

Yoga, Pilates, and Puppies

In this hectic world, we need to figure out what works for us. What makes us feel productive, accomplished, content, and overall happy? Everyone's needs are different. That's why there are so many choices out there. But, often we may feel overwhelmed by all of these choices available. This is why I want to share with you my choices and why they work for me. Hopefully, by reading this you find yourself thinking, "Hey, that kinda sounds like me," or "I know someone that might benefit from doing yoga or pilates."

I think I have an "A" type personality. I tend to want to always do my best, over-analyze everything, and am very hard on myself when I don't accomplish what I expect of myself. Over the years, I have discovered that I am much happier being a "B" type! This means that I have high expectations of myself, but I know I will often mess up and will have to just go with the flow. So, I have to constantly remind myself to take full deep breaths and just be happy where I'm at.

I have been teaching yoga for about 17 years, since I was 21 years old. It started out as another aerobics class to teach. Teaching yoga for the first time was honestly very scary, and I was extremely nervous. I felt uncomfortable with the new movements and my mind kept wandering as I held the poses. But, a big part of me loved the feeling yoga gave me. It felt like I was slow dancing, and I love dancing. Plus, the stretches felt soooo good. Over time, I noticed that I hold a lot of my "stress" tension in my shoulders and back. After I taught a yoga class, I felt less stressed and my mind became more clear. Then, I noticed that if I allowed myself to relax in yoga class, I could learn how to allow myself to relax in other situations outside of class. I was the kind of person who always had to be doing something and my mind was always thinking "what if" scenarios. But, in yoga class, that didn't happen, because I had to focus on my balance and breathing. So, in daily life, whenever I feel stressed I simply focus on my balance and breathing. I bring the feeling I get in yoga class to wherever I am.

Exercising is also an awesome way to deal with daily stresses. When I taught yoga in the gym, I noticed many of the same people on the treadmills and elliptical machines daily. Hey, I am a big elliptical machine fan. I love the cardio it

gives me. It's great when I just want to burn calories and get going. But, it's only working my legs! Okay, so I can do free weights to work my arms. I can do aerobics classes to get a great work out too. But, what about my core? Hmmm? That is the million dollar question! I can do sit ups. But, am I really motivated to do sit ups at home on a regular basis? Hmmm? One day my aerobics director asked me if I wanted to teach pilates on the reformer machine. I have a dance background, and I heard pilates is used by dancers to work on their core. So, I began teaching it. I taught six people at a time because we only had six machines. But, the only people taking the class were the ones that could afford it. Also, many of the students could not afford to continue to take the classes because it was too expensive. Hey, if you have the money, go for it! Then, I heard about pilates on a mat. There you go! Ah ha! I began teaching pilates on a mat.

I started by teaching only one pilates mat class a week. *OMG!* My tummy area got so awesome! I started to have regular students, and my class began to grow! It made me so happy to see my class fill up with people who would tell me they're feeling their core get stronger! Pilates works from the inside out. It strengthens and tightens all the inner muscles including your core, pelvic floor, arms, back, butt, and inner thighs. Your core is pretty much all the muscles between your shoulders and hips. As you do pilates, all the inner muscles work together. Most people are not used to working those! I wasn't! But now, *OMG!* I still love taking zumba and kickboxing classes. But, nothing worked my inner core like pilates.

I have taught yoga and pilates in many gyms and health clubs. I loved teaching there and taking many other aerobic classes. I put up with the sweaty covered floors and machines, and the dirty locker rooms. I also tried not to be bothered by the "meat market" scene. It has always been my dream to have my own yoga and pilates studio, so I could keep it clean and zen. Well, my dream came true recently. I just opened Yoga Core Fit, a yoga and mat pilates studio on 187 C Butcher Rd. in Vacaville. I make sure we only use all natural cleaners, and all the mats and equipment are cleaned after each use. Hot green tea is offered. Also, books on health and wellness are available for reading pleasure in the lobby. I am

the kind of person who is very sensitive to my environment. That's why I tried to make my studio very zen. No "meat market" here!

Now, let's talk about puppies! Puppies are just pure happiness! So, I decided to make my studio's logo a puppy of course! My logo puppy is doing a yoga boat pose, or a pilates teaser pose. Also, I encourage people to share the love by donating \$3 to the Solano SPCA Haven for Animals when they stop by. I really believe that what goes around, comes around. So, feel free to stop by my studio to give a gift of health and wellness for yourself, and give a gift to the Solano SPCA Haven for Animals too. Maybe, yoga, pilates, and puppies will give you happiness too!