

The Beat Within

The Beat Within ■ A Weekly Publication of Writing and Art from the Inside ■ Volume 15.40



I am sorry to my friends, I do not have time to joke about this anymore, there is nothing funny about the possibility of me spending my entire life here, and if I listen to them, that is just what is going to happen. I've see it too many times already...

read the rest of Jose's POW on page 6

FEATURES OF THE WEEK

feature of the week

News From The Art of Yoga Project

Yesterday, at the San Francisco Juvenile Hall, the young women let their radiance shine. This is not a rare occurrence- we truly get to engage in wonderful relationships within the yoga classes at Juvie.

We appreciate their humor, their fear, their hopes and encourage their dreams. You may have heard me say this one million times before: The Art of Yoga Project sees each young woman as a brilliant life force, as beauty, as incredible strength and we draw out their positive nature. It is an exchange of sisterly love and compassion that transpires three times a week (at this facility). And hopefully, and meaningful experience (or at least a memory) that will last them a lifetime.

But I digress; yesterday, our Art of Yoga Project yoga teachers (Beth and Jessica, thank you!) lit up the young women by dedicating their time to visit, listening to what their yoga requests were, and by creating a safe and sweet space to practice. The young women on the unit, being typical teens that don't miss a beat, observed that "yoga people are always happy".

Playing on that idea, our yoga teachers asked them to end the practice by journaling about what brings them joy? These are their thoughts that: A) they allowed me to share, and B) I want to share with you in the case I have not underlined enough that these are great kids. Great kids who somehow have missed the leadership to guide them safely through childhood. Great kids who have so much to offer, to give, to know, to experience. Great kids, like mine and yours, that we all can support to ensure a compassionate, positive and enlightened future.

"What makes me smile is knowing that I can do anything I want to do, if I put my mind into something. My boxing coach tells me to never give up, if I want to make it in life. Having someone who loves me for me, that fact that I be who I be. Just having a feeling to know that I'm still breathing and alive, knowing that I made it this far, even though so many trying times I struggled living on my own. But it makes me happy and all smiles that I have the people I got in my life." ~ K.

"I smile when other people smile. But in general, I'm a happy person. Laughter make me smile. A sunny day make me happy." ~ R.

"People that have holes in their socks!! Nahh! What makes me happy and laugh is having my health and that everything on me works. And that God blesses me to wake up every morning so I have a reason to be happy, laughing and joyful everyday." ~ G.

"What makes me happy is seeing my son happy every day with me. When I think of my son running and playing, it makes me smile and happy. When I'm with my man, it makes me feel like a whole bunch of joy." ~ P

If you are out of ideas on how to support at-risk young women in your neighborhood, try donating to www.theartofyogaproject.org or contact me, Courtney and I will give you some good directions.

In love and peace,

- Courtney, The AYP SF Site Director

From The Beat: Thank you for reaching out to us Courtney, and sharing in your wonderful session you recently had in the San Francisco Juvenile Justice Center the other day. We hope to hear from you again, real soon! For those of you who do not know, the mission of "The Art of Yoga Project" is to lead teen girls in the California juvenile justice system towards accountability to self, others and community by providing tools to effect behavioral change.

