



Yoga instructor Todd Dybul and student Jennifer Cape in one of the more classic positions, meditate at the end of the class.

Photos by Mark Justensen

## 'Physical' fitness

*Dybul believes power yoga benefits men, women of all ages*

By Dan Davidson  
News Graphic Correspondent

Many American men evidently picture a yoga class as a circle of post-partum women sitting cross-legged with their eyes closed and fingertips gathered in a bunch. At any rate, yoga does not rank high on the male activity list.

But it should, says Todd Dybul, area yoga instructor who thinks the version of yoga he offers presents challenge enough for even the fittest of athletes of either sex.

It's called power yoga and is much like the common Vinyasa yoga, which Dybul also teaches, in that it emphasizes a series of poses and breathing techniques. It differs in that it moves along much more crisply and requires (at an more advanced level) greater effort.

"As the name suggests, the emphasis is on the physical," said Dybul, who offers classes in power or Vinyasa yoga at YogaOne in Cedarburg, Form and Fitness in Grafton and Elite Fitness and Racquet Club in Mequon. "It attracts people who need a physical challenge."

This is not to suggest that it is geared only to men. In fact, Dybul's students are mostly women and not all of them - men or women - are in real good shape when they start the program. So the classes are geared to what the students can comfortably do.

"At one time guys would never be caught dead doing it," Dybul said. "Today, power yoga attracts athletic females first, then interested women, then athletic men and finally just interested men. But more and more men are getting it. Most men have back pain."

Yoga as it is practiced in the United States is usually far different from that found in India, said Dybul. Practitioners here may point to a spiritual component and incorporate a bit of breathing exercise during the yoga session, but it is often a far cry from the realization, through direct experience, of the pre-existing union between Atman and Brahman, which may still be the goal for many Indians.

Yoga here is mostly Americanized and power yoga

underscores the American brand even more, Dybul said. "Power yoga has been around since the '80s," he said. "It takes a 5000 year tradition and puts it into the mainstream."

Dybul, 42, said he has been a student of eastern philosophy and has studied several of the eastern martial arts, including Karate, Tai Chi and Tae Kwon Do, advancing at one point to blue belt.

Some years ago he said he hurt his back, tried yoga for succor and became hooked. About three years ago, he began to instruct.

His tall body is more flexible than that of most American martial practitioners. He manner is calm and his voice soft. He may begin his class with a bit of Pranayama, or breathing exercises, glide into a bit of Tai Chi and then go through the Sun Salutations, or yoga postures.

"Then, at the end of class, there may be a period of meditation, during which we bring back the emphasis on breathing and being aware of how you are breathing." Most of the students end in a good sweat, he said.

Judy Schelling, who attends sessions at Elite Fitness, said, "I do yoga, take Pilates, spinning and I walk, and if I could do only one thing, it would be yoga. The energy, the flexibility and the focus it provides allow me to face challenges more easily in everyday life."

Another student, Dave Nelsen, said he takes the class mostly for strength and flexibility.

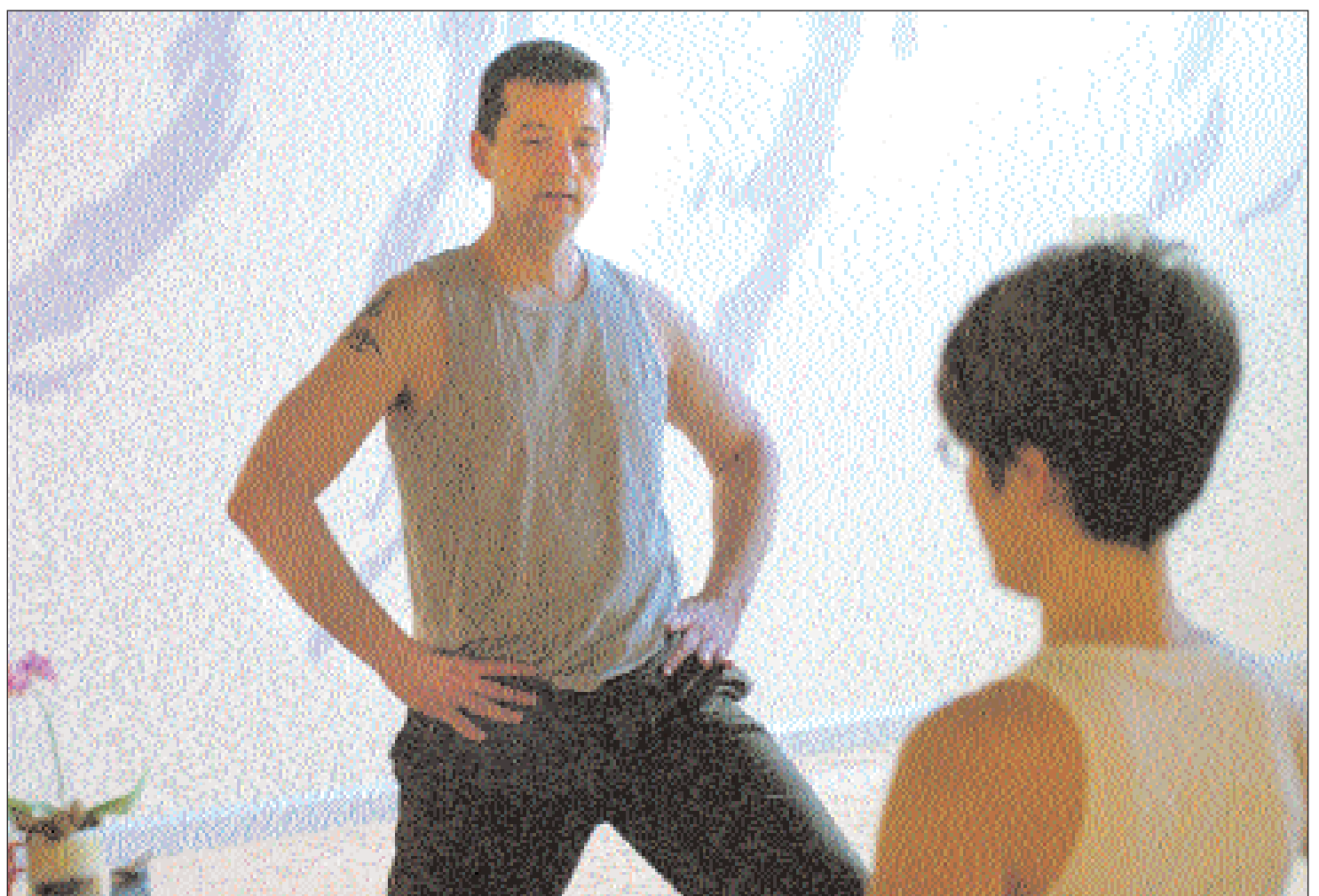
"My back hurts less all the time," said Nelsen, who has been taking the class with Dybul for six weeks but has been doing yoga on and off for several years.

Dybul works in marketing at M&I Wealth Management in Milwaukee and also instructs yoga there. Besides increasing his student enrollment at his three other venues, he said he hopes to expand into the corporate world and help those overly stressed executives detach from their worries and let their cares, like leaves on a slow moving river, float by and out of sight without a second thought being given.

The cost is reasonable: \$10 for one session at YogaOne. With a membership at Elite Fitness and Form and Fitness, classes are free.



Dybul and student Cape strike a yoga posture while moving through one of the morning sessions at YogaOne Studio in Cedarburg.



Above: Instructor Dybul demonstrates a stretching position. Left: Dybul works with student Cape, correcting her position in one of the many exercises.