

# USE IT OR LOSE IT

by Lucy Wilson

*Eagle of Pineapple Yoga KAUA`I celebrates 20 years of daily 'Mysore Style' Ashtanga Yoga practice with his students on the North Shore.*



(Eagle Kilauea, Kaua`i)



(PineappleYoga.com Kilauea, Kaua`i 2001-2021)

Pineapple Yoga KAUA`I is a traditional 'Mysore Style' Ashtanga Yoga school, meaning each student is self-paced and taught individually to follow the authentic sequencing from the Ashtanga Yoga method (beginner to advanced) with postures prescribed slowly, each building on the next. Eagle, Authorized instructor and former professional athlete, teaches his students the importance of the foundations of yoga as they are designed to promote longevity and reduce mental stress. This allows constant refinement of the breath and structural alignment.

"I have had about ten sprained ankles, a torn MCL, two tibia dislocations, years of sciatica, and a right rotator cuff shoulder tear... Every time I have these injuries, I turn to my Ashtanga Yoga practice to help me regain strength and heal. I play sports (surfing, soccer, snowboarding) intensely and my profession is demanding on my body. Ashtanga Yoga helps heal all my injuries, and has lessened the severity of new injuries by making me stronger and more flexible. Ashtanga Yoga has helped the most with my sciatica — getting rid of it completely." - Chef Leo Antunez



Photos left to right: (Eagle backbending student Jessica Murray) // (Parampara - Ashtanga Yoga lineage respect) // (Ashtanga Yoga "Mysore Style" practice a Pineapple Yoga on North Shore)

The first foundation in the Ashtanga Yoga practice is the focus on the the breath (prana). In life, we forget to breathe. Breathing is our most amazing gift as it helps us move through resistance and keeps us fluid. With our breath, we can allow a decompression of mental stress, body and nervous system. Local artist, Shastin Grace explains, "[This practice] works much deeper than just the physical aspect. I think differently, I have learned to take better care of myself — to be more present in my life. I notice and appreciate the natural beauty around me. I am aware of and grateful for my breath. I never used to really notice those things. Most of the time all I felt was pain and all I thought about was how to escape it. In my day-to-day activities, I feel more calm and at ease. Physical pain is no longer stopping me from doing the things I enjoy."

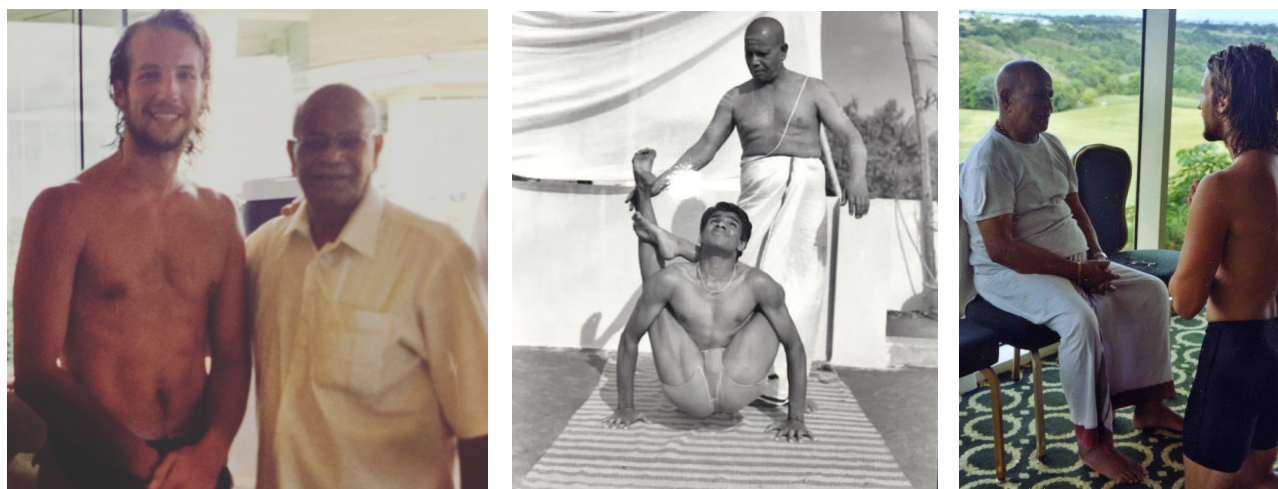


(Eagle practicing at Secret Beach Kilauea, Kaua`i )

Prior to teaching Ashtanga Yoga, Eagle was a professional racquetball player, competing annually in regional, national and world championship stages. After a serious car accident, Eagle was left

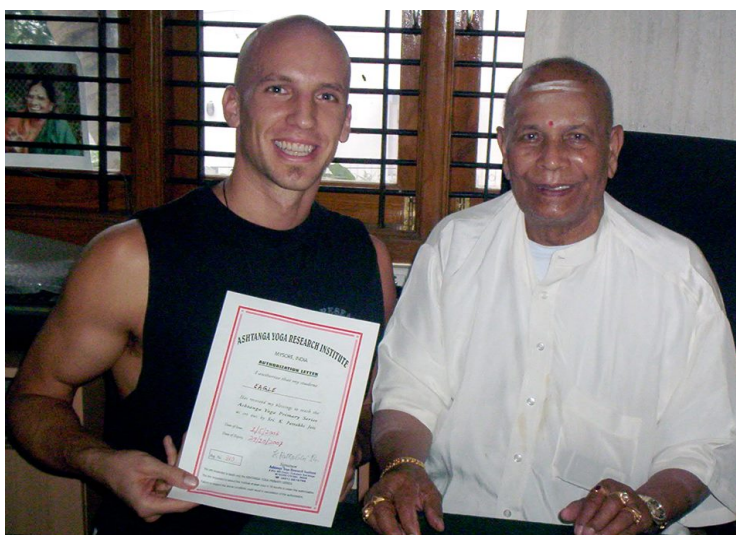


debilitated and went on to receive a 360-degree spinal fusion laminectomy surgery. Eagle turned to the practice of yoga as a way to heal his body, balance mental anguish, fully recovering and making a return to professional competition. He ultimately retired from the sport, ranked second in the nation and tenth in the world on the International Racquetball Tour. He attributed his healing to his adopted lifestyle that included yoga and a vegan diet. This healing success inspired him to seek out the most experienced masters of yoga. Eagle traveled to Mysore, India and lived there for up to 6 months a year for ten straight years to learn the traditional method of Ashtanga Yoga, passed down by the late, great lineage holder, Sri K. Pattabhi Jois. The method is now carried forward by



Photos from left to right: (Eagle & Sri K.Pattabhi Jois - Kaua'i, 2002) // (Indian Ashtanga Yoga Masters Sri K. Pattabhi Jois and his grandson Sri R. Sharath Jois - Mysore, India) // Eagle & Sri K. Pattabhi Jois - Kaua'i, 2002)

his grandson Sri R. Sharath Jois. Eagle then found his way to the Garden Island of Kaua'i [20 years ago] and now, at 48 years young, continues to share his knowledge and experience with local and international students in his Kilauea yoga shala (school). The benefits of Eagle's personal practice have continued to deliver consistent, ongoing healing, which has inspired his intention to make a one-tournament return to the US Open Racquetball Championships in two years, at the age of 50. Ashtanga Yoga develops the potential for athletes to compete, move and practice with greater efficiency, preventing bones and muscles from getting rusty. Eagle's student, Starling Faaron, has been practicing for six years now. He clearly remembers his first year not being fun at all. "I couldn't even do a basic sun salutation for the first two months, but I kept pushing myself to attend Pineapple Yoga KAUA'I because I was motivated to gain more mobility so I can surf for life."



(Eagle receiving teaching 'Authorization' from Sri K. Pattabhi Jois - Mysore, India 2006)

This practice is definitely not limited to athletes. Individuals that suffer from any mental trauma, body disfunction, dis-ease, will likely reap the benefits the practice delivers. A local school teacher, farmer, father and musician on island, Adam Harris, shares, "We are getting older every year, yet with my yoga practice I actually feel like my body and mind are getting younger. I have a range of motion and flexibility in parts of my body that I have not experienced since elementary school. The ease in my body gives me greater freedom to do anything that I want to do, from free-diving to hiking to working on the land."

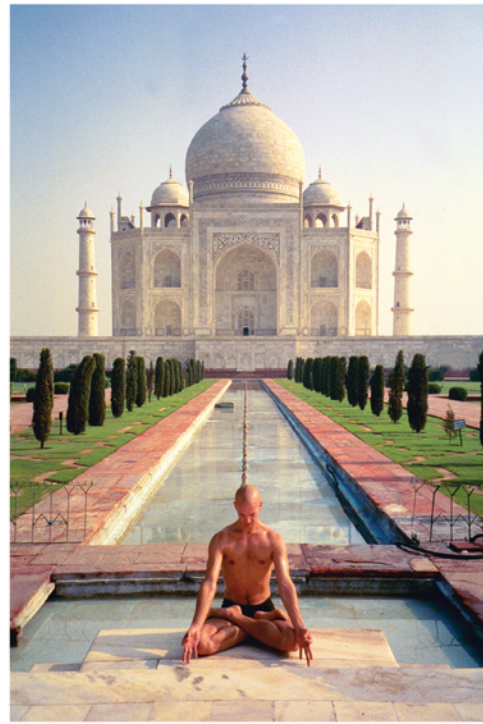
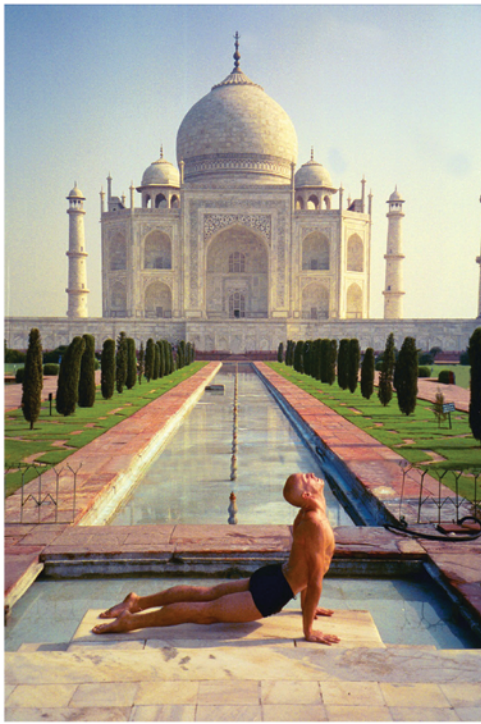


(Current Ashtanga Yoga lineage director Sri R. Sharath Jois and Eagle - Mysore, India 2009)

Eagle's teachings of Ashtanga Yoga serve as a holistic approach to health and wellbeing, but like anything, this practice requires dedication and consistency. Eagle's infamous mantra to his students is, **"Use it or lose it."** He says, **"This familiar phrase is still one of the best teachings of truth. Applicable to all areas and facets of life. Movement is life, stagnation is death. Simple, powerful and true."** Eagle is an ideal creature — very knowledgeable and totally dedicated. He has overcome the physical and mental challenges, which allow him to impart



immense compassion for his students. Eagle has a great balance between encouraging you to go further while being sensitive to the necessary sustainable techniques, which allow us to achieve the healing benefits and avoid injury.



(Eagle practicing at the Taj Mahal - Agra, India 2003)

Adam Harris says, “Years of excruciating pain from my compound scoliosis and five displaced vertebrae is what drove me to practice yoga daily. After only one year, I could feel an incredible difference in the comfort of my spine. Eagle’s way of teaching includes just as much spiritual and personal philosophy as it does physical postures and breathing. I have learned to find much greater acceptance in my own life and with the pain and stiffness I find in my body on a daily basis. Resisting the pain and the weakness in my spine is the source of so much tension. Accepting where I’m at in each moment and working with what I can, is the only way to change the present state I’m in.”

As students, we cannot expect to jump into a headstand after one week of practice. If it were that easy, you’d see everyone on the streets doing it, and dis-ease would be irrelevant. With commitment, it is possible to live in a dis-ease-free state and accomplish a healthy integration of incredible poses like Eagle’s existing students. For instance, in the fundamental standing postures, each foundational pose is integrated safely before moving on to the next pose.

A local Ayurvedic practitioner and pharmacist at the North Shore Pharmacy, Martha Harkey, a student at Pineapple Yoga KAUAI for approximately the last 16 years, practices Ashtanga Yoga daily at the age of 72. She believes yoga is critical to health, as it is much more than exercise. “It is the mental and spiritual aspect of yoga that I come to love the most. You walk out of practice and

all of the sudden, the sky is bluer and birds are singing. This practice heightens your senses and increases your awareness.” Martha goes on saying, “It’s amazing to me that something so simple can have such a profound effect. I can do things that I couldn’t do when I was 30, and I feel 29!”



Photos left to right: (Legendary Yoga masters BKS Iyengar, Sri R. Sharath Jois & Sri K. Pattabhi Jois - Mysore, India 2005) // (BKS Iyengar and Eagle - Pune, India 2003)

Incorporating Ashtanga Yoga into our lives, prevents unnecessary but seemingly normalized surgeries, benefitting all ages, whatever the present state of health may be. As a student myself, I am constantly learning patience with my body and developing omni-awareness of my breath, bhandas (internal muscular locks), and structural alignment. It is those foundations that are far more important than simply creating a particular ‘shape’ with our bodies. I was hooked the first day after learning I had been doing downward dog unconsciously and incorrectly for 10 years while participating in quicker group-led classes at westernized yoga studios.





(Ashtanga Yoga Master Sri K. Pattabhi Jois backhanding Eagle - Mysore, India 2003)

The students at Pineapple Yoga KAUA'I have experience ranging from 1 week to 20 years. Chef Leo Antunez says, "The community that Eagle works with is great. There is a diversity of backgrounds and ages that attend his class, which I love."

Artist, Shastin Grace, adds, "There is a silent camaraderie—an energy we build together in there."

When you focus on your breath, which quiets the mind, the gratitude and inspiration you develop for yourself becomes vast. Dedication, discipline and consistency hold a capacity unimaginable. A realization occurs in which health, kindness, awareness and clarity of mind reveal themselves to become the essential priorities that our society often seems to bypass. It all starts with you as an individual. You are your own healer — trust yourself. The expansion of consciousness brings peace and fulfillment.

Surfers, hikers, paddlers, chefs, landscapers, farmers, computer programmers, wellness leaders, keiki (children), mothers and fathers all participate in this daily ritual. Day after day, peace, ease and freedom become manifested.



(Eagle - Kilauea, Kaua'i)

### **Eagle concludes...**

"2001 - 2021, wow!! Lets see what the future holds. It has been a great privilege and honor to gather each morning with all of the sincere practitioners in our community over the past 20 years. Witnessing transformational Self-discovery experiences during classes, which have been



offered six days a week for 50 straight weeks each year has been packed full of truly extraordinary circumstances of deep healing. This inspiration has continued to stoke the fire and passion for my own personal practice as well as my fulfillment for sharing this sacred Ashtanga Yoga method. Respect to all the global Ashtanga Yoga instructors for maintaining the integrity of this ancient system of Self-realization from Mysore, India. Namaste to my Indian yoga gurus (teachers), my personal lifelong mentors Bill & Jeana Stanley and the entire Eagle `ohana (family). Lets keep breathing together. Practice Ashtanga Yoga... practice Aloha."



(Eagle - Moloa'a, Kaua'i)

For more information on Eagle's bio or to contact, visit [EagleYoga.com](http://EagleYoga.com)  
 Kaua'i North shore Ashtanga Yoga classes: [PineappleYoga.com](http://PineappleYoga.com)

Inhale

Exhale

# "Inquire Within"

2001-2021

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Samasthiti  
Equal  
Balance

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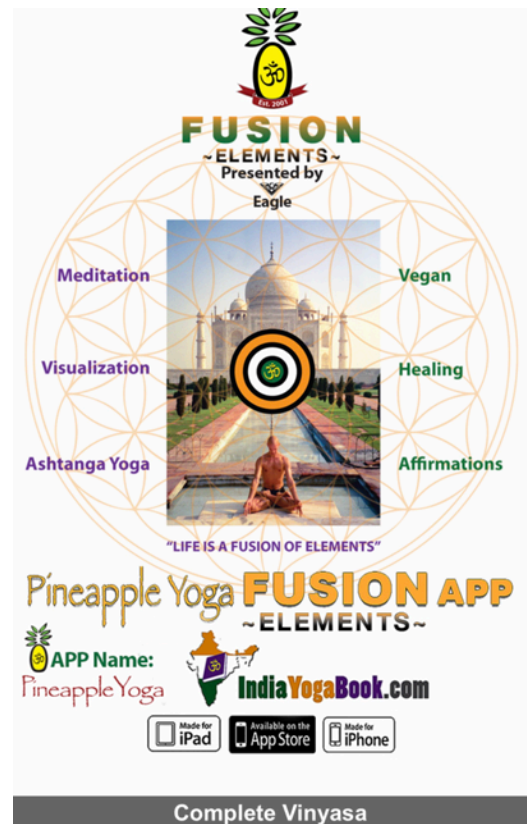
Surya Namaskara - Sun Salutation

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