



Lily Hou

How Yoga Fixed Me - Haley Stomp

PART I

I was carried out of the boat, unable to look down at my damaged legs. I knew it was bad; the pain was intense, but the shock of what happened was an emotional earthquake. Ten minutes prior, I had been floating

in the lake, in awe of how I could see my hands and legs clearly under the glassy water and grateful for being in such a beautiful place. Everything about the moments before is a beautiful memory of peace. Peace about making it through seven months of 2020. Peace about spending time in northern Wisconsin with our friends and into someone else's bubble. We left our COVID cabin fever at home for a new, wonderful kind of cabin fever.

I am not an experienced water skier. Nor am I an adventurous sort when it comes to water sports. I prefer sports that require my body to move or lift things and not much else – running, volleyball, yoga, aerobics, weightlifting. I am, however, not afraid to try things and take risks. This is how I found myself water skiing for the second time in my life.

I got up on skis successfully a couple of times for a brief ride, and honestly, that was enough for me. After my second ride, I was back in the starting position. Unsure what was next as the boat crew moved around, I loosened my grip on the handle while I floated on my back, knees bent, a soft breeze on my face.

Then it happened. The boat roared forward, dragging the rope and handle between my legs at sonic speed. The handle grabbed my legs

mid-thigh. Locked into my fascia with force, I was pulled forward in the water. Within a matter of seconds, the plastic handle on the rope rolled up my legs and propelled over my knees, and the ride of my life was over. With searing pain, my imagination was running through its long list of bad outcomes. I was too scared to look at my legs.

Fast forward a week. Back home, after several days in bed with ice packs, pillows, and ibuprofen, I accepted that I would eventually recover with no physical restrictions. I walked gingerly, in pain, with every step. There was a giant abstract art installation in the form of rainbow bruises on the front and back of my legs. Rope burns were tattooed into my thighs, and divots bisected the fascia on my legs – one big dip carved into each thigh. For the most part, it looked worse than it felt.

Two different doctors assured me nothing was broken. The sports medicine doctor suggested I do yoga to help stretch and build strength in my quad muscles as part of the healing process. Little did he know that yoga would do much more than that for me. ✨

SEE PART II IN THE FEB/MAR 2026 WOW CONNECT DSM ISSUE

Lily Hou has owned Green Yoga House (greenyogahouse.com) since 2003. She began her practice in the mid-1990s and quickly discovered the transforming benefits of yoga for her rheumatoid arthritis. She has received training by some renowned yoga masters on various styles. As a certified yoga instructor, Lily is known to teach with an eclectic blend of many styles and uses her extensive knowledge of body alignments and exercise safety in designing her classes to meet individual needs. She approaches her mostly private classes with enthusiasm, compassion and respect for each client. Lily has a Bachelor's Degree in English and a Master's Degree in American Literature. She frequently speaks on yoga and wellness. She is also passionate about her fun jewelry business, "Lily Hand Made." greenyogahouse.com • 515-991-6266



Amy Davis

Let LOVE Lead the WAY

"It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood, won't you be my neighbor?" Mr. Rogers sings this tune as he enters his home from his day at the office. He removes his business jacket as he replaces it with one of his iconic sweaters. This simple, natural act lets the audience know that he is ready to take them on a journey of learning and discovery.

Being a therapist is removing my own personal jacket, replacing it with my clients as we walk an hour long journey of self-discovery, pain, insight, and reflection. I leave my story at the door, with all of the lessons I have learned as gifts of wisdom that are not spoken, but mirrored back to my clients as a familiarity in my eyes. My office is a sacred space, oftentimes the first place many clients have felt safe enough to share something that may have been weighing them down for decades. I help them remember who they are, as they take their heavy jackets of protection off, allowing their vulnerability to show me their scars of hurt and pain. I too, have many scars from hurt and pain. They do not know this, as this is their time to feel seen and heard, not mine. My insight, optimism, and genuine concern for them is not from a place of naivety, rather deep, immense longing for connection. As I help them let go of what is not theirs and reclaim what is, I in turn discover more of myself. What my clients may not know is that although I am a guide for their healing, with each conversation, I am also healing. I too have a longing in my heart and soul to be seen, heard, understood and felt. I recognize their pain as my own. We are all humans trying to get through this life as unscathed as possible. In order to attain peace, we must remove the masks we hide behind to show others that we are not okay. Healing means we must be truthful with not only ourselves, but those around us. True freedom is authenticity and awareness that life is painfully beautiful.

Sometimes life sucks, it's hard to navigate, and we need help. THIS is the gift of therapy.

As I hold the pain of losing my mom, I in turn, carry the wisdom of appreciating beauty every moment I can. I promised her that day that I would, "do something with her dying by suicide, that she didn't die for nothing". I needed to understand, know, search for clues and find answers. In turn, I found myself. Part of me also died with her the night she took her life. The part that held the fear of showing who I am to the world. Being a therapist is more than a job to me, it is a gift I share from my heart, a heart that did not harden with life, but rather opened up to the possibility of letting love lead the way. ✨

Let's Connect!

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Amy Davis, MSW, LISW

Amy is a mom, wife, Clinical Social Worker, advocate for mental health, public speaker, and soon to be published author. Since losing her mom to suicide in late 2011, Amy began her journey of healing with the understanding that it was up to her to heal and change generational wounds. This meant seven years of advanced education as a single mom, showing herself, and her daughters, that they could do anything they set their hearts and minds to. Amy now is married and has a beautiful blended family with four amazing children, who are all on their own path of self-discovery.

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