

## Pretty Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Fumiko Takatsu

JVN: Hey, curious people. Welcome back to Pretty Curious, our podcast on all things beauty. I'm Jonathan Van Ness. This week, you guys, I'm always excited for an episode, but I'm especially excited for this one. Happy Monday. Welcome back. Love you so much. If you're not listening to this on Monday, I'm sorry about it. But we have the creator of the face yoga Method, Fumiko Takatsu. I have been reading about Fumiko for years and just, I've heard about her here and there and I'm really excited to delve into this because I just do not know that much about face yoga or really anything at all, and I'm really excited to find out, but before we do that, it's time for a face or for a face question for a listener question. This person asks, I'm not a fan of the face I make in pictures. Should I practice in the mirror? No matter what the face I make in my head never shows up in the photo. You know, for me, I learned everything about what I know about taking pictures from Tyra Banks in America's Next Top Model. Um but sometimes I'm like, what is happening with that face of mine. And I think, yeah, I think it would be mirror, mirror and then more practice on camera because obviously the camera doesn't exactly see what the mirror sees. Um, I think it's because too, it's like you got to get out of your head and get into your body. I don't know if, if you listen to our, if you listen to an old episode of ours with Kimberly Snyder who I love so much. But she talks about how like we don't go to like the head to answer a problem that's in the body because like, we don't get stuck in our head. So it's like, it's more of a feeling, it's more of like a vibe. So it's like if you're trying to feel like cool and calm, think of something kind of cool, like cool and calm, but get that feeling down into your body so that it translates into your face. Um and see if like that is helpful. Um it's really more about a vibe you're trying to like be a vibe this one time I was on the cover of Attitude Magazine and I have the craziest look on my face and um if you will put it, uh it's, it's, I look, I just, my eyes are huge and, and the thing is, is that that photographer was doing this thing where he was asking me questions every three seconds because he didn't want me to do any of my like model faces he wanted just like natural me, but that just makes me have an irritated face because I was like, why are you asking me questions in the middle of a picture? And so I think that that just like goes to prove my original point, which is that like if you feel irritated, you're gonna look irritated. So if you're already in your mind that like, you know, this might not be a good picture. Like if you're already feeling insecure about it, it's gonna translate. So I think trying to feel confident and feel secure. And also the thing is, is like even if the picture doesn't turn out the way you want it to, it's OK. It doesn't matter like we're alive, we're here, yay. Like it doesn't, not everyone is going to be the most photogenic person and that doesn't determine your worth or your value or how hot and fuckable you are. But I understand that we want to look good in pictures to increase our fuckableness, so we just gotta like *\*sings\** calm down, maybe just calm down. And work on our confidence and then I think that our pictures will turn out better. Let's get to our conversation. Let's learn about OK, but I I'm sorry, giving the wisdom you guys, I'm sorry about it, but I'm not going to say I'm sorry because I'm not and I love you guys and I hope you had a good weekend. Um but now let's settle in for a stunning conversation finding out what is face yoga with Fumiko Takatsu. For nearly two decades, Fumiko Takatsu's face yoga Method has used her proven combination of breath mindset and face yoga poses to revolutionize the way that we treat the aging process. Recognized as the best in the history, Fumiko has certified over 450 students in her method and successfully built her female led brand around the world. Additionally, Fumiko has published five books,

two ebooks, a skincare line, blog, and multiple online face yoga programs to help people embrace their natural beauty and aging. Fumiko, welcome to Pretty Curious! How are you?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yes, so much. Thank you having me here, Jonathan. I'm super excited.

JVN: We are so excited that you're here too. I love the like, I'm a big fan of yoga. I was a daily practitioner for like all of my twenties and I, I had so many teachers that I loved so much and I just, the health and mental wellness benefits that I've had from yoga have made such a huge deal in my or just made such a big difference in my life. And Fumiko, I remember like a long time ago, like I want to say in like the first Obama administration. So that's like 2008 to 12. I feel like I remember seeing an article about you like forever ago, like about face yoga, right?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Thank you. Yes. Yes. You know what, Jonathan? I started face yoga 21 years ago. So I've been around it for a long time. I think face yoga can have alcohol right? In the adult. Technically. Yeah. And then um I just can't, you know, emphasize how important it is for us. Yes, not only practice, you know, body yoga but a face yoga because face and a body they are connected. Yeah.

JVN: So, and then when did you start? Like when did you know that face yoga was on to something? Like when did, when did you first started getting like press and like people asking about you? Like when did you know that you had made it?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yeah. So first of all, I got in a near fatal car accident, I could have been dead right there on the spot, you know, 21 years ago and I was told in the ambulance that, oh, you're so lucky you could have been dead right there like, ok, because I was feeling like the still not sure where I was at, you know, physically and mentally. But the trauma, the car accident made my face and the body so out of alignment. And on top of that mid thirties, I'm 55. I'm going to be 56 next month. But I started seeing a sign of premature aging. So I have to do something. So first thing I did, of course, like many people, I started buying expensive creams and getting facials, I never done anything on my face, you know, in terms of procedures, but I almost got depressed because the money I was spending and also the results were just superficial. Lasts for, you know, 10 days or two weeks and they have to do it again and again. And I thought one day, wait a minute, I've been doing body yoga since I was 10 years old. And then I've been pretty fit. Why not move my face just like move my body. And that's how I started. And a funny thing is people started noticing me, my friends especially they're like, did you get a new boyfriend? Because I look different. I look happier and then they will need to know secret. And when my mother asked me if I've done any procedures, I said no, no, I never done it, Mom. I felt like I knew onto something and then I got the media um attention right away because there was nobody doing a face yoga at the time, there's no word existed face yoga on internet or anywhere in the world. So people wanted to have me on TV shows and a magazine interviews. And I published 5, 6 books and they translated in different languages and I went to Korea for TV shows. So, so that's how I started. But I wasn't planning a business out of it or I wasn't even thinking about teaching because originally I created this just for myself so that I feel and look better.

JVN: I love you so much it hurts, 1, 2, what is face yoga? How do we, how does one practice face yoga? Because in my mind, I know a lot of the different like I know what my power yoga is. I know what my little Vinyasa is. I know what my Iyengar is. I know what my Yin is. I know what my restorative is. Um but, and I know how they like the different ways in which you can

practice it but is face yoga like holding asana, is it like more like Vinyasa? Like when you like breathe and move your like how do you do it? How do you do the face yoga?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: So first thing is I want to just start, I love this question, by the way, Jonathan because you know that yoga comes from Sanskrit and then it means, you know, not the exercise but unite. So when I say face yoga, it's not just a physical exercise, but you know, unite the mind and the body in the spirit and the face at the same time. And it's a holistic approach. So when I teach face yoga, the first thing is a posture, you have to have a good posture. In order to get the result on our face, you can't look down because that create double chin. And then I add the breathing exercise, you know, you have to breathe consciously because everybody breathes as long as we live, but we are not really paying attention to breathing, especially from nasal, you know, nose breathing. And then I add the uh meditation part by asking them close eyes and kind of like a scan, the face and the body and then affirmations. So when you practice face yoga, many people think it's just, oh it's just moving the face muscle randomly, you know, it's much more um precise and much more slower and sometimes less movement. But you're connecting all the senses and a movement and combine with breath and the mind so that you can get the huge benefit. So I called it, you know, face yoga is a lifestyle. So I didn't name face yoga Method just for, you know, fun of it, but I named it so that I can really approach in a big picture and then give the result people looking for.

JVN: Yes, because in my mind, I was thinking like, ok, like upward face dog, let's go like and, and then I was thinking if you move your face in like repeated patterns a lot, will it give us more wrinkles?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yes.

JVN: But it's like, so it's not even doing that. It's like a whole, it's like a whole lifestyle, honey.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Ahhh.

JVN: It's like not just like certain like exercises over and over again.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yeah. And then, you know, when you move, you got, you got a good point, when you move your face same way over and over without even knowing how you're moving it, I called it the facial habits. If you have a lot of bad facial, facial habits or doing the pose wrong way, you can create the wrinkles. It's like, you know, your claws, you're folding the same over and over, you know, you get their wrinkles and a permanent wrinkles. But my face method really isolate and relax certain muscles and then activate certain muscles, lazy muscles so that you can get the result you're looking for and you can create your face that you desire for.

JVN: What are the origins for you of, of creating face yoga? You just said that it's, it's a lifestyle. It's not necessarily like going to like a 60 minute face yoga class. It's kind of like a, it's like a lifestyle. So how did, where did you derive that method from?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: But starting with my own face, I created lots of poses, you know, lots of trial and errors. And I have to admit probably the original poses I created 21 years ago. I might even not encourage people do it because it wasn't right, like what wasn't perfection or not articulate at the time, but at the time it was great. So I did that but also I studied so much in Jonathan, and I think I'm studying more than ever in my life, in my almost close to 60 years older than ever because the more I learn it, the more I feel I don't know enough. And

it's so exciting and it's so fascinating because everything is connected. And another thing is that, um I, I went to graduate school and I studied cultural anthropology and when I was going to graduate school, I have to study um physical anthropology. So I learned about the muscles and then physiology of the muscles and then linguistics. So I learned that a different language uses different facial muscles in order to pronounce certain words. And I cannot pronounce certain words even now because I'm Japanese originally from Japan, and my muscle memory, it doesn't exist to pronounce certain words. So it's so difficult sometimes to say some word in English. Yeah. So that's how I learn it. And the more I learn it, the more I started combining even acupuncture um also like master technique, but also, you know, using tools and everything because I'm so curious about learning things and editing more and then refining the things. So that's how my journey is and that's how I created the face yoga back in 2003.

JVN: OK, so I'm obsessed in our 1st 15 minutes together or however long it's been, it's flown by, I'm just fallen deeply in love. Where can we start if we want to become a face yoga practitioner?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: So the best place to start is I have a lots of social media like you too. Um you can go to my website, the FaceYogaMethod.com. There's a lots of lots of programs based on your needs and also concern and then you can take classes. And I also certified teachers, I have a certified teachers all over the world and they are spreading this message which I'm so proud of them. And uh yeah, just check it out and if the best thing is feel it, like I want people to feel it and how that makes them feel and then they can start deciding like I need this because I have double chin. I need this because I have full head wrinkles. I need this because I have droopy face or droopy eyelid and all that. So, just –

JVN: Oh I have droopy. I have droopy eyelid. What would be like a technique that I would do for my droopy eyelids?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: OK, so droopy eyelid because gravity is pulling everything down and why not lift it up. So let's try one pose then. So it's called a forehead lift. You can place that inside of the um in a what do you call that?

JVN: Index finger?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Index fingers, yes. And place it on top of the head where the hair is a hairline, shoulder relax, which is important, relax your shoulders because you don't want to create tension on the forehead and then very slowly lift the index fingers up and shoulder relax. And then with this posture, look down with your eyes only. So you're not only smoothing out and lifting the full head by, by looking down, you're really creating more space for the forehead, two, lift up and then when you're ready, you come out and close your eyes and a breeze in and out from your nose. And I want you to feel the forehead. How does it feel? Do you feel a little difference? Do you feel a space? Got a little wider, a little more sensations?

JVN: Yes, I feel more openness,

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Openness. Yes. That's right. That third eye you want to lift that up and you know, when we were tense, the shoulders and the forehead and everything, everything just going uh tighten and we want to just open up. Yeah.

JVN: You guys, I miss, oh my god. I look like I'm 28 again from just doing that once Fumiko look at me. I look totally different.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: I love that!

JVN: I feel like I know, I feel like I see it. I do. Um Wow. Ok. Now what about so, but there's like things like that for all the things and you do, there's like even just in those two little exercises that we did, like just the constant like checking in with the body, the breath, the relaxing of the shoulders, the gentle movements of the face. That's just, wow, that's beautiful. Um what about the fillers? What about if we've done? What about if people have done fillers? Is it OK for us to face yoga? Our lives away?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yeah. So first thing is I have no judgment. You know, it's a personal choice and option and I've done nothing yet. But I don't know, maybe 30 years from now, it's like, hey, I'm going to do all the things I don't know. But for me, face yoga poses is a very simple but also gentle and a very, very slow, so pretty safe for anybody who have done any injections or any treatment. But I understand that filler can kind of migrate, you know, if it's not done properly. So I highly recommend if you done, you know, fillers maybe ask that person or provider did that job for you and then make sure that it's OK for you to, you know, stimulate the skin or muscle because I don't want to damage, you know, the person's skin or face, especially um um any treatment. And another thing, Jonathan, I want to add to, I love, I love your product. A friend of mine recommended me a couple of years ago, I've been using it and that the reason is because face and scalp are connected. So it's so important. So important I have actually poses to stimulate and release attention from the scalp so that you can actually lift your face. So if you have a droopy eyelid, you know, don't go straight to the eyelid, release attention from scalp so that you can release the tension and you can open up the space and then you can lift it eyebrow and eyelid, so –

JVN: You guys fo just showed me a half halfway gone bottle of Prewashed Scalp Oil. I'm so happy that you use it. That means so much to me. Oh my god. I'm so excited. Our team is going to be so excited!

What do you see? I mean, because you've been doing this for over 20 years now. I mean, social media in the last 20 years has completely changed so much of how we interface with beauty and aging, I think. And I think hopefully for the better, like I feel like when it was more magazine based, like there was less voices and less just opinions. So there was like there is less ways for people to find ways to feel good about themselves. And I think now with social media, there is so many more spaces in places that people can, you know, feel good about themselves. But also we see a lot of people doing things like there was this Tik Tok video where this girl like at home bleach and toned her hair and it just like all melted off, like just, it just melted right off. And so you being this like beautiful pro aging like queen but then you see the kids like just washing their face to death. What are the other things that you see people do that you're like, oh my gosh, I would maybe take a little off the fastball?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Oh the face even you know, they, they, they, there are lots of people, they start calling face yoga, it's part or face yoga or something and then doing the pose the wrong way are creating more wrinkles like, ah, I wanna scream because they are not gentle, they're not moving that muscle in the right way. And then, because they're young, it's ok for them to do it. But when you get older, repeating wrong movement can cause more damage and like, oh, please! Or putting their finger in the wrong place and then creating more

wrinkles and then moving the head so quickly that it's so bad, you know, in the long term for the neck area. And then those are the, you know, things I want to like, oh, just, just be gentle and careful. And then, um I wanna say that, you know, I, I love the word pro aging because I think many times we try to come back and they say, hey, anti aging, it's such a negative connotation for me. And I don't like that word because I'm, I'm older than five minutes ago. And then I like the quote Eleanor Roosevelt says "today is, you know, the oldest you ever been and the youngest you'll ever be again like," oh, that's so true. And when people say I'm getting old, um I have a neighbor or I had a neighbor, she passed away right before she turned 103 and she was driving a car until she turned 98 and she was, she loved the pink. So she put pink all over the house and she even paint that, her fingernails always pink until three days she passed. Actually, I painted her nail but she told me that, you know, people in the seventies, a spring chicken. Oh, that's right. And the people in the sixties, like they are babies and a full heart. I'm 55. Right. She's like, you don't even exist yet. And I like that. So that's so true. And I just want to see, you know, trend is great, and Tik Tok, all the social media is wonderful, but I think we should really know what we were getting information if it's right or right information for you or if that applicable to what you're looking for.

JVN: One thing that I hear you saying, which resonates with me is that you took um some of your pain and transmuted that into your passion. Um You did that after your car accident and you've transmuted that into having this really successful company. You've made this really positive impact, your female, founded your female led in your company, which I think is so cool. What have you, what is, did you ever have like a setback or a time when you thought? Oh, I don't know like how I'm gonna make it through this? Like, how have you handled the adversity from your success or have you had any adversity from your success?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: I have for sure, and this is very interesting and a wonderful question. Thank you so much for asking me because before I, before that Face Yoga Method of business, 21 years ago, I was teaching at one of the oldest women's universities and I loved it. I love the aspect of, you know, empowering girls, like let 'em free and make them feel like, you know, matured women. I enjoyed so much. But when I started doing a face yoga, so many people at the time, of course, no social media. So so many people, including my parents, they didn't like it at all. And I remember that one of my friends um asked me if I lost my pride. Like what? Because doing a funny faces, you know, it's not just funny, weird faces like this and then doing TV show and then also a little bit controversial too at the time. Like some people, many people believed don't move your face because moving your face create more wrinkles. So there's a lots of, lots of, you know, people didn't believe what I was doing. So I was pretty lonely and there's not much, you know, internet research or people who are supporting my theory. So that was the hardest time. And my mother of course, didn't like it. And she was like, why you don't stick with teaching at a university? It's prestigious for women and then you have a guarantee life. But why you just get rid of that and it starts something very different and weird and it was, it was a lonely journey. And another thing is because I didn't have a confidence in my skin. I was wondering, do people believe me? I know how to move muscles but my skin was not the best, you know, condition at the time. So like, oh, I don't know if I can convince people or if people believe what I'm saying. So that was the hardest part and then later, you know, things happen in life. And also there's a trend change constantly. So for me, stay in this business for this long is I think the most important thing is that just be true to myself, like really really listen to myself in a voice, why I'm doing this and what I want to create. But most importantly, how I want to enjoy life is so precious

because I could have been dead right there 21 years ago. So I feel like I get a second chance, enjoy it and life is so precious and fragile at the same time, yeah.

JVN: Fumiko, we're doing our, we're doing our last round. Are you ready?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: OK, yes, I'm ready.

JVN: So it's going to be rapid fire.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: OK.

JVN: What is your budget? Beauty recommendation under \$10?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: OK. So at home face facial in the kitchen, put yogurt on the face and uh egg white on the fine lines and do 100 time face splash and your face look fabulous. Ah

JVN: Ah, wait the 100 times what?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Face splash. So you splash your face with luke more water 100 times. I don't know, don't ask me why 100 times. But if you do 100 times your complexion will change. Yeah.

JVN: Oh my god. I'm obsessed. OK. What's your favorite splurge recommendation?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Acupuncture facial. So put needles on the face, no injections but just you know, acupuncture facial. It's weird but oh I love it.

JVN: Yeah. Oh Yeah. Yeah. And also just you guys know you need to like go and look at Fumiko's social because she is like you look younger than me. Your face is so baby tiny little baby lady face just like a little tiny baby. I can't believe you're going to be 60. It's outrageous. Um OK. Uh OK. Uh What, what's a product that you never leave home without?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: My diy body bar or I should say uh lotion bar, I make at home. I almost can eat it because I make it at home with all the organic, you know, natural ingredients with lots of love and works great on the heels and lips and entire body and Jonathan, I can send it to you if you want, especially heels and the elbows, you know, as we get older, they get a little bit dry. So I just I can't leave my house without the lotion bar.

JVN: I want it! I want, I need it, I can't live without it! Um Fumiko, do you have like a favorite vintage beauty look from like when you were growing up, like some, like, magazine cover or like a family member or like something that you were just like, oh, that is so stunning?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: OK. For me it's the eighties look with eighties music \*laughs\* yeah. So I put, you know, kind of eighties because that's when I grown up and then I had my, you know, teenager years, like, why not go back that? And in my music, eighties music just echoes in my head and that's how I love to look.

JVN: Oh my god, I love that. You're so fucking cutie. OK, you really are. You're actually just like stunning. I can't get over it. OK, what is he, OK, this is going to be meh or major. So meh is like meh and major is major. Are you ready?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yup.

JVN: OK micro, microcurrent masks?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Major.

JVN: Oooh, facial misting?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Used to be major, but now eh.

JVN: What about 24K gold plated gua sha tools?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Never, never, because I'm allergic to gold.

JVN: Ahh, um wow. What about face cupping?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Major.

JVN: What about LED light therapy?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Oh, my gosh. Big. Yes. Yes. Major.

JVN: What about sheet masks?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Used to be major, but now is, meh.

JVN: What about physical exfoliant or chemical exfoliant?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Oh, that's tough. Used to be both major. But now depend on the products.

JVN: Ahh, ok ok.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yeah.

JVN: What about, what about facial massage gloves? Oh, yeah, like that when you massage, like the inside of your cheeks.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Like a, like a massage? Yeah, major, yeah.

JVN: Ah! Fumiko. Do we have the most fun ever?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: We did. Gosh, I can keep talking to you and then I can either to mimic your moves.

JVN: Oh please do. I want you to mimic my moves all the time. Um and also I am so excited to have met you virtually. I want, where do you live?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: California?

JVN: You in LA?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: No, Sacramento. So Northern California,

JVN: Oh! One of my favorite old clients lives there. Samantha Corbin. Shout out. Yeah, I love her.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Oh Wow. OK. It's very close then.

JVN: She's cool. I love her to pieces. Um Fumoki, I want to meet you someday. You're amazing.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Thank you so much. Me too. I feel like I already know you but oh, that'll be fun. And I want to give you hug.



JVN: I want to give you a big hug. Where um where can people like where are you the most active on social? Are you the most on Instagram or Tik Tok or both?

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Um Instagram. Yeah. And then we have a youtube too, but Instagram is right now currently probably the most um active social media platform.

JVN: Youtube can be hard to keep up with, but I do really like it. I want to bring mine, I'm bringing mine back

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Hmm, yeah same here too.

JVN: I used to do it all the time but I'm bringing it back. We got to bring it back. Fumiko.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yeah, I know, can be a little bit longer. That's why like I have to shoot a couple of videos this week. But yeah, you're right, Youtube.

JVN: We'll bring it back.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Yeah, I will.

JVN: I adore you Fumiko, thank you so much for taking your time to come on Pretty Curious. We just adore you. Thank you so much for using Prewashed Scalp Oil. And if I can, I'd love to send you other products. Can you send us your address? And I'll send you a little JVN routine.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Thank you, oh I love that!

JVN: Yes, Fumiko thank you so much for coming on Pretty Curious. We love you so much.

FUMIKO TAKATSU: Thank you so much, Jonathan.

JVN: You've been listening to Pretty Curious with me, Jonathan Van Ness. You can learn more about this week's guest in the episode description and follow us on Instagram and TikTok @CuriouswithJVN. Pretty Curious drops every Monday wherever you get your podcasts and make sure to tune in every Wednesday for Getting Curious. Still can't get enough? Honey, you're insatiable! Subscribe to Extra Curious on Apple Podcasts for commercial free listening and our subscription only show, Ask JVN, where we're talking all about sex, relationships, or really just whatever's on my mind that week. Our theme music is composed by Nathanael McClure. Come on Nathanael! Our editor and engineer is also Nathanael McClure, yes! Getting Curious is produced by me, Chris McClure and Julia Melfi with production support from Julie Carrillo, Anne Currie and Chad Hall.