



Total Fitness Over 50 and Fit: Beginning Yoga

Strike a pose!

I'm Barrie, and I warmly welcome you to my bi-weekly blog: Over50andfit.

Yoga originated as a group of physical, mental and spiritual disciplines in Northern India, in what is generally accepted as some 5,000 years ago. When was yoga introduced to North America - can you guess? - 1893.

If I have one regret in my lifetime of fitness, it is that I have not devoted more time to the practice of yoga. For me, more than any other activity, yoga embraces: meditation, harmony of mind and body, relaxation, strength, mental discipline, and improved well-being. Flexibility exercises like yoga gently reverse the shortening and tightening of muscles that typically occur with disuse and age.

Some Benefits

- Better balance
- Improved flexibility
- Enhanced breathing
- Stronger bones
- Help tone muscles and build stamina
- Reduced anxiety and stress
- Better sleep

Finding the right type of yoga for you.

Although there are more than 100 different types or schools of yoga, most sessions typically include breathing exercises, meditation and postures, sometimes called poses or asana, which stretch and flex various muscle groups. Nevertheless, it is still a daunting task to find the type of yoga which is most appropriate for you. The best solution I would suggest is to take an in-person class, in which you can try the different poses and get expert help from the instructor. If this is not possible, you can observe classes online. Many of these classes are outstanding and you will be able to determine which class is best for you.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing and buy a yoga mat. As with all exercise, be cautious and start slowly. Do not overly exert yourself, for some of the stretches can be demanding for beginners

Popular Forms of Yoga

Eventually, you will become familiar with some of the more popular examples of yoga exercises for beginners: Child's pose, Mountain, Plank, Tree, Triangle and Warrior. Yoga, which is becoming increasingly popular for seniors, will help you to find a safe and effective way to enhance your physical health and overall wellness

Online Instructor

There are many skilled and prominent instructors online. Terecita Blair is one who has a warm and friendly presence, and commands a huge following. This former Instructor of the Year helps you find flexibility with her amiable approach in her extensive collection of videos for beginners, advanced and seniors at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLW_D7pVJXMbu7VoQhqqiwrXcBsn_eOlZiT. She is a true hero, in that she has undergone 5 spinal surgeries and been inspirationally courageous during her treatment. When I contacted her, she generously replied by sending me information on a topic which is all too often ignored: the huge importance of breathing correctly.

Please feel free to share your comments and questions.

Do remember to keep hydrated and drink lots of water.

In my next blog, I will discuss the merits of Tai Chi.

Yours in fitness,

Barrie

