

THIS IS JESSAMYN STANLEY. SHE'S 29 YEARS OLD.
WHAT DOES SHE DO?



Read on to find out... were your guesses right?

Jessamyn Stanley, 29, yogi and self-described fat femme, began practicing Yoga five years ago when she was in graduate school. As her practice developed, she documented it all—the progress, setbacks, and many barely clothed yoga poses—on Instagram, eventually amassing over 219,000 followers to her phenomenally motivational account, [@mynameisjessamyn](#).



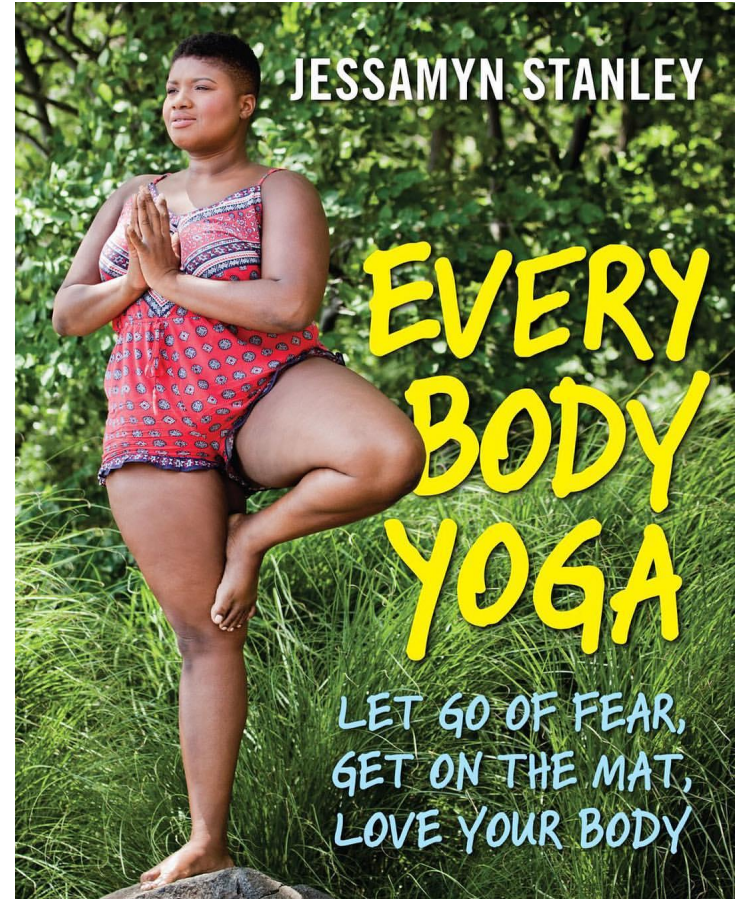


Today she is a certified yoga instructor in Durham, North Carolina. She's been profiled by numerous mainstream media outlets, including Glamour, Cosmopolitan and BuzzFeed. Every step of the way, she's remained laser-focused on the importance of body positivity, self-care, and self-love. "I am not a person society would expect to see great things from," Stanley tells SELF. "As a woman of color, you definitely grow up thinking that there are certain limitations to what you're supposed to do." Her size only further restricted her ideas of what she was capable of. "I underestimated my body for years," she says. "I always thought that because I'm fat, I'm not the tallest, I'm not the 'prettiest,' there's always going to be something wrong with me."

Stanley is the first to admit that practicing yoga didn't automatically lead to self-acceptance. "I realized when I first started that I was obsessed with the way that my practice physically looked," she says. That constant focus on her physical appearance got in the way of what Stanley now sees as the point of yoga: tapping into her body's strength. That all changed when Stanley started moving based on how she felt, rather than how she looked. That mindset has extended to the rest of her life, as well.

Adapted from

<http://www.self.com/story/jessamyn-stanley-is-changing-the-yoga-world-one-pose-at-a-time>



Discuss these questions with your partner :

- 1) How and when did Jessamyn start practising Yoga?**
- 2) Check out her instagram [@mynameisjessamyn](https://www.instagram.com/mynameisjessamyn). What is your favourite photo or video? Why? Why do you think her Instagram is so popular?**
- 3) Jessamyn says she is "not a person society would expect to see great things from". What does she mean by that? Who do you think society expects to see great things from?**
- 4) She used to have low self-esteem in the past. How did she describe her feelings back then? Do you think most women can relate to those feelings? Why/ Why not?**
- 5) How has Yoga helped Jessamyn feel good about herself? How has mindset changed over time?**
- 6) Have you ever done Yoga? Why/ Why not?**
- 7) If you could choose, would you have Jessamyn as your Yoga trainer? Why/ Why not?**

You are going to watch a video about Jassemyn. Before watching it, discuss these questions.

- 1) Does she seem a positive person? Why/ Why not?**
- 2) What insecurities did she have when she started practising yoga?**
- 3) How do you think she deals with the haters?**
- 4) What politically correct word does she use that means "fat"?**

[Video](#)

Now that you have watched the video, discuss these questions.

1) What did she say about her belly?

2) How did she overcome her insecurities related to her belly?

3) What lessons about self-love can people learn from her?

4) She says some people are offended and repulsed by what she does. Why do you think they feel this way?

5) Do you think Jessamyn is inspirational? Why or why not?

These are 2 random comments from her page. Do you agree or disagree with them? Tell your partner.



Roberto Licardié Let's not glorify obesity. I myself am obese, and although we can embrace it. It is not natural! We're humans, the ones that used to run, climb, jump and hunt for our food. This video is great and all, but lets lose weight!

Like · Reply · 215 · 23 September at 03:37



Rebecca Mashaw For those who haven't done yoga...what she does? It is HARD! She makes it look easy and graceful but it takes serious strength, balance and flexibility. She has my respect for that, and for her attitude.

Like · Reply · 1,039 · 22 September at 20:00

Complete the sentences with words or phrases Jessamyn said.

I've had such a _____
_____ with this part of
my body.



My _____ parts of my
body are the parts I hated ____
_____.

How can I continue to
_____ on this
part of my body that is a
very crucial part of who
_____?

There are no _____
_____ showing their
bodies this way.