

Profile of a Yogi:

Maureen McKain

YA-IYTA member, Nelson



Going right back, what first drew you to yoga?

As a child I took ballet lessons for seven years and from there danced in stage shows from my teens to mid 20's. I then did Jazzercise and Aerobics. When I heard my sister and mother were going to yoga classes, I decided to go to yoga as well. From my first yoga session, when I was about 30 years of age, I was hooked! Now at 65, I am teaching seven classes a week.

And when did you first become involved with YA-IYTA?

I started teaching Yoga in the early 80's and after completing Sylvia Mayne's (Savitri Devi) course (Laurel House School Of Yoga) I attended seminars and conventions with IYTA. I became a member of IYTA, then completed the IYTA TTC in 1992. I was a Tutor for TTC for 8 years and during that time was President for Waikato Branch for three years. I was dedicated!

Has any one teacher played a particularly important part in your yogic journey?

I have learned from many teachers and Swamis'. Those who have created the biggest impact over my life are, my first ever spiritual teacher, Dr. Nicky Hamid in Hamilton and in more recent years, my Guru, SriSri Ravi Shankar Guru of Love & Joy for the world. His teachings are "Art of Living" now being taught in over 150 countries and based mainly on the science of breath.

Which aspect of yoga presently interests you most?

Hatha Yoga, inclusive of science of breath & meditation. That's my life!

Do you have a favourite posture? And what about a favourite breathing technique?

Adho Mukha Svanasana / Downward dog pose. A very good weight bearing asana for strengthening the bones... Bhastrika Pranayama is a daily practise for me.

Where and when do you like best for your personal practice?

Tahuna beach in Nelson during the summer is my favourite. Also at home in my lounge, flowing yoga to music.

If you could recommend only one book about yoga, which would it be?

Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha by Swami Satyananda Saraswati.

Which of your personal qualities do you feel has been most strengthened by yoga?

Flexibility of body & mind. Acceptance.

Can you give us a favourite inspirational quote?

"Do not go where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

Finally, do you have a message you'd like to give to fellow YA-IYTA members, or any insights that you'd like to share?

I have been leading Summertime Yoga on the Beach for three years in Nelson and would love to think that this could flow on to lots of yoga on the beaches all over New Zealand, with as many teachers as possible sharing yoga with their communities. People love it!