

Yoga is for Everyone

Second in a series on Holistic Health

Susan Sluk, who owns and operates **Eat. Drink. Om... Yoga Café** in on Gay Street in West Chester, believes in yoga for all ages and abilities. Having taught various types of yoga for the past 14 years, Sluk, pictured to the right, has instructed yoga classes for mothers and infants, veterans, people who use wheelchairs or have other disabilities, and people in recovery, among others.



Yoga, Sluk says, is defined by the person practicing it. "It's not just here on the mat. It's past the poses," she said. "I built my studio around meeting the needs of people who were being missed." She illustrates the point when she explains how she found a special yoga mat for a blind client or talks about a client who has autism. "The program is customized for the individual," Sluk said.

The ancient practice of using breathing, exercise and meditation to improve mind, body and spirit, yoga has proven health benefits, including reducing stress and anxiety. Studies have also shown connections between yoga practice and improved posture, flexibility, blood flow and bone health, among other benefits. Very young children have shown to improve self-regulation, anger management, calm and focus when practicing yoga.

Sluk has instructed classes for new moms with infants as young as 4-5 weeks old, as well as toddler classes. She says the practice helps children to react inwardly versus acting out.

In addition to her expertise in working with people who have special needs, Sluk says the two instructors who also teach at her studio have extra knowledge to help clients. One has worked with people who have traumatic brain injury and is certified in Mental Health First Aid.

"Yoga truly is for everyone, and anyone can benefit from the practice," Sluk said.

For more information about Eat. Drink. Om... Yoga Café, visit the website at <https://www.eatdrinkom.com/>.