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Baseball and business

Tuesday, February 02, 2010

I'm desperately seeking an oasis of calm



This morning, I was taking a yoga class and trying my best to be "present."

I tried to focus on my breathing – very slowly in, and then equally slowly out. I tried to remember not to hold my breath and not to breathe through my mouth, my usual means of getting air in and out. It's amazing that this isn't second nature.

I tried to get my body into poses that felt foreign and verged on uncomfortable. Put simply: I tried to stay within the confines of my yoga mat for the full 90 minutes of the class.

I say tried, rather than did, because being "present" – without thinking about my future to-do lists or my past gosh-I-didn't-do lists – is not easy. In fact, it's a Challenge with a capital C. I'll be doing fine for a while, but then some minuscule thought worms its way into my brain, and I'm down a rabbit hole. I know this is why meditation success has eluded me, too.

I've only recently begun doing yoga, though I've been thinking about it for years. It's been hard to tear myself away from the endorphin rush of spin classes. But I know it's good for me.

"Everyone is here to learn something," the instructor said this morning. "The limber people are learning to be strong. The strong people are learning to be limber. It's all about practice."

Frankly, I know I'm not limber, and I suspect I'm not strong either. I guess I'm there to practice everything. And especially to practice how to be "present."

I hear people constantly talking about how much they dislike the frenetic pace we all live in today. There's almost no escape. I don't know anyone who LIKES this pace, yet we are all victims of it. I'm not sure there is a cure for this – but I can see clearly that the ability to distance yourself at least temporarily from this crazy frenzy is one way to lessen the negative impact.

Being a business owner is a blessing and a curse. I happen to consider it mostly a blessing, but I admit that being unable to turn off the noise in my head is a curse. For now, I'm going to continue to seek calm in my yoga sessions. I'm going to practice and practice and practice until my 90 minutes is an oasis in my frenzy. And then maybe my frenzy will be less so.

Are there any businesspeople out there who have achieved this yoga oasis and can give me encouragement? Or maybe some folks who have discovered a different way to cope with life circa 2010? Enlighten all of us, please!

Posted By Hilary On 02/02/2010 At 3:21 PM [Comments \(6\)](#) [Trackbacks \(0\)](#)

Reader Comments

Hilary: So glad to hear a fellow PR professional has found yoga. I was at my favorite yoga studio (www.lotus7yoga.com) this morning and also trying to stay focused during a restorative class. But you know what? When I came back to the office (which also happens to be my home), I was more centered and able to get a lot more done in a shorter period of time. I have been doing yoga for over 10 years and love it. Keep it up!

JENNIFER HEINLY

Hilary, I have done some type of yoga for exercise since my early 20's! A VERY LONG TIME. I don't get too focused, however I do maintain the breathing. I do this on the floor each morning for 40 minutes in front of the TV morning news. A yoga teacher would shudder at this. I will tell you that yoga is vital to my well being. I'm limber, strong, feel great and probably less stressed out than I'd be w/o it. Great blog.

LINDA CASSO

Pilates works for me more than yoga.

SYLVIA SCOTT

I have tried numerous times to do yoga and every time the quiet makes my mind go a million miles a minute! I think of all that I could be doing and want to be doing. I guess some of us were not programmed to do down dogs in a blank mind. Don't get me wrong. I still wish I could touch my toes and do it, but could we set it to some upbeat music and skip the deep breathing for my hectic head? Great post!

GAIL GRAY

Hilary, You are on the right track! I've seen your mind at work, and it may not be telling you right now, but it is SO HAPPY that you are trying to give it a break. Just keep practicing. In your yoga session, there's nothing to achieve at all, except to show up and at give 90 minutes of your attention to Hilary. As for the endless lists, perhaps you could simply set them aside, (knowing, of course that they will still be there at the end of class), and consider your yoga a short scenic tour of your own interior. It can be pretty interesting. Have fun!

LAURA LEHRER

All of you are terrific! Thanks for the encouragement and your own tales of calm. Sylvia -- yes, pilates is on the list, but not sure it will bring me calm! Gail - yep, that's what I've been saying, too, all along. Trying to turn over a new leaf, so far, it's feeling pretty good!

HILARY KAYE
