

# Trading Body Slams for Body Stretches: Yoga for Regular Guys

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You wouldn't expect the latest incarnation of yoga to come from a pro wrestler, but that's exactly what happened. In 2005, pro wrestler Diamond Dallas Page created an average-joe workout called YRG (Yoga for Regular Guys), a combination of power yoga and old-school, bare-knuckled calisthenics.

The key is isokinetics, executing movements creating your own resistance. The heavier someone is, the more resistance, and the more intense the workout. Says Page, "When guys realize they're in their fat-burning zones without walking up hills or running on the treadmill, that's when they get the motivation to continue."

Page's books and DVD's have influenced the exercise routines of Super Bowl winners, major league baseball players, his fellow pro wrestlers, and a whole slew of ordinary guys. He's even created YRG 50+, a program for fellas who are 50 pounds or more overweight or over the age of 50. His most important lesson to share? Nothing is unachievable.



Page winning his first of three world titles in 1999.

These exercises require no Stairmaster, no treadmill and no weights. Together with YRG co-creator Dr. Craig "Yogadoc" Aaron, Page energetically guides DVD viewers through each step of the workout while surrounded by a roomful of average guys and gals acting as demonstrators. Though he starts off on the yoga mat, most of the movements are done standing.

## Beyond yoga

"When I became a wrestler at 35 years old, everyone said I was out of my mind. Guys usually retire at that age." After a rotator-cuff injury and a full year on the shelf, Page found himself in the unique position of effectively being a 37-year-old rookie. At the start of his career, he was already holding back the hands of time. A wrestling star at the age of 42, DDP suffered another injury setback, this time rupturing two spinal ligaments in his lower back.

In need of a low-impact rehabilitative exercise, Page turned to yoga and incorporated strength training. "As soon as I started doing yoga, I found myself modifying the moves and creating a routine that gave my whole body a workout. After all, I was in my 40's getting thrown around like a rag doll more than 20 times a month." After perfecting the workout, DDP could be found performing YRG backstage at wrestling arenas worldwide.

"Guys would bust my balls when they caught me doing it, but once they saw my

strength and conditioning in the ring, they never gave me crap again." He even gained some converts, such as 20-something superstar Randy Orton who adopted YRG into his training.

In 2005, after a ring hiatus of two plus years, Page was still able hang with wrestlers 20 who were years younger. He possessed more stamina, strength and endurance to point where his younger opponents had to tell him to "slow down." Page's entire fitness routine during his time off consisted only of YRG.

### The birth of "50+"

Close friend and coauthor of Page's biography Larry "Smokey" Genta needed to shed a few pounds, and attempted Page's 20-minute DVD workout. "I'm not a wrestler like DDP," says Genta. "I'm the regular guy. I'm the guy with a weight problem." Page recalls Genta reluctantly confessing to no longer being a regular guy after a failed attempt at performing YRG. "That's bull," Page responded. "All we have to do is modify the workout."

The "50+" modifications involve fewer repetitions of the individual YRG movements to meet the ability level of the person doing the exercise. "You're not only losing weight – you're toning your body," says Page. "Anyone who teaches this has to have that drill instructor attitude, because this ain't your regular yoga."

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"I told Smoke, 'If you can bend down to pick up your keys, or reach up to change a light bulb, you can do this workout.'"

The intended functionality of YRG 50+ is for users to eventually graduate to standard YRG. Page stresses the importance of a healthy eating plan going hand in hand with any fitness program, a major component he incorporated when training Smoke.

"I wasn't a gym guy," says Genta. "If I went running, it would kick my ass because I was too heavy." YRG shares the no-impact attributes of yoga; the exercises involve no jerking and jarring of the joints. "Doing this workout, I forgot about the three pins in my hip," says Genta. "If I ever felt restricted, I could just adjust the move until I was comfortable. All of a sudden, I had way more flexibility. I could even touch my toes."

Now 51, Page takes pride in still being able to get into the ring and "go," if called upon. His list of clients and YRG patrons include pro wrestlers the likes of Shawn Michaels, Christian Cage and Samoa Joe as well as the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' Derrick Brooks and the Baltimore Orioles' Kris Benson, just to name a few.

But it's not about helping pro athletes; it's about helping regular guys. "Smoke hasn't just lost weight" says Page. "He's gained flexibility and strength. He's doing core strength training now. If he can do it, anyone can do it."

### Next Steps

Interested in learning more about YRG? Check out DDP's website at [www.diamonddallaspage.com](http://www.diamonddallaspage.com).

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