

Summertime, and the Livin' is Easy--If You Work Hard In Yoga

Studio Announcements

Take Your Practice to the Next Level with Jason Winn's Seminar August 9!

Jason Winn is one of Bikram Yoga's true authorities, one of only three people Bikram himself sanctions to conduct seminars around the world. He was the former owner of the Laguna Beach studio and now is focusing on giving seminars world wide. We're still in the planning stages with the Pasadena studio to bring Jason here for a seminar August 9. Email or talk to Rose if it sounds interesting.

Fall Teacher Training, Acapulco, Mexico Sept. 14-Nov.15!

Even if you've never thought of being a Bikram Yoga teacher, the International Teacher training has blossomed into an experience that's as much a yoga retreat and boot camp as it is a chance to honor yourself and your practice two months of immersive yoga. Because now teacher training takes place at the Fairmont Acapulco Princess Hotel, a four-star, 480-acre property overlooks the Pacific Ocean on Revolcadero Beach. The facility maintains a 24-hour medical clinic, five swimming pools, lush tropical gardens, restaurants and shops, a world-class spa, full gym and two golf courses. And two Bikram Yoga classes a day, many taught by Bikram himself and his senior instructors. Bikram and his wife hold afternoon and evening lectures, along with handpicked experts on everything from nutrition and anatomy to physics and yoga philosophy. Let's just say it's come a long way from eating lunch in the parking lot at the Bikram World headquarters on La Cienega like we did it back in the day. Interested students can visit bikramyoga.com, or contact shelly@bikramyoga.com; any questions talk to Rose.

Full Service Yearly \$1350

This fantastic special includes two towels per class for the whole year, a \$25 water credit, mat storage and one private lesson! Available through July 31st.

Yogi Q&A: Team Robi



Name(s): Paul, Kath and Jennifer Robi
Age(s): Paul (46), Kath (45), Jennifer (13)
Profession(s): Paul- LAPD Bomb Squad Detective Supervisor
Kath- Retired LAPD Detective
Jennifer- Student (Assumption BVM School)/
8th Grade Student Body President

Been doing Bikram Yoga since:

Paul: March 2008
Kath: February 2008
Jennifer: February 2008

How many times a week do you practice?

P: 3-4 times
K: 3-4 times
J: 2-3 times

What inspired you to start Bikram Yoga?

P: I was inspired by the benefits that were obtained by my wife and daughter.
K: My attempts to recover from injuries sustained in a serious car accident in April '07. I suffered a severe concussion as well as numerous other injuries when my daughter and I were the victims of a drunk-driving accident.
J: I was encouraged by my parents, in an attempt to help me recover from a serious back injury that I suffered in a car accident with my mother in April '07 which has left me temporarily disabled and has required me to wear a hardshell back brace 20 hours a day.

Why Bikram Yoga? Had you done other kinds of hatha yoga

P: This is the only type of yoga that I have ever done. I did not know what yoga was until my wife and daughter started going.
K: After much research on many different types of yoga, I felt that Bikram would be most beneficial to our recovery.
J: My parents felt that Bikram Yoga would help me most in my recovery process.

Yoga And Your Health: Taking The Time to Be Grateful

Summer is a time when we have a million things going on; things we want to get done, or goals we want to achieve--looking good in a bathing suit, eating better or being more resourceful. Well this month, one of our Yogis of the Month, 13-year-old Jennifer Robi shared her story and what Bikram Yoga has done for her (see left). It's so moving, we thought in lieu of giving you advice on what to eat or how to look at food, to really just take the time to appreciate what you do have, to take nothing for granted and most of all to keep living life to its fullest, no matter what it throws at you.



Finding A Bright Light Through The Darkness By: Jennifer Robi

It was that time of year again, April, and our school's annual science fair! My group was made up of two of my best friends, Ellie and Whitney. As for me, my name is Jennifer. I was looking forward to what was going to be a really fun filled project with the three of us working together! We all decided to have our first meeting at Whitney's house to get going on our project. After a few hardworking and enjoyable hours it was getting dark and time to head home. I called my mom to pick me up

We Need Your Input On New Classes and Classtimes!

"Early Bird" Class: We've had suggestions to move the 6 ams to 5:45 am for you early birds. Would this help you to attend before work? Feel free to weigh in with your opinion

"Mid-day" Class: We'd like to add a noon or 1 pm class Friday and then see about adding it other days as the need arises. Again, feel free to email and weigh in if this class would help you attend more.

We've had requests from students with special physical needs for a "special" class to help with modifications. In these cases, please talk to your favorite instructor to set up a time for a private lesson.

Posture Highlight: Locust--Ustrasana



Camel pose or Ustrasana, is arguably the most important posture you do in a Bikram Yoga class. If for no other reason, it is the only posture so extreme you would only perform such a range of motion in a Bikram Yoga class.

It comes towards the end of class and you can't say you didn't see it coming--it's basically the thigh-stretching of Fixed-Firm pose and the total spine backward bending of the Bow but now adding gravity. So, it's essentially a culmination of other ranges of motion we have done, intensified literally by using the weight of your own head, as Bikram puts it, "for gravitation."

The key to Camel is to build it from the ground up. Begin standing on your knees with knees and feet six inches apart, hands on the hips like you're putting them in the back pockets of some pretty high-riding pants. Then lift and drop your head back--you'll naturally exhale--and keep lifting and rounding (as opposed to leaning back) until you can reach your heels. Whether you can grab your heels or not, the key is to create lift through the front of the body, especially the hips thighs and abdomen. Bikram warns us that the you'll feel it in your

What are your favorite things about Bikram Yoga La Canada?

P: Bikram yoga La Canada is clean, very accessible and fun. Both the instructors and students are very nice and encouraging. K: I really liked the facilities, all of the instructors are very encouraging and care about helping you succeed and have all taken extra time before, during and after class to help us each improve. The positive feedback from them is what keeps us going.

J: I like the instructors, they all encourage me to do my best and help me progress.

When you started what was the hardest thing about the yoga and how did you overcome it?

P: The heat and not being very flexible--I do a lot of weightlifting. I overcame this by not getting discouraged and attending classes as often as I could.

K: The most difficult part for me was the length and intensity of the class. I overcame this by attending class as often as I could and not giving up. I would often have to force myself to go, knowing yoga was helping me in my recovery. At the beginning, many of the poses I was not able to do properly.

J: The hardest thing for me was the heat and often being the only 13 year-old in a class full of adults. This was intimidating for me. I am now getting used to the heat as much as I can and I realize now that many of the adults have the same challenges I have. I attend class with one or both of my parents, they are always there for extra support. I also had a private lesson that helped me understand the poses and how they work on my body.

What's your favorite pose and why?

P: Camel--it helps my back open up and feel so much better. When I first began yoga I was not able to do the Camel and thought there was no way I would ever be able to do this pose.

K: Standing head to knee is my favorite now, although I can't touch my head to my knee, this pose gives me inspiration because when I first started yoga I could not stand on one leg, balance or grab my foot. Now, I have the strength and endurance to stand on a locked leg, balance and grab my foot with the ten-finger grip. I never believed I would be able to.

J: Camel--it helps my back open up and I can really feel the stretch. I am also a big fan of Savasna!!!

What's your hardest pose and why?

P: Triangle. It's very difficult for me to hold the pose for the entire duration

K: Triangle. Because of the muscles being used. I feel like my body is going to collapse. I can barely hold the pose for the required time.

J: Hands-to-Feet Pose. Due to my injury it is very painful for me to get my body into this position.

What changes has doing this Yoga brought to your life?

P: It makes my back feel great and helps relieve stress. This benefits me in my job that can at times be very stressful and requires me to wear very heavy safety equipment.

K: Going to yoga for the last five months has helped my recovery. The benefits I have received are very noticeable and encouraging. One year of physical therapy left me with few results and little hope. I no longer have to walk with the assistance of a cane and I am able to drive again. I am very grateful!

J: The physical benefits that I have received from yoga have helped in the recovery of my back injury and has proven to be

and she came right away. After all, we only lived a few blocks away. We were on our way home when in a blink of an eye our lives were changed forever.

I sat there frozen with terror as another vehicle plunged into ours. Our truck was suddenly spinning violently out of control. My mom, without hesitation, shielded my body with hers. After a few Hail Mary's and what seemed like an eternity, everything came to a jolting halt. It was by the grace of God that the arm of an oak tree from someone's front yard had caught the roof of our truck and kept us from rolling and crashing into an adjacent house. I caught my breath and looked around, scared and confused. My mom lay there limp, draped across the front seat of our truck, with blood gushing from the side of her head and neck. I found myself at the tender age of twelve, searching for my cell phone to call for help. It was dark, the streets were deserted and I didn't know where I was. A man who appeared out of nowhere, startled me as he began to render aid. This Good Samaritan, whose identity I still do not know, helped me pull my mom out of our mangled truck. Shortly there after, the streets were flooded with police cars, paramedics, fire trucks and other emergency vehicles. I felt lost in the darkness despite the flashing red and blue lights everywhere. As I was being treated by the paramedics, I could see my mom in the distance with her head bandaged like a mummy, being strapped to a board and lifted into the ambulance. I felt scared and helpless not knowing what lay ahead. I put my head down to pray for a few moments and as I looked up, I could see my dad in the sea of blinking lights trying to find me.

Once we were reunited he assured me that everything would be O.K. My mom and I were then quickly transported to the hospital where we were surrounded by doctors, nurses, police officers and family members. It was at the hospital when we were met with the harsh realization that my mom and I had been the victims of a heavily intoxicated, habitual drunk driver. What I felt at that moment, words can not describe.

It was in the months that lied ahead that would test my faith in God and strengthen our family bond. What our family had anticipated to be fun filled summer vacation turned out to be several months of recovery and rehabilitation. My mom was left with her head stapled closed, a severe concussion and multiple other injuries. I, too, had a concussion and a spine injury that put me into a hard plastic back brace that I would wear 20 hours a day for the next two years. I suffered tremendously as my body became accustomed to the brace. What I didn't anticipate at the time is that our emotional trauma would be more agonizing and take the longest to heal. I endured many sleepless nights, nightmares and flashbacks. I cried myself to sleep every night for months in an attempt to accept the fact that we barely

lower back as it is the deepest back bend you will do. But you're trying to lift up and out of the lower back so you don't feel it all only in your lower back. Once you get your heels, push your knees into the floor, push your stomach, legs, hips forward and use full deep breaths to keep pushing the midsection forward and up.

Because your spine is supported first by the hands, then by the bow-like spine from your spine-strengthening series, you can take deep full breaths. As a beginner you may feel like you're just literally hanging on for dear life, but among the many benefits of Camel is stimulating the nervous system as well as opening the rib cage and letting the whole front of the body de-stress. Camel is good for any and all back pain. The thing to visualize, is how much the front of your body is lifting and opening. Think of, say, a spinnaker on a sailboat catching the wind. Like the great yogi Christopher Cross once said, "Sailing takes me away to where I'm going beautifully," and Camel takes you away like a Calgon bath for your nervous system. Enjoy.

very inspiring.

What keeps you motivated?

P: The more I go, the more progress I make. I also am motivated by the positive results that I observe in my wife and daughter.

K: The positive results that I experienced as my body continues to recover. Although I am not 100% I pray someday I will be close.

J: I am kept motivated by the positive results and my mom and dad and family.

Any recent breakthroughs you'd like to share?

P: I was recently able to grab my feet with the ten-finger grip in the standing head to knee pose. Now, I don't like to brag, but I can also grab my ankle in the standing bow pose without holding on to the wall and hearing Bambi say, "Mr Robi, what are you doing!!!!!"

K: I went to class six days in row which I had never had the endurance to do before. This helped in my overall strength in many of the poses. I'm not ready for the 60-Day Challenge, but maybe soon.

J: In the tree pose, I am now able to keep my hands in prayer. I also recently started to kick out in the standing head to knee pose. I am very proud of myself.

Any words of wisdom to new students?

P: Always do your best to attempt a pose and eventually it will come in time. It did for me. You have to give your body a chance to change.

K: Don't be discouraged after a couple of days, be persistent and give yoga a chance to work for you and it will. I hope to encourage my other children to come on a regular basis. I want them to enjoy the benefits at a young age.

J: Don't get discouraged, always push yourself to make it to class. The days you really don't want to go are the days you probably need to go the most.

escaped with our lives. Reliving this tragedy was more than I could cope with, knowing that it could have very easily been avoided, but for someone else's irresponsible actions.

After six months whisked quickly by, I found myself sobbing in front of a judge as I testified during a court trial. I had to recall the devastating events that took place that horrific night in April. I could have in no way prepared myself to be face to face with an individual who so selfishly allowed her self to become so heavily intoxicated while behind the wheel of a motor vehicle. As much as it pained me, I looked at her while I gave my tearful testimony. Her lack of emotion, blank stare and glassy eyes said it all. This was a person with no remorse who would never feel any shame in causing great bodily injury to two innocent people.

As a year has passed by, my mom and I continue to slowly make progress with our rehabilitation. The many dark days we have endured are now becoming brighter days. I find myself constantly reflecting on how valuable and fragile life is.

I now understand that life is a precious gift from God that is to be cherished and lived to its fullest. I thank God every day for my precious gift of life that I will never take for granted. As you find yourself reflecting on this life altering chain of events, I leave you with the reality that this is not just any tragic story: this heartfelt story is my real life story.