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# Get Fit With Yoga!

*By Winnie McCroy*



## **Longtime yoga instructor Tamí Jacobs**

first started doing yoga when she was very young, to deal with a diagnosis of ADHD. She began training as a teacher in 2004 and has taught yoga for almost 20 years. In addition to her bodywork and massage, Jacobs is available for private yoga lessons in Baltimore.

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New Year, New Yoga | Get Fit with Yoga feat. Tamí Jacobs - Queerful



**Winnie McCroy:** Hi, this is Queerful Editor-in-Chief Winnie McCroy here with yoga

instructor Tamí Jacobs of Jacobs Yoga. We're here to talk about how yoga can help you meet your New Year's Resolution of getting in shape. Hi, Tamí!

**Tamí Jacobs:** Hi Winnie, how are you?

**WM:** I'm doing great! Let's talk a little bit first about yoga. What are some of the basic types? And what kinds of yoga do you like to teach, and to do?

**TJ:** There's so many different types. My personal yoga was through Ashtanga yoga, and there is Vinyasa, which I studied for many years. They're all styles of Hatha yoga, which is the main form. And right now I study Katonah yoga, which I've been studying for about six years now.

**WM:** Wow. And how did you first get into yoga?

**TJ:** I first got into yoga through a girlfriend who dragged me to a class. And I wasn't really interested at all at the time. But once I got there and I realized that I could focus for the first time in my entire life, I was hooked and I started to take classes. Within a year, I took my first teacher training and that was in 2004.

**WM:** So where has your journey taken you since then?

**TJ:** Oh, boy. Well, I did my first 200 hours in 2004, and then moved to New York and probably did my 500 hour [teaching certification] in 2007, I believe. And that was all under the umbrella of Vinyasa Yoga in Baltimore. And it wasn't until two years after I finished my 200 hours that I started to teach. And I'm also a bodyworker. I'm a massage therapist in the bodywork tradition, so I was always able to do both of those things so that I wasn't getting burnt out. I think that a lot of yoga teachers are teaching too often, and get burned out.

**WM:** That's really insightful. What are some of the things that you like about yoga? What keeps bringing you back to your practice?

**TJ:** For me, it's medicinal and it makes me feel like I come back to myself and I become my best self. You know, it gets rid of all the other distractions, and gives me the tools to focus and to make my body function in the ways that it functions best.





**WM:** I think when you said medicinal that really resonated with me because I know a lot of people turn to yoga to help improve their physical health. Can you tell just a few of the ways that regular yoga practice can make your body healthier and stronger?

**TJ:** Sure! It helps to increase strength and flexibility and lowers your blood pressure. And it helps reduce inflammation. There's so many benefits! And I truly believe that that your yoga practice, you can use it for whatever it is that you're looking for. So, if you're looking for something to help you lose weight or if you're looking for something to help you get stronger, if you're looking for something to help you with stress and anxiety; for all of those things, yoga is there for you.

**WM:** That's wonderful. And I know a lot of people also turn to the meditative side of yoga to help with their mental health and general well-being.

**TJ:** Big time.

**WM:** Have you found that in yourself and in your students?

**TJ:** Yeah, I mean that I think that's why I continue to teach, because I not only seen my own transformation but watching people come into the room for the first time and watching them become their best selves and seeing their lives change and transform—it's really quite beautiful.

**WM:** Even after the first time? I think people want to know how much yoga do you need to do to begin to see changes in your body and in your mind?

**TJ:** I think you see it right away. When you're ready for, you'll see it.

**WM:** That's great. And if you just do 15 minutes a day, say, is that enough yoga to start seeing a change before too long?

**TJ:** Absolutely! Absolutely, you know, prop up your seat, sit up nice and tall, bring your attention to your breathing, and make sure that you're in the right alignment so that you can breathe fully, absolutely. There's nothing like it.

**WM:** That is so great. It seems like yoga has a really great short-term payoff, but I know a lot of people talk about the long-term benefits of a daily yoga practice. As somebody who has been doing yoga for two decades now, can you tell people a little about bit about what the long-term benefits are?

**TJ:** I think that the biggest thing is that it has the power to make you more powerful. Like you get to be your best self and I think that it allows you to experience more joy and less sorrow. If you continue to practice anything that brings you joy like this, there's no other choice. You just experience joy, and then you get that full joy out into the world.





A person is performing a handstand on a light-colored, textured rock surface. They are wearing a blue sports top and dark shorts. Their legs are straight and pointing upwards, while their arms are extended downwards to support their weight. The background shows more of the rocky terrain under bright, natural light.

**What is your favorite yoga position? Handstand. I love to be upside down.**

**WM:** That's fantastic. Now as we wrap up our interview here, Tamí, I want to ask you just a fun question. My favorite yoga move, as you know, is Flip Dog? What is your favorite yoga position?

**TJ:** Handstand. Absolutely, without a doubt, I love to be upside down.

**WM:** That's great. Do you do anything fancy when you're upside down?

**TJ:** I try not to fall down.

**WM:** Oh my gosh. Well, that's fantastic. I love the joy that you're bringing to the audience here. And I hope that they can grab some of this good stuff that yoga brings and bring it into their life in the new year. As we say goodbye, I want you to tell people how they can connect with you. If they're in the Baltimore area, perhaps private classes. How can they reach out and touch you?

**TJ:** They could find me on Instagram or any other social media on Jacobs Yoga. And I teach at Guardian, which is where I am now, which is a wonderful nonprofit jiu-jitsu studio and then this is the upstairs, which is just for yoga. And I'm also at a studio called Soulage, which is in Mount Vernon in Baltimore. And yeah. Reach out!

**WM:** Fantastic. Winnie McCroy here with Tamí Jacobs. Try yoga for your New Year's Resolution, everybody, and get fit and happy. Thanks, Tamí, for that joyful energy.

**TJ:** Thank you, Winnie. Thank you.

For more information, visit <https://www.instagram.com/jacobsyoga/?hl=en>



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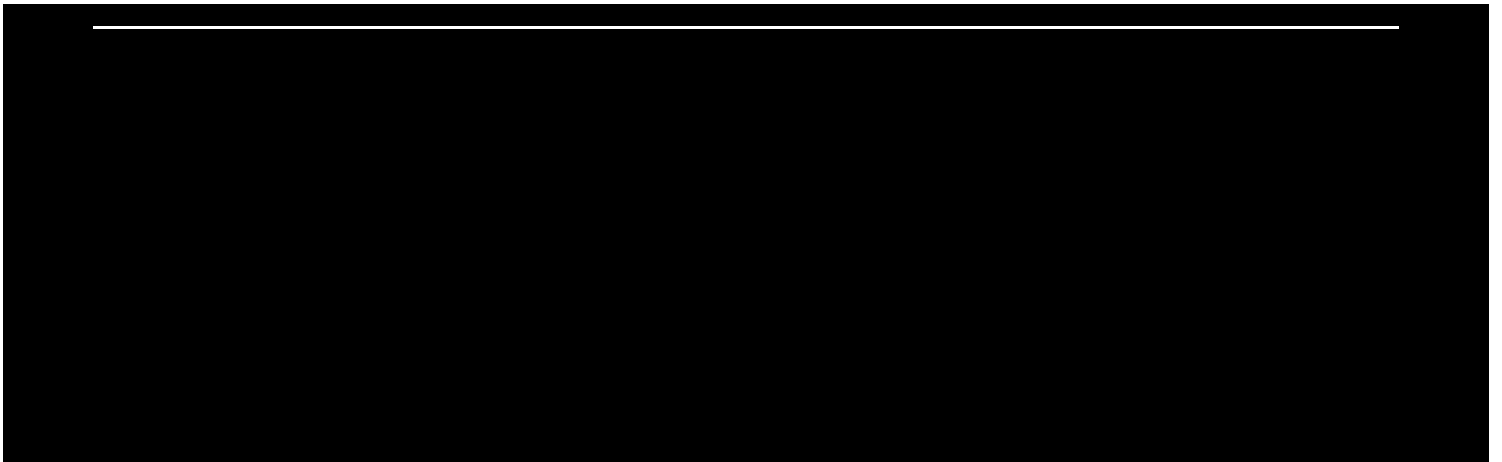
Winnie McCroy is a writer and editor with more than 25 years of experience, primarily with gay/HIV and alternative publications. Her passions include queer culture, tenants' rights, HIV and healthcare, and arts & entertainment. Her hobbies include cooking, karaoke, arts & crafts, and playing '80s-era songs on her guitar. She recently relocated to an historic home on the Jersey shore with her wife and adorable pup, Fred.

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