

## Airport Yoga Lady

On that cold, dreary early morning, there she was, lime green sports bra and black yoga crops at Gate 10 of the Mpls airport. In a waiting area filling up with travelers, she stood out.....mainly because she was standing on her head, , her lean, long body straight as a board, toes pointed upward, towards the sky silhouetted against the floor to ceiling window, with its backdrop of our awaiting plane.

She must have known she was going to have time to practice so deliberately worn her yoga clothes. How could she practice this so personal craft while facing a waiting area of strangers? Was she in the midst of a multi-city journey and had only this opportunity to stretch, breathe and seek her center?

Lately I've been on a journey of my own, one not involving planes, but the exploration of my own body's inner balance and its powerful, healthy response to yoga and energy healing. In my suitcase was a how-to practice yoga book along with clipped articles on 15-minute stretching, mindful breathing. At this very beginning of my learning of mountain, cobbler and warrior poses, my practice is done either in solitude or with a group of five fellow energy travelers at a studio in town. Airport Yoga Lady and I are poles apart in how we practice these solitary mind/body/spirit exercises.

Later, after I had arrived myself at a place that is sunny and warm with its own healing energy I opened my how-to yoga book and thought of that slender body posed, so still and straight against those windows. I admired her skill because she obviously was no novice. She was advanced while I only a beginner. And while we may have both been on similar paths, an enormous difference in spirit also exists there. it's not just my clumsy body that would prevent me from practicing at an airport gate. It would take a foreign-to-me inner confidence to deliberately pursue this ancient, solo craft in the midst of a crowd of strangers. That is a confidence that will always be elusive to me.

Perhaps it was our long, igloo producing winter that had finally driven her to book a flight to Phoenix to continue her yoga studies and she just couldn't wait. She was starting her journey early and was at the stage of her practice where location didn't matter. Mindfully Breathe in. Breathe out. Location doesn't matter when your spirit is free.

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