

There is nowhere to go but within

Burlington Boho, August 2016

Practicing yoga has been a constant for me over the past 10 years. It has grounded me and helped me stay present and have the courage to breath into and through challenging times. While the spaces, teachers, mats, and pants have changed over the years, my need for the practice hasn't. There have been days when I sought smiles & connection from community more than movement so I showed up. And there have been days when I needed quiet and space to just come to my breath so I showed up and relaxed in *balasana*. And there have been days when I needed a deep lateral stretch to feel more open in my body. And then there were days when I was struggling to find peace and a surrendering to *surya nurmaskar* was the best I could do.

Through all of this, I have come to understand that yoga is expression of our insides. It's not about how flexible we are. It's not if we can touch our toes. It's about how we approach this ancient, healing practice and how we allow ourselves to feel and heal through the breath and asana. It's using the practice for our own healing.

And for me, practicing yoga has been a way for me to practice non-attachment to my sometimes really intense feelings. There's a new term for sensitive souls now. It's called being a Highly Sensitive Person. I am not always sure if I like this term, but I know that throughout my life my feelings have sometimes overwhelmed me. I have struggled to separate myself from them. Practicing yoga and developing a meditation practice has helped me stay more grounded in the present moment, which may not always make my intense feelings go away, but it has slowly helped me distance myself from them.

This summer has been a time of heat movement & I have felt the impulse to "do" more & move forward and create a positive change. However, lately I am noticing that instead of doing so much and trying to get somewhere, I actually need to slow down and practice being. Instead of frantically try to move forward with career goals, I need to find ways to soothe & pacify. Instead of vigorous movement, I am craving slower and more restorative practices.

To give ourselves the time and space to slow down is a real gift. Especially in this digital world where everything happens so fast and is so immediate. Maybe in the heat of summer we can soften from doing so much and expecting the immediate result. Maybe there doesn't always have to be a goal or a destination. Maybe we can simply honor what we need from the inside and understand that sometimes there is no where to go but to listen to ourselves and to breath deeply.