

MIKE SPENCER

YOGA JOURNEY LIBRARY

HOME STUDIO: VERTICAL VIEW MERIDIAN IDAHO



TRICKED INTO YOGA

I was tricked into doing yoga in April 2022 at the age of 54. I was eager to travel somewhere tropical after the corona lockdown. My wife said her instructor was doing a yoga retreat in Costa Rica and that I could go with her if I wanted. She got me with Costa Rica, that being on my bucket list. I told her I would go would and hang out on the beach or go exploring while she did yoga. She agreed and we bought our tickets.

The first morning of the retreat everyone was getting to know each other while gathered around the swimming pool. They were asking me questions that I didn't understand like, "Do you practice with Jenny?", the yoga instructor and organizer of the retreat,

I didn't know what that really meant. Then to show my fake interest in yoga I started asking questions like "So you're here to practice yoga but when is the game, or is even such thing as a yoga competition or it i called a game or match or maybe a meet?" and "What do you call the place you do yoga? Is it a yoga floor, field, court or is it a yoga pitch?" Yes, I really did show my great intelligence.

My wife came to me around the same time and with puppy dog eyes said, "Mike, this is a yoga retreat, I want you to do one class, for me." I know she expected a fight. She had been telling me I need to be more healthy and to exercise for several years, but to her shock, I agreed and followed the group to the first practice. I wanted to get it over with so I could play and explore without that commitment hanging over my head the rest of the week.

So I sweated and modified and sweated some more and learned yoga is a lot harder than what I thought and child's pose was my friend. I made it through the first practice.....loved it, and ended up doing two practices a day for the rest of the week.

I immediately felt at home on the mat and enjoyed the physical workout of yoga. I was not judged or looked at weird with my not-so-perfect poses, and Jenny was an excellent instructor and would encourage and complement at times and at other times would nicely corrected me my poses, but it was not just the yoga itself, it was the whole experience from the practice area, a thatched covered

Ianai, looking out through mango trees to the expansive view of the Pacific Ocean, the sound of the surf, the songs of birds, the howling of monkeys, and most important were the peopleor maybe it was the food. No the people were amazing, from my amazing instructor, Jenny Lewis who embodies the yoga spirit. She is a master instructor with her near perfect forms, her physical strength, knowledge and love of yoga make practicing with her very rewarding both physically and mentally, even for me an out-of-shape-tight-worn-out-old man find a love of working out again. The other yogis were very kind and didn't judge me. I don't know why my wife didn't tell me how great yoga was years ago. 😊 Since my introduction to yoga my practice has improved, I have become stronger physically, I have lost weight, I am more flexible and have better balance. My poses are improving but are still nowhere near being picture perfect. During the past few years I have learned to modify do to injuries, pulled and strained muscles, and age. I have learned more about my body, it's limitations, and my need to modify.....and I'm good with that. Yoga has become a part of my life. I try to make it to the studio at least twice a week. It is something my wife and I enjoy doing together, and we are a part of a great yoga community. We love practicing with our community on a weekly basis and attending retreats each year. In 2023 we went on another retreat to Bali with Jenny and the Wellness Week .Last year we went to Curacao with the Wellness Week and many of our yoga friends. Yoga has become a big part in our lives. We are advocates for living a better and more healthy life by eating better and through physical activity. I travel quite a bit with work. I take my yoga mat with me and visit a local yoga studio as much as I can. I have practiced i



in Bend, Oregon at "Namaspa Yoga Community," they are my home away from home. I have practiced in Niagara Falls, Canada, with several studios in Utah and Idaho Falls, ID. I have practiced on the lawn between two ski lifts at Bogus Basin Ski Resort with Yoga on the Mountain, around swimming pools in Bali and even on a bow of a boat in Curacao, after the harbor patrol pulled us and wondering if Captain Shirley was going to be hauled into jail, and how were we going to make it back to the resort. Yoga can be done anywhere. I get mixed reactions when I tell people I do yoga. Most look at me funny. The same look I would give people 4 years ago. I have had people say to me, men do yoga? Isn't yoga for Women? Yoga is good for stretching but I run or go to the gym for a workout. The whole purpose of this Website, the "Mat Time" Newsletter and the Old Fat Men's Yoga Club is to educate and promote yoga. Yoga is for everyone....everywhere. The Old Fat Men's Yoga Club is a play on words. It is the opposite of the stereotypical yogi, yet a demographic who would greatly benefit if they picked it up. Yoga is for everyone....everywhere! Did I say that already?