

WOW

LIVE THE LIFE YOU LOVE



FREEDOM

Featured Teacher:
Jessica Barron

July 2022

What's Your Story?



My Purple Mat

Warrior Turned Yogi

Express your freedom with

Jessica Barron

In her own words...

I grew up in Baltimore, MD, and enlisted in the Air Force in 2000. I practiced yoga on and off for ten-plus years. After a challenging time in my life, my therapist at the time prescribed yoga. Her prescription caught me off guard—all the doctors I'd seen before prescribed sleep, depression, and anxiety medications, but Ms. Judy prescribed yoga.

Through asanas and pranayama, I was finally free! No more pills. While I'd love to say I practiced regularly, I did not. As an active duty service member, my schedule was not always ideal. I practiced when my mind, body, or soul needed it.

My purple yoga mat has been there for me through it all. She has soaked up tears and taken punches, but she has always been there.

In my last five years in the military, I moved to Bowling Green, Ohio. I was the Non Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) at Bowling Green State University. The position and location sparked some concerns for me, and the anxiety, depression, and insomnia crept back up.

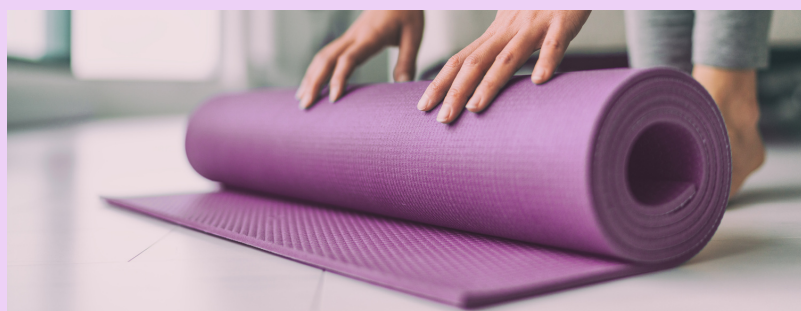
What was missing? My purple yoga mat.



For years I said I'd teach yoga one day, and when COVID hit the world, I used it as an opportunity to get certified. I received my 200 hour Yoga Teacher Training in August 2020 and opened an online yoga studio eight months before my military retirement.

While looking for additional training opportunities, I found Kristy online and enrolled in a couple of her classes. I love her teaching technique and her "realness."

Little did I know that I would enroll in an advanced 300 hour Yoga Teacher Training through Wise Owl Wellness and embark on a whole new journey.





While driving down Main Street in my hometown one day, I was called to open a studio. I followed the call, and in September 2021, I opened a brick and mortar: **My Purple Mat**.

I did not start like most business owners. I didn't have a business plan, budget, or anything business-related. I had a vision, and exactly one year from the day I opened my online studio, I was now a business owner of a yoga studio on Main Street in Reisterstown, Maryland. It is an adventure, but I am still going strong.

Through yoga practice, I have cultivated compassion, patience, and love for myself and others. I have learned that everyone is searching for something in life, and the answers are within us. We must take the time to see, hear, or understand what it is. Words have the most significant impact on us. Through consistent practice, loving yourself and loving others will come naturally. I know what yoga has done for me, and I want to share it with others. I am passionate about community, and teaching yoga is my way of giving back.

My Purple Mat is a yoga studio with a twist. I offer yoga, meditation, reiki, and sound healing. My Purple Mat also has a small boutique with crystals, jewelry, sage, and more. I serve my entire community. My youngest client is ten, and my oldest is 85. I aim to solve the stereotypical image of yoga. Many folks view it as a fitness regimen for rich white women. That is so far from the truth. My motto is: ***Inside-out healing, starting with YOU.***

Ten years ago, I questioned my existence on earth. A judge gave my ex-husband custody of our children because I couldn't be a mother and service member. He made it clear that I had to decide which was more important. It was an impossible choice, but the reason I went into the military was to provide for my children.

After the divorce and custody battle, I went to seek therapy in hopes of getting myself together. Instead of therapy, the doctor prescribed what seemed like an entire pharmacy just to get through the day.

I was at the lowest point in my life. The Universe sent me to Ms. Judy (former therapist promoted to mentor), and she changed my life. I have been that person that didn't see the good in myself or others. On the outside, I was fine, but on the inside, I was in pain, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Yoga is inside-out healing, and it works!

My Purple Mat was there for me, and My Purple Mat is here for you, too.





How do I define FREEDOM?

FREEDOM is accepting yourself.

FREEDOM is understanding that we all have a purpose on this earth.

FREEDOM is being able to set boundaries and say NO.

FREEDOM shows up in my body/life/work/play when I open my closet and choose what clothes I am wearing that day. I pick out my clothes. I choose who I communicate with daily. I choose how I respond to others.

Most importantly, I choose what no longer serves me.

I help others find FREEDOM by asking what brings them joy?

For my individual private sessions, I speak with clients over the phone to get a better understanding of what they are seeking. Our phone conversation gives me a little insight into their energy level. If it's a good fit, I set up an in-person consultation. Once in person, I can ask detailed questions if they didn't provide enough information in the intake form. I make a plan for them based on their intake, and then we get to work!

People inspire me to do what I do. I can not fix the world, but knowing that the people who walk through my door are working on themselves brings me joy. If I can help them, they help others.





What's Next for Me?

Transitioning My Purple Mat into a wellness/holistic space and traveling would be nice.

I would like to offer energy workers, yoga teachers, massage therapist, etc. an opportunity to serve their clients at My Purple Mat. I am also researching Life Coach programs and possibly Yoga Therapy School.

The journey continues.

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