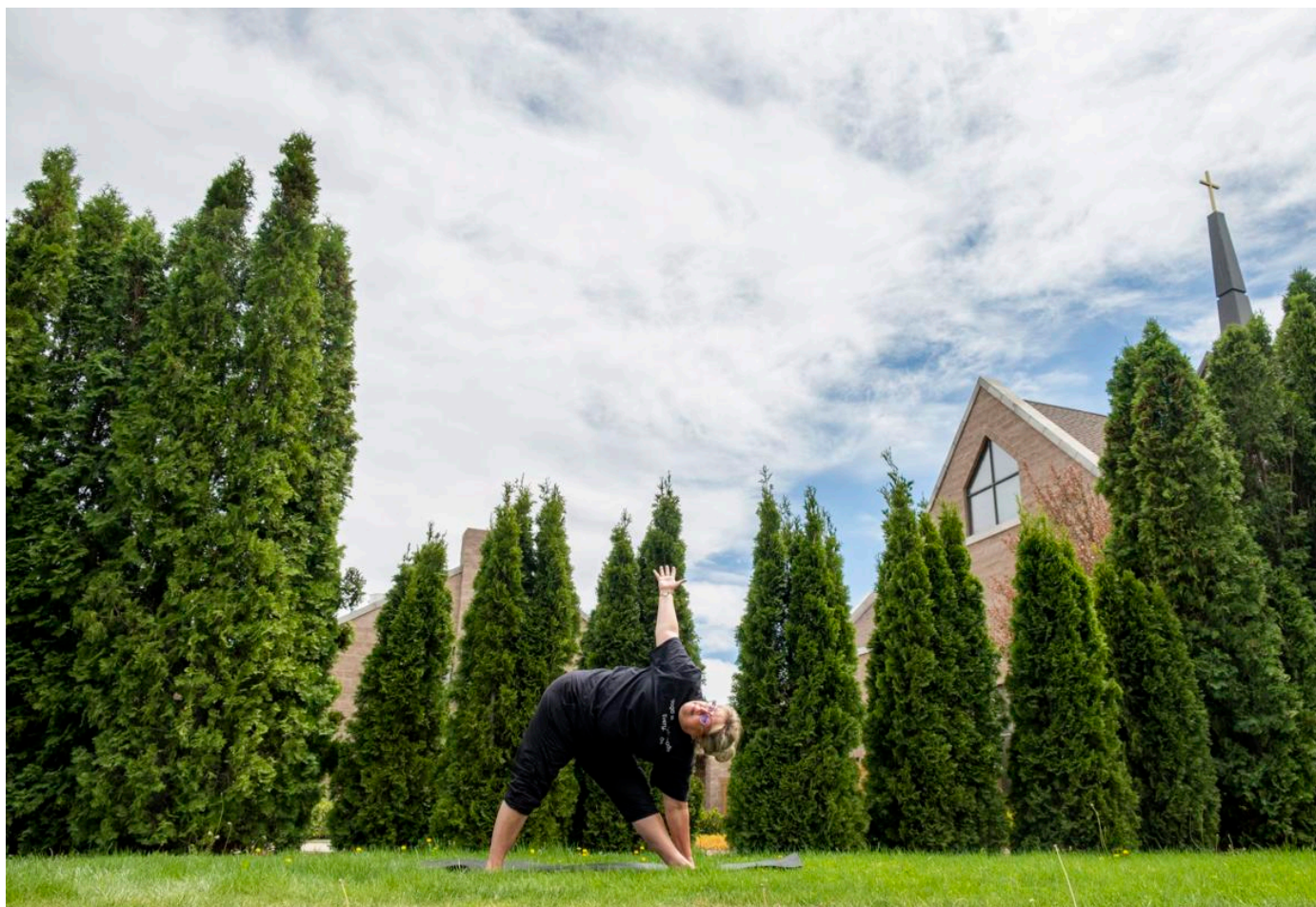

https://magicvalley.com/outdoors/this-yogi-says-even-you-can-do-yoga/article_a3d8a3e9-2340-530f-8889-4340a95da426.html

ALERT**FEATURED**

This yogi says even you can do yoga

Jonathan Ingraham

May 27, 2021



Yoga instructor Amy Toft poses during a short vinyasa session on the north lawn of the Ascension Episcopal Church Wednesday, May 19, 2021, in Twin Falls. Toft is leading the organization of Idaho Yoga Week in the Magic Valley, slated to run from June 3 to 9 at various locations around Twin Falls and Jerome.

JONATHAN INGRAHAM, TIMES-NEWS

Jonathan Ingraham

TWIN FALLS — Yogi Amy Toft's motto is yoga is for everybody. Every. Body.

“Many times people are really surprised what year a yoga teacher I am because everyone in their head thinks you have to be tiny to do or to teach yoga. I love it. I love how I feel,” Toft said. “I like teaching people like me that aren't like 20-years-old, super thin, put their legs over their head. I really believe yoga is for all people.”

Yoga can make one physically stronger and more flexible, it helps the brain, and helps you be calm, Toft said, “And I think it should be available to everyone and people don't realize it is.”

Toft started practicing yoga 15 to 20 years ago with Morgan Jenö in Twin Falls. But Toft didn't really become dedicated to it until six or seven years ago.

“When I first took the training, I thought, I just wanted to get better at yoga, but then I realized I really like teaching,” she said.

Two years ago Toft completed her 200-hour training at Hive Hot Yoga. During the pandemic, she completed her 500-hour training in Boston with Jacqui Bonwell.

Toft is a Register Yoga Teacher 500 (RYT-500) and has taught more than 500 hours of classes. She teaches several other classes including outdoor yoga, chair yoga and workshops.



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“I did a Dhali Parton workshop where we cleansed our shakras and we learned Dhali wisdom, so it was called ‘Find Your Inner Dhali’,” Toft said.

Idaho Yoga Week started in Boise and is an opportunity for people who have never tried yoga to try it for free.

Idaho Yoga Week Calendar

May 31 - June 6

Ascension Episcopal Church, Twin Falls

- Amy Toft Outdoor Yoga free classes, 6 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday. No Saturday class during yoga week.

Jerome Rec Center, Jerome

- All yoga classes are free 8:30 to 9:45 a.m., Tuesday and Thursday with Suelin Buhidar.

Xcrossways Fitness, Twin Falls

- All yoga classes are free. Chair Yoga, 11 a.m. Wednesday, 10 a.m. Friday. Gentle Yoga, 12:15 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, 5:30 p.m. Wednesday.

Gemstone Climbing, Twin Falls

- Free drop in yoga all week
- Slow Flow Yoga, 6 p.m., Sunday
- Gentle Yoga, 9 a.m., Monday
- Hot Flow Yoga, 6 p.m., Monday
- Power Yoga, 6 a.m., Tuesday
- Warm Strength, 7 p.m., Tuesday
- Gentle Yoga, 9 a.m., Wednesday
- Hot Flow Yoga, 6 p.m., Wednesday
- Warm Stretch & Flow, 7 p.m., Thursday
- Slow Flow Yoga, 9 a.m., Friday

Thomsen Park, Twin Falls

- Drop in and out anytime. Bring your own mat or towel. Drawing for a prize after each class.

- **Saturday, June 5**

- 9 a.m. Whitney Hopkins from Gold's Gym, 'The Breath Changes Everything'.
- 9:30 a.m. Sami Ashenbrener from Hive Hot Yoga, 'Deep Core Connection Yoga'.
- 10 a.m. Amy Toft from YMCA 'Balance Work'
- 10:30 a.m. Joybeth Stewart "Slow Flow Yoga"

- **Sunday, June 6**

- 3 p.m. Amy Toft from Shimmy Shakti "Groovy Yoga"
- 3:30 p.m. Float Magic "The Power of Breath"
- 4 p.m. Cory Bates from Sage Center on 8th "Power Flow"
- 4:30 p.m. Jenn Bates from Sage Center on 8th "Mindful Moon Salutations"
- 5 p.m. Andrea Robbins from Shimmy Shakti "Yoga Nidra"

Last year's event was canceled due to the pandemic, so Toft decided to take on organizing it this year, contacting all the studios and gyms asking if they wanted to participate.

"Some places said they wanted to be a part, but we are just going to do free classes or bring a friend for free for that week," Toft said. "Some said they would send a teacher over and we'll do these little two days for half-hour classes."

Why do yoga?

Strength, stability, balance, flexibility and the calming effects from breathing during yoga all contribute to why yoga is good for the body, Toft said.



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“Its good for your brain because you are remembering things you are doing, it gets your left brain/right brain moving, and it’s good for your spirit or your soul,” she said. “It’s also a benefit to any other exercise you are doing, whether you are a runner it helps loosen your quadriceps up (for example).”

The Twin Falls yoga community has been supportive and non-judgmental, Toft said as well. She thinks the attitudes yogis have here are pure and encouraging toward one another.

Each studio has a different style or speed of yoga as well. For example, at Hive, if you are physically inclined, and want to go hard and fast, you can, yet other places offer slower-paced sessions if that is your speed, she said.

“It’s not like I’m one true yoga (either). Other people...I always learn something new from other people’s classes,” Toft said. “I think people might learn one little different thing from me too.”
