

The Shama Yoga Rug is a Reminder to Create a Life You Love / Upward Frog Blog

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By Kee Kee Buckley, creator of the Shama Yoga Rug.

I didn't set out to become an inventor, it just sorta happened. It happened during a time in my life when I looked around and realized I wasn't happy. There were a lot of broken parts in my life, and I had grown tired of sludging through the murky undercurrent of stagnant and toxic energy that seemed to infuse every bit of my existence. It was 2003, and yoga was the one thing that seemed to bind all the broken pieces of my life together. It was my lifeline during a time when little else made sense. A six year relationship had just ended, leaving me moving out of the beautiful spacious Venice Beach house owned by my ex-boyfriend into a tiny 300 square foot hobbit hole. I was also working hard to digest the fact that my dream career was really just something that was leaving me feeling empty and unfulfilled. I needed to find a solution and fix my life. Not knowing where else to begin, I turned to yoga.

In fact, I dove head first into yoga and enrolled in yoga teacher training. Then, wanting to take my practice even deeper, I enrolled in the Yoga Philosophy program at LMU and joined a yoga philosophy study group with several well-known LA yoga instructors. As my body and spirit grew stronger through yoga, I began to challenge myself physically with a more advanced asana practice. Yet with more physically demanding asana came more sweat. As much as I would like to say I glow when I work out, I don't. I sweat. Profusely. My face gets red and puffy and sweat drips from places one would think sweat should never ever drip. On the one hand, sweating felt good – like I was detoxifying all that toxicity in my life. On the other hand, sweating hindered my practice by causing me to slip on my mat. Wanting a non-synthetic solution, I turned to cotton yoga rugs. Unfortunately, although they helped, I still would slip. Yes, I sweat that much.

Although I hadn't yet found a solution to fix the bigger problems in my life, I was bound and determined to find a solution to fix my problems with sweating on my mat. A conversation with a friend about how I would improve the yoga rugs on the market led to me impulsively getting on the internet and educating myself about the difference between the weft and the warp yarns in weaving. I decided my dream yoga rug would have a raised weft weave, leaving ridges that would not only help with alignment, but would also be big enough to serve as friction points to stop me from slipping at the same time as being small enough that they wouldn't throw off my balance. In order to accommodate large hands and feet on taller people and smaller hands and feet on shorter people, I wanted these ridges to be spaced further apart towards the ends of the rug and closer together towards the center of the rug. India was the only country I knew of that had commercial handloom companies, so I shot off a few e-mail inquiries to several of them. The most

accommodating was a family-owned business in New Delhi, and over the next year they would send me samples, I would make changes and then they would send me new samples. We did this several times until I finally had a production sample of my new yoga rug, which I promptly named the Shama Yoga Rug. Shama in Sanskrit means tranquility and peace, and because I was actively searching for inner-peace in my life, I thought this the most fitting name for my new rug. The next few years involved obtaining a utility patent on my yoga rug, setting up an online store, and eventually finding a home for the Shama Yoga Rug in the Manduka family of products.

Fixing my problem with my sweaty yoga practice taught me a valuable life lesson. When I find there is a problem in my life, then I should buckle down, find a solution, and fix things once and for all. Surprisingly, inventing a patented yoga rug was easier than fixing some of the other broken things in my life. But I'm getting much better at drumming up the necessary courage to create lasting healthy changes. Each time I practice on my Shama Yoga Rug, I'm reminded of the importance of being an active participant in creating a life I love.



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