

## 05 Yogatime=Playtime

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by College Kid Yoga in benefits of yoga, Charm City Yoga, Madonna, vinyasa, Yoga, yoga philosophy, yoga pose

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On Saturday afternoon, I attended a steamy **vinyasa** class at **Charm City Yoga**. Not only did I revel in the intense heat of the room, but I also reaped amazing benefits from my instructor's directive, yet playful teaching style.

Melisa challenged us to get uncomfortable throughout class, meaning that she wanted us to twist deeper, bend lower, and open wider in every pose. She tasked us with pushing ourselves not to the point of pain, but until we found our "edge," our physical and mental limit. For example, in **Warrior II**, Melisa challenged us to bend and open our front knees until our thighs intensely burned, and to sit in this feeling of discomfort.

In a way, these moments are actually comforting, as they remind us that everything is temporary. We all experience periods of stress, anxiety, sadness, and other kinds of discomfort in our lives, just like experiencing the burning sensation in our thighs in Warrior II. However, we do not have to suffer from this discomfort. If we remember that these moments will pass, just like when we finally release Warrior II and the burning immediately disappears, then we can maintain a sense of peace and calm at all times.

On a lighter note, Melisa also allotted a significant amount of time to play in class. She demonstrated several arm balances, headstands, and handstands that we could attempt for ourselves. Rarely do I take these poses in my own practice, so trying a headstand and handstand at first intimidated me. However, I tried to view this portion of class with a playful, childlike mind. I attempted these poses with a sense of humor. I could barely figure out how to frame my head in a headstand, so when I fell out of the pose, I laughed to myself and tried again. I also enlisted Melisa's help, and while I felt slightly self-conscious about displaying my lack of ability to her, I felt proud that I took a risk in that moment and asked for guidance with a pose that scared me. The playfulness continued when I attempted a handstand (against a wall, of course). I focused on the cool, weird feeling of planting my feet on the wall and my hands on the floor. I felt like I took full advantage of the time Melisa gave us to truly *practice* yoga. And I had fun.

Me having fun with the yoga:



Madonna having fun with the yoga:

