

MY STORY
JENNIFER YUHAS


THIS WAS NO MISTAKE



Often referred to as the 'mistake on the lake,' Cleveland, Ohio is realising a revitalisation that is far-removed from its rust-belt roots. Cleveland's modern-day vibrancy is rich in entrepreneurial spirit, dripping with creativity and bountiful in innovation. Signs of renewal are blossoming at every turn from the newly created brewery District in Ohio City, to the sleek architecture of downtown's newest skyscraper to the pop-up shops, farmer's markets and neighbourhood festivals throughout the year. Why? Because Clevelanders, well, we believe in CLE and the old-school doubt-mentality has been replaced with possibility.

For those of us with a regular yoga practice, we know the benefits are unmatched. We realise that doubt loses its grip and possibility surges through our blood when we combine breath and movement. Cleveland's Inner Bliss Yoga Studio owner, Tammy Lyons encourages students to "lift up [their] neighbour, beyond doubt, beyond fear, [to] breathe in [and] go up." And up is exactly where Cleveland is headed. Despite years of corrupt county government, stagnation in urban development and doubt that Cleveland could ever emerge from its image of 'the mistake on the lake,' growth in downtown dwelling has increased to a remarkable 95% occupancy rate and the enthusiasm for the birthplace of rock 'n roll continues evolve.

In January of 2013, two yoga teachers had a conversation in passing: "Wouldn't it be amazing if...?" and amazing is exactly what happened. Over the course of the next six months, this flicker of 'what if' flourished in ways one could never have imagined.



Collective consciousness or the power of satsang, in Indian philosophy, refers to the gathering of shared beliefs and attitudes that can operate as a unifying force within community. According to the Global Consciousness Project, "large-scale group consciousness has effects in the physical world. Knowing this, we can intentionally work toward a brighter, more conscious future." Raising awareness, generating energy and cultivating community support were the simple intentions behind a tiny idea that was nourished with love, attention and dedication.

That following August 2013 on a warm summer evening, 1,400 yogis congregated on the plaza of the world-famous Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio to raise the vibration around our great city, a city on the cusp of tremendous renewal. Wind in their hair, goose bumps on their skin, and love in their hearts, the believe in CLE event marked Cleveland's largest outdoor yoga practice in its history.

Hosted by Inner Bliss Yoga Studio, Cleveland's local lululemon Athletica and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, believe in CLE was a meaningful evening of yoga, education, music, dancing and connection all with the simple intention to accelerate the buzzing revolution in our city. In addition to an empowering yoga practice, Congressman Tim Ryan addressed the group on the potential of mindfulness, Cleveland Cavaliers Head Strength Coach, Derek Millender discussed the benefits of yoga in professional athletics, and the DJ jammed all night as yogis danced in celebration of our beautiful city.

Placing their hands at their hearts in recognition of all that they love and all that they live for, corporate executives to hipsters to full-time mommas and even police officers chanted the sound of Om, connected their breath with their movement and churned the energy all in support for a doubt-free Cleveland as the sun set along Lake Erie.

Anchored in yoga and fuelled by the power of collective energy, believe in CLE is a movement taking shape. Inner Bliss Yoga Studio is hosting its second event in the winter of 2014 at the distinguished Cleveland Museum of Art.

WRITTEN BY

JENNIFER YUHAS

E-RYT 200 & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, INNER BLISS YOGA STUDIO

I TOOK MY VERY FIRST YOGA CLASS IN 1999 IN A YMCA. I NOW TEACH YOGA FULL-TIME IN CLEVELAND, OHIO. I AM HONOURED AND GRATEFUL THAT I STUDY WITH EXTRAORDINARY TEACHERS YET THE MOST EXCEPTIONAL TEACHER CONTINUES TO BE LIFE ITSELF. FOR MORE INFO, VISIT INNERBLISSYOGASTUDIO.COM

Photography © Jeff Schultes