

Studio provides variety in yoga

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Starting their business has been a family affair for Wendy and Lamont Gilliland and their daughters, Jasmine and Caitlyn.

And their new yoga studio, Simple Abundance Yoga in Johnson City, is all about creating an atmosphere of family support and encouragement — by reaching out to those in the community who can benefit from the practice of yoga.

“I started out going to (yoga) teacher training, just to go deeper into my practice,” Wendy said. “Part of going to teacher training is that you have to teach classes for free ... After (my first) class when I put them in Savasana (an ending pose) and I looked at them I started to cry. There was such an overwhelming feeling of being blessed and having the opportunity to help them. I knew I wanted to do that forever. My husband has reaped such benefits himself and so have my two daughters, we just knew as a family that we wanted to do this (start a studio) for other people.”

The Gillilands built the inside of their new studio — located at the Shops on Sunset, 306 Sunset Drive, Suite 102 in Johnson City — by hand. Wendy said the space was just bare bones and concrete floor before they moved in. It has since been transformed to a serene escape with wooden floors, richly painted walls and a soothing water feature.

Since the studio opened Aug. 21, the practice has grown to more than 60 students.

Including the Gillilands, Simple Abundance has seven different yoga instructors. Classes are for all levels and walks of life, including beginning yoga practitioners. Wendy said she tries to dispel any rumors about yoga for those interested in beginning a practice. She also tells her own story of coming to yoga in her 40s as an alternative treatment for MS symptoms to help people realize the benefits.

“Yoga is not a religion and it’s something that really is accessible to everyone,” Wendy said. “What I’ve found with the people who come here is that we do have people who have practiced for years and years, but we also have a lot of people who have never attempted anything like this and they are loving it. That really fills my heart.”

Classes include yoga levels one and two; Foundations of Yoga — a six-week course that covers basic yoga poses and alignment; prenatal yoga; teen yoga; couples yoga; golden yoga, for ages 50 and older; gentle/restorative yoga, which focuses on relaxation and breath; t’chi yoga; mom’s quiet time yoga; and other variations. Classes are available at a drop in rate or in packages. For a full schedule or to purchase packages, visit www.simpleabundanceyoga.com.

Simple Abundance also focuses on a community charity each month with a portion of the proceeds of some yoga classes going to charity. They’ll be hosting a “Yoga for Peace” class Sept. 11 from 7 to 8 p.m. Instead of a regular drop-in fee, the studio will be accepting donations for Boysto-Men/Children of Promise.



Wendy and Lamont Gilliland own Simple Abundance.