



# GISBORNE

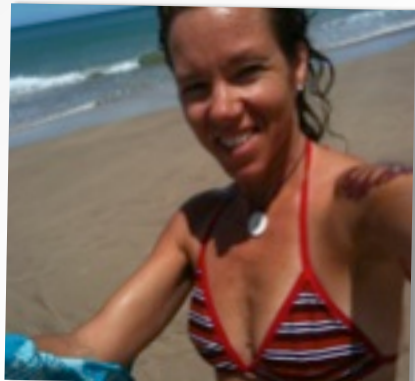
NO. 8



Friday, January 8, 2010 . . . the last day of the yoga adventure



REN AND NOAH  
FUNNY FACES



ME ON WAINUI BEACH



EVERYONE ON PETER'S  
PARENTS' FARM

# Ashtanga Yoga January 8, 2010 continued . . .

The end of the trip has come. It is time to pack our bags and head back to Berkeley. Can't quite believe it's coming to an end. It has been such an amazing time for me and Noah and Ren.

Practice on Tuesday was energetic, fast and fun. Noah and Ren went with me on this day and the days that followed. They sat in the little side room at the yoga shala that connects to the practice room. It's the place where everyone waits until a spot opens up to practice. They were both amazing and hung out there my entire practice. Quietly and calmly. They intermittently played, colored and watched.

Every once in a while I would look up and catch one of their attention. Our eyes would lock for a moment and a huge smile would emerge for both of us. God I am grateful for those two beings and sharing this journey with them. I feel so lucky to have them in my life and to fully be present and share myself with them. Experiencing this kind of integration of my life is truly a gift.

Nakrasana. Crocodile posture. So difficult to get the body off the ground in the first place, and then even harder to keep it off the ground throughout the 10 breaths. The body does not want to jump up. The body wants to rest. Where is the strength coming from? No grace. No ease. Pure will at this point. Will and determination and humor.

I am not ready to leave this place or this experience. I am not ready to squeeze my yoga practice in after dropping off Noah and Ren at school and before teaching. I am not ready to move from my home of 11

years and relocate somewhere that I haven't even found yet. I am not ready to . . . and yet it doesn't matter what I think I am ready for, because it will come and time will flow forward and I will have exactly what I need.

"With consistent practice, over time, all is coming." Sri K. Pattabhi Jois.

Until now, I understood the "all is coming" to mean something was coming from the outside- something I'd get or receive - and that would be the "all." I think I might be getting it now. The "all" that is coming, is the all of me and it has nothing to do with anything external. It is not about receiving or even understanding. The "all" that is coming, is the coming to myself, my highest self: the unfolding of me, the purifying of me, the steadying of me and the mind. The "all" that is coming is the ability to *deal* with it *all* - ease, discomfort, life, death, endings, beginnings, change, heartbreak, love, stiff hamstrings, sore back, the mundane, the joyful, the scary, the impossible - all with mindfulness and humanness.

The yoga practice provides us an opportunity to begin this process on the yoga mat, so that over time, and in time, we can take these lessons into our daily lives. On the yoga mat we learn we *can* deal with struggling to bind, balance, or fold forward and backward with steadiness. This in turn helps us know we *can* be amidst difficulty and find that same steadiness. There is a saying pain is mandatory, but suffering is optional. The "all" is maybe our ability to feel the sensation of life, including pain, without suffering.

This yoga is simultaneously strengthening, softening, steadying, and

purifying not only my body, but my heart and mind. In my practice, my mind has become much quieter and my body much more still.

This trip has been the ultimate in nourishment on many levels. I love that about yoga. About going inward. About digging and poking and being willing to "see" what is truly present.

My last day of practice was empowering and my strength is still building. Everything felt easier today. I am grateful for the moments when this is my experience. So grateful.

Even though I have been 7000 miles away, I have felt everyone's love across the land and the sea. Felt the respect and love that we share as a community of yogis, as a community of heart centered folks. Thank you for that love. Thank you for the moments I get to spend with you.

Once this goes out to the web I will be back in Berkeley. I will be sorting through mail and to do lists and getting back into the groove of my daily life.

So much transition lies ahead for me in the following months. I will do my best to move through that transition the same way I move through my life - with yoga and love and friends and tears and joy and presence. I don't know yet where I am headed, except on the Melanie journey. That is the only for sure thing I can say right now - being true to me, my children and my path. Everything else, including the Melanie journey I guess, is a walk into the unknown. A walk I am more than happy to take.

Om Shanti (peace to all)