

## Yoga Center opens in Pell City

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by [David Atchison](#)

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When she left Russia, she almost cried.

That was home for Julia Cook.

She was not only leaving behind family and friends, but also one of her passions – yoga.

“When I was leaving, I almost cried,” Cook said. “I said, ‘How will I be without yoga.’”

Her friend and teacher told her not to worry.

“No problem,” her friend said. “Open your own studio.”

Two-and-a-half-years later, that is exactly what Cook did.

Cook is currently a certified Hatha Yoga instructor through Tallapoosa Center for Inner Arts and Registered Yoga Teacher through Yoga Alliance.

Cook, who is from Saint Petersburg, Russia, opened the Pell City Yoga Center this month.

When she first arrived in the U.S. with her new husband, Doug, she began taking Yoga classes once or twice a week.

“I wanted to do it more, so why don’t I just teach,” she said. “I love yoga very much.”

Cook said yoga is not only good exercise that helps people to be more flexible, it is a thought process, making life more enjoyable and positive.

“Yoga brings your awareness in your body,” she said, making life more pleasurable. “Yoga teaches you to enjoy life.”

Cook said yoga also helps relieve stress and it helps you see things, life, in a different, more positive way.

She said like some activities, yoga takes time to develop, like many people say, you have to learn to walk before you can run.

In fact, Cook holds several beginner classes Monday through Thursday. It’s called her “Slow Flow Yoga, a gentle class for beginners.

She offers “Power Yoga” for more advanced students.

Fees vary, depending on the number of classes that are prepaid in advance. She also offers yoga mat/blanket rentals for those who do not have their own yoga mats.

On Fridays, Cook offers a “Community Yoga Class,” in which donations are accepted.

“I want people to start taking care of themselves,” Cook said. “Especially women, they take care of their husbands and kids, but not themselves.”

She said yoga helps people deal with their emotions.

“You just need to be yourself and come,” Cook said. “It’s time you can spend for yourself.”

She said most people feel a sense of accomplishment, and it may be hard at first.

“Your body will respond,” Cook said.

She said yoga is also good for athletes, and athletes tend to have fewer injuries or are less prone to injuries when taking yoga.

Cook said when she first began yoga in Russia, she suffered from low back pain and migraines.

She said yoga helped her to become free of back pain, and it significantly reduced her migraines.

Cook said the Pell City Yoga Center also provides customized private yoga sessions that are customized to fit individual needs.

For more information about the Pell City Yoga Center, go to [www.yogapellcity.com](http://www.yogapellcity.com) or call 205-332-5330.

People may also visit the Pell City Yoga Center on the second floor at 1822 Cogswell Avenue.