

Hot Yoga and YOU! (er, ME)



By
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Rose

Yoga...it is something I, as a health care practitioner, have recommended to my clients HUNDREDS of times! Until recently, the number of yoga classes I have attended totaled...zero.

Before I come off sounding like a total hypocrite, let me give you some background: I did learn some yoga in a college course, and I did practice yoga from watching a videotape...occasionally.

A live class, with an instructor? Never got around to it, even with all my good intentions. Despite often seeing people of all ages in my practice with off-the-charts flexibility...something you really WANT to have, especially as you grow older.

“Hot yoga” (also known by its licensed name, Bikram) is the practice of doing yoga in a room heated up to the body’s natural temperature, approximately 98 degrees. After one of my past love interests had a life-changing experience with it (no foolin’), I became intrigued. She lost a significant amount of weight after 45 days of hot yoga, and had a heavy emotional weight lifted off her shoulders.



So, how did I get started? Yoga on Union – adorably abbreviated as Y.O.U. – had a special rate on hot yoga some time ago. I realized that not only was I going to be doing yoga in a class for the first time ever, but I was going to be sweating my Azorean butt off, as well. That’s me, all in or nothing. Even when I am a bit apprehensive.

The owner and head instructor of Y.O.U. is Juliet Loranger, a personal friend who assured me that the class (taught by her) would be unpretentious, relaxed, and there was nothing to worry about. She was right. I arrived, mat in hand, changed my clothes and sat my water bottle next to me.

So, what was hot yoga like? To my surprise, half the students were male. Many came alone, some with significant others. Although I felt less in shape and experienced than the others around me, I was encouraged to hold poses ONLY for as long as was comfortable, and to take breaks when necessary. I recognized this as the advice of a yoga teacher who knew what she was doing. And boy, did I go for the water bottle quite a few times, in the hour-and-a-half class!

The music was relaxing and not disruptive. The site of Union Street from the many windows at twilight was lovely, seeing the streetlights come on and the view of the waterfront. Juliet was alternately encouraging and funny; true to her word, the mood was mostly relaxed and not overly-serious. Although it was strenuous and effective, I left feeling energized; a feeling of well-being and of having truly worked out my body and will.

I can wholeheartedly recommend yoga to everyone. It relaxes

the spirit and strengthens the body and mind. Before attending any class, take the time to meet your instructor and question them (politely, of course) about their experience, as well as their credentials. As always, see your doctor first before starting any new exercise regimen, even more so if you are going to try hot yoga, and you are heat-sensitive. In other words, if you can't stand the heat, stay out of the...yoga studio.

Yoga on Union is located at One Johnny Cake Hill, New Bedford, MA. You can find them Yogaonunion.com, for class schedules and pricing.