

## A Truer Balance

As a  $\frac{3}{4}$  physician, there are two things that have proven to be the most important things in my life recently, and that have truly gotten me through medical school: The loving relationships in my life, and Yoga (on 6<sup>th</sup>).

This may sound a bit inflated, but it could not be truer.

Yoga lets me live a little more freely – to play, to experiment, to express and explore myself, and to apply these discoveries to my life. As a little girl, dancing and gymnastic were essential parts of my life, and discovering my creativity through my body was my way of connecting to the inner playful-me that was always finding new ways to express myself. As I grew up, somehow I ventured farther and farther away from that physically creative me, and somehow I ended up in science, pursuing a Medical Degree and a career as a Physician. Go figure. Finding yoga as an adult has allowed me to reconnect with that playful, joyful, creative, and spiritually centered part of myself that I explored more regularly as a child. In the five-plus years that I have spent practicing yoga, I have found far more than I ever thought was possible through a few simple poses.

Yoga has taught me how to live better. To an outsider, and to my pre-yoga self, I believed that I had been quite good at living. I thought of myself as relatively “in-touch” with myself in comparison to the average human being, and very attuned to my mind-body connection. What I think was missing, however, was the consistency of maintaining this connection and balance. At times I would be good at connecting – I could listen to my body, be present in the moment, and be less judgmental of myself. The problem was, this only really happened when I was on vacation, non-stressed, and with few responsibilities. But that is not the vast majority of “real life” for me. Any time things became complicated or demanding – beginning medical school, for instance – I tended to fall apart by disregarding the still, calm side of myself. I had oodles of energy exploding out of me, aching for a directed purpose, but I didn’t know how to direct it well. I would get so enthused by its power that I allowed it to overtake and, at times, tear me apart with its immeasurable force. I did not know how to welcome in that potentially very good energy without it overpowering my other collected, focused, and spiritually content part of myself. Many times I have found myself so disjointed that I hardly recognized myself. It is then – at the most crazy, difficult, and sleep deprived times as a med student, when I thought that I could do nothing more than simply hold on and make it through my day – that I have needed yoga the most.

Yoga and the teaching that I have received at Yoga on 6<sup>th</sup> have truly saved me from what could have easily been a horribly depressing, self-deprecating, and soul-disjointed fate. You have helped me to discover how to truly live well. Through your teaching I have begun to connect my calm, still, and loving self to my motivated, kinetic, and eager self. It has been an amazing transformation. I am less agitated with all of my energy, and instead, I have begun to understand how to harness that enthusiasm and eagerness in a more healthy way that has become a very powerful and resonant “focused intent.” After 5 years of yoga, I can finally say that I am beginning to find a balance between these two

intensely powerful and pivotal parts of myself. I have not always blended the two seamlessly, and I have much growing to still look forward to, but I do believe that through the practice of yoga, I have begun to learn how to harness and focus my abounding “active” energy by first acknowledging and filtering it through my more peaceful and “still” energy.

Yoga is teaching me not only how to blend these two parts of my psyche for my own good, but also how to project this radiance onto the world and to give of it generously. Yoga is also a balance for me between taking care of myself and ensuring my own happiness (the stillness), and giving of myself to the world to hopefully make it a better place (the active). In Judaism, we talk about “Tikun Olam” which means “to make the world a better place” or “to heal the world.” I think growing up with this teaching always in the back of my mind, I have wanted to give of my energy and passion, but I have not known how to do this while also caring for myself. Yoga has begun to teach me this in a profoundly true and authentic way. I have become better at loving myself and those around me, and I have also become better at giving of myself and pursuing my much loved career and desire to make the world a better place.

Yoga (and Yoga on 6<sup>th</sup>) has helped me to truly tap into that place of calm and stillness while simultaneously able to “do”, move, and take action more effectively. It is a difficult thing to express, but it has enriched my life profoundly. My relationships with others, my relationship to my work as a student physician, and my relationship to myself have all softened, become more authentic and rewarding, and have resulted in vastly more satisfying and gratifying experiences. I truly believe that yoga has been a vital part to all of this. I do not know where I would be without yoga in my life, and I thank Yoga on 6<sup>th</sup> for providing an amazingly inspirational staff and beautiful facility to have contributed immensely to this step in the right direction. I hope to practice with you all for a long time, and I hope that this is only the beginning of a rewarding and wonderfully joyful path ahead. Thank you for all of your help, encouragement, and love!

Sincerely,  
Kerri Entin