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Guinea Pig Experiment #29: Spynga



The Problem:

I needed to find something to compliment my running. Getting back in the shape of things after the holidays, I started running again but realized I need to mix up my workouts, especially in the winter. I also wanted to find something that would give me more strength and flexibility, especially for my core and legs - which are considerably weaker than my cardio system.

Hypothesis:

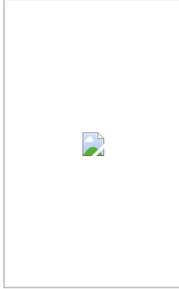
Cycling is good for the butt and legs, while yoga is good for strength, core, and flexibility. So if I did both, then I would hope I'd get what it is I need to compliment my running and make me a better runner. I took a Spynga class at [Spynga, the Yoga and Cycling Studio](#) in Toronto. What is Spynga? Spinning + Yoga!

Variables:

I'm in moderate shape - having gone from peak fitness to injury, to slacking when I could have been getting back in shape, to further weakening over the holidays. Too much shortbread, stuffing, gravy and mashed potatoes. All in all, I needed to get my butt back in gear and had started up running again, but lack any core strength or stability in my thighs. I was in for the 45min [Spynga Flow](#) class, one of the studio's most popular, with [Casey Soer](#) instructing. Spynga Flow consists of 25 minutes of intense spinning on stationary bikes and another 20 minutes of Yoga.

Procedure:

Pack a yoga mat if you have one – or bring a dollar to borrow one from the studio (money goes to charity), pack your running shoes, and workout clothes. I went straight from work, so had to prep this in advance.



Once at the studio, they have cubby holes to place your belongings and change rooms. Then pick a bike - with it being my first time I was helped on how to properly set it up and tailor the height of the bike seat to my height. Definitely ask for help when doing this if it's your first time.

Next, I was on the bike and ready to go. I spun and spun, lifting my butt off the seat as often as I could as the instructor took us

from moderate to high intensity, back down to low and back up to high intensity in what felt like a punishment to my butt. The instructor was very supportive, cheering us on, and didn't make me feel like a slacker when my poor behind couldn't take being lifted of the seat anymore and had to plunk back down while others somehow managed to keep theirs high in the air.

Finally after what felt like enough pain, the instructor said this is the last song – and I pushed it as hard as I could – feeling the burn, literally. She had us incorporate push-ups on the bike while cycling as fast as we could, which was surprisingly new to me and effective.

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Then it was time for the yoga, "Thank God" I thought. I thought wrong. The amount of stability and core strength it took to do and hold the poses was tough, and I was dripping sweat, collapsing, and doing the beginner version of the poses. But fortunately, the instructor was encouraging and helpful with how to safely position myself so as not to kill myself!

The class was fast paced, and flew by – before I knew it I was lying down on the mat relaxing, deep breathing.

The instructor said she was going to now come along with some lotion and push down on our shoulders to those who want it. It was very relaxing. We were all cooling down, with the lights dim, while focusing on our breath - then the instructor came around and just quickly put a bit of light pressure on my shoulders and I felt my stress go away.

Then we all sat up, and did one "Om" together at the end. I admit, I wasn't expecting to "Om" but I was committed 100% and found that five seconds of meditation to be surprisingly peaceful. I opened my eyes and felt really good.

Analysis:

At Spynga Flow, Soer was very helpful with anyone who was new in making sure we didn't push ourselves too hard in the yoga poses or that we weren't straining ourselves.

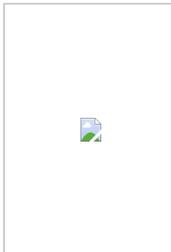
And needless to say, I got my butt kicked! I was dripping sweat 10 minutes into the spinning and well into the yoga portion of the class. The next day it hurt to sit down, my butt muscles and abs were quite sore, but a good sore. As someone who just loves to run, I realized how week my core muscles really are.

Conclusion:

The environment at the studio is welcoming, not at all intimidating. Soer and Nisker have found a way to bring a warm yet professional atmosphere to their studio. With chandeliers hanging from the ceilings and wooden floors, you feel as though you're visiting a community of people in a home as opposed to the cold concrete walls of a gym.

I loved this class for the high intense cardio benefit I got at the beginning and then the toning and strengthening benefit from the yoga. Although for me the yoga was very challenging at times, it forces you at the end to really stretch and feel your muscles and focus on your breathing, which resulted in me feeling very relaxed. I went home and nearly passed out on the couch at 9:30pm – I had that tired feeling I used to get as a kid after playing outside all day.

Dare to Do 30 Challenge:



Spynga also has a Dare to Do 30 program starting January 13th where participants get unlimited yoga and cycling classes and counseling on nutrition, exercise, weight loss and more. Dr. David Macklin from X-Weighted: Families is on board with this program helping to teach participants about attainable goals and nutrition. **Read my Q&A with Dr. Macklin and Sari Nisker for more on the Dare to Do 30 program [here!](#)**

To sign up for the Dare to Do 30 challenge contact Sari Nisker at sari@spynga.com

See my slideshow of pictures from the class below -- Special thanks to Sari Nisker for taking the photos for me, as spinning and snapping pics was a little hard to manage.

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Posted By: Beach Babe

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