

# LOVE YOUR BODY

Written by Dana M Layon, RYT  
President Satsang Yoga & Wellness Center

Too many times we look in the mirror and are discouraged by what we see. Our hair should be longer, our teeth whiter, our legs smaller our breasts bigger. And that's just what *I see* when *I look* in the mirror! The point is: we all do it, even yoga instructors.

In our society, the media drives what we are supposed to look like. Thin bodies, flawless skin, shiny hair but they don't ask us how we feel on the inside. Do any of us know? When was the last time *you* looked in the mirror and looked past your face – inside your eyes?

The majority of people who come to Satsang Yoga don't have perfect bodies – there is a whole range of people – big and small, young and old, fit and not so fit. They come to class with different body types and different intentions. In one class, we had a lady 30 weeks pregnant and another gal who is training for a triathlon –that's how diverse a class can be.

When I started yoga, I couldn't touch my toes, I couldn't find my breath, and I definitely couldn't do any of the poses I do now. From all the cardio and weight training I had done over the years, my muscles were strong but tight and it was difficult to take long, deep breaths. Savasana (Final Relaxation) was the most difficult pose – five minutes seemed to go on forever!

After I had my babies, I found myself starting from the beginning. My center was hard to find, my physical body had completely changed and my personal hurdle in each class was self-acceptance. I had to accept that my body wasn't as thin or as strong as it was before. My yoga class took work – it didn't come easily. This time, Savasana was my favorite pose because I could sit in complete silence – treasuring each last minute.

We grow into our yoga practice. Coming to class each time can bring us something different – we name our intention at the beginning of class and honor that intention throughout our practice. We eliminate judging ourselves as each day is different. We release any thought of competition or expectation of the class so we can be fully present and accepting of where we are in each pose.

When we quiet our mind during our deep breaths, we allow ourselves to look inside. Yoga teaches us to look at ourselves from the inside out. What inspires us; what makes us happy; what humbles us. It also teaches us self-acceptance.

Yoga is not a destination to the perfect body it's a journey of self-awareness and acceptance – being content with where we are right now in our bodies and in our life.

Satsang Yoga offers yoga classes for beginners, intermediate practitioners and a multitude of “special interest clients”. Please see [www.satsangyoga.net](http://www.satsangyoga.net) or call 360-604-YOGA for more information about a class that will suit your needs.

Dana Layon is President of Satsang Yoga Studio. She is a Registered Yoga Teacher through the Yoga Alliance, member of the International Association of Yoga Therapists, Women Entrepreneurs Organization of Washington, Co-founder of Natural Approach to Parenting and Creator of the Prenatal Yoga Program at SW Washington Medical Center.

