

## STREET YOGA

Word of mouth spread quickly about Street Yoga and with that our participation of Yogis attending Friday evening class grew in popularity and participants. One of the participating yogis was a local public radio ( WFIU - Indiana University ) host DJ who hosts a regular Friday evening radio show known as “Soul Kitchen” . He began announcing during his show the details of attending Street Yoga during his broadcast. We began to have an increase in participating yogis on the street! We had a local Btown Instagram posting that also generated interest and inquiry along with printed posters that were circulated and posted widely in our neighborhood and around town.

The best story about the printed posters evolved from permission when the neighborhood coffee shop known as SOMA posted the printed poster to the back of the unisex restroom in the store. Folks who came to practice were greeted and often asked, “How did you hear or find our about Street Yoga?”. The best response often heard was “I about it from a poster on the back of the restroom door at SOMA”.

A yogi, Kristen Varella wrote these words sharing her experience of yoga during the summer.

In March of 2020 my yoga practice at a local studio abruptly ended. I had been a frequent participant in the space and valued the community that rolled out their mats nearly as much as the the practice. Due to the pandemic I transitioned to an at-home yoga practice for the first time. My solo practice evolved over the pandemic year growing okay with a slower pace and more mindfulness.

When I first learned of Street Yoga in early May I was thrilled to enter into a safe outdoor space and join with others. While both of these were a gift to to me, perhaps what was more poignant was the space that I cleared each Friday night to show up, and the learning of Iyengar Yoga. In that first yoga session I learned that the practice was free open to all and teachers were paid fairly through a grant from the Iyengar Yoga Association of the Midwest. Each week as more people gathered and the welcoming community grew, we learned the teachings of B.K.S. Iyengar and were led by skilled yoga teachers. I was then able to take back this experience and weave it into my weekly personal practice, being mindful of my alignment and incorporating poses we had practiced together.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to grow in my understanding of Iyengar Yoga, and the witnessing of an Indiana summer unfold before me each week. Many thanks to the Iyengar Yoga Association of the Midwest for the grant that allowed a diverse group of individuals to grow into a community, witness the changing of season, and develop a deeper yoga practice. - Kristen Varella







As Kristen so beautifully wrote , “I am grateful to have had the opportunity to grow in my understanding of Iyengar Yoga and the witnessing of an Indiana summer unfold before me each week.”

Indeed the summer unfolded well and it is in abiding gratitude to the IYAMW Grant and Scholarship Committee grant support money that launched Street Yoga into a successful yoga project that gave to our Bloomington, Indiana yoga community.

Tony Hirsch

