

BRINGING YOUR PRACTICE TO LIFE

team player

A yoga-loving basketball coach scores with compassion on the court.

Spend a day in the life of Kenny Robinson, and you might find it hard to believe that this athlete was a desk-

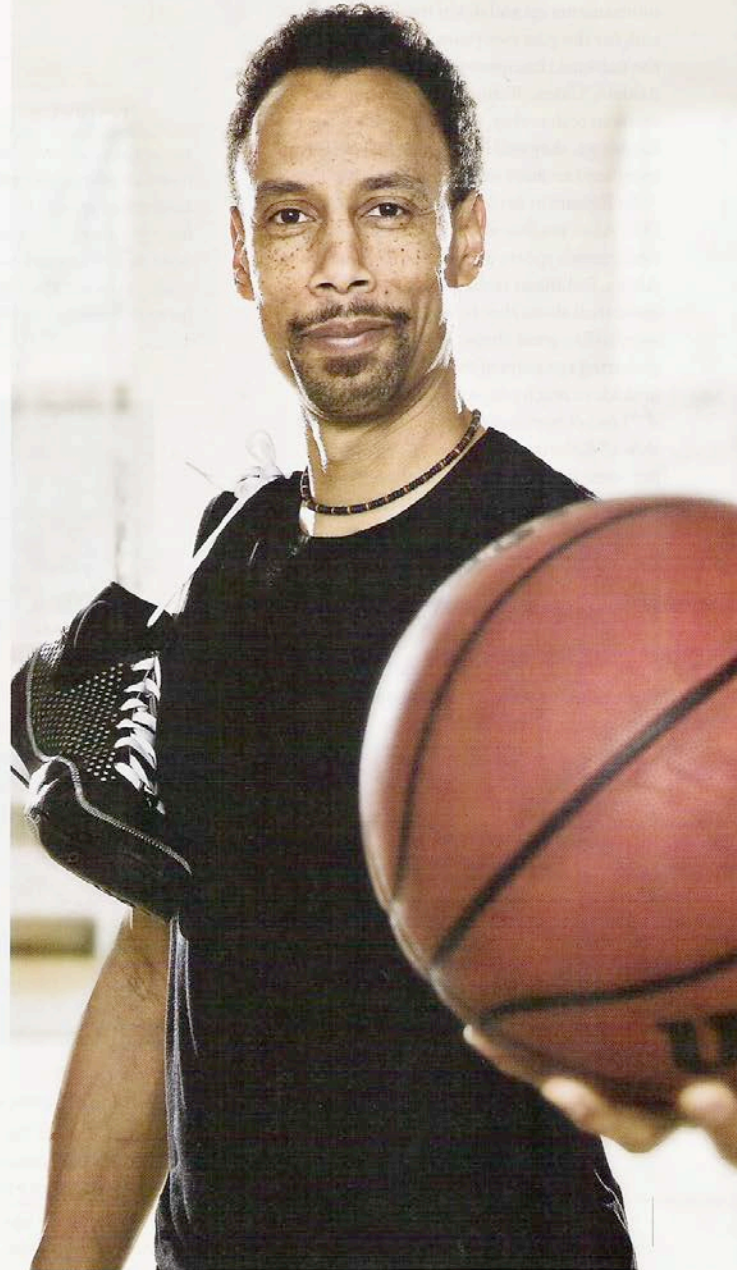
bound accountant for nearly two decades.

Robinson, who lives in Arlington, Virginia, loves to get others moving—whether coaching basketball to middle-school students or teaching yoga to seniors at a local synagogue. He did a yoga teacher training in 2006 and meditates daily.

He gave up his number-crunching career in 2003. Yoga and meditation were keys in helping him uncover his desire to leave spreadsheets behind for a life of mentoring youth.

“Yoga definitely gave me the impetus to change my life,” Robinson says. “Yoga is about compassion, and during my meditation I looked inside and saw that I wanted to help people.”

A self-described basketball junkie, Robinson knew that the game was a good way to reach kids. In October 2003 he started Beyond the Hoop, a nonprofit program in Washington, D.C., that helps kids develop their basketball skills but also emphasizes education. Students must prove that they are keeping up with their schoolwork in order to play ball. Kids who don't are matched up with tutors to



team player

➤ improve their grades. The teams practice nine months of the year, participate in tournaments up and down the East Coast, and, for the past two years, have reached the national championships of the Amateur Athletic Union. Robinson also wants students to realize that, no matter what their hardships, they still live in relative comfort compared to most others on the planet.

So Robinson decided to reach beyond D.C. After reading about Hoops 4 Hope, which sends sports equipment to youth in Africa, Robinson realized he had a lot of basketball shoes that he didn't wear but were still in great shape. He set a goal of gathering 150 pairs of shoes and galvanized his kids to reach out in the community.

"I didn't have anywhere to store so many shoes," Robinson says. "Luckily, we could put some on the stage of the church where we practice." Last year Beyond the Hoop collected more than 2,000 pairs of shoes for Hoops 4 Hope to distribute to young athletes in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Robinson hasn't decided what outreach his kids will do this year, but he wants something local, like a soup kitchen: "They'd see that they have it better than people right here at home." DIANE ANDERSON

sole redemption

You can help put shoes on feet in need.

BOULDER RUNNING Since 1986 these Boulder, Colorado, runners have sent to Third World countries new and near-new athletic shoes along with other athletic equipment. boulderrunning.com

SAMARITAN'S FEET This nonprofit's goal is to equip the feet of "10 million impoverished people, with 10 million pairs of shoes, over the next 10 years." samaritansfeet.org

THE SHOE BANK Founded in 1989, the Shoe Bank provides shoes for 20,000 people—primarily children—every year, both here and abroad. shoebank.org

real world yoga

challenge

My boyfriend loves to play sports, but I love yoga and want him to practice with me. How can I persuade him to come to class?

response

You probably can't. When others try to persuade us to do something, we might hear it as criticism; your boyfriend may feel he's being judged. Instead, practice faithfully yourself. The effects of your practice will become evident to him and might draw him to the practice. Let his natural curiosity build and respond when he asks. This path is challenging, but it's the one most likely to bring results. When and if he does try yoga, the practice will have a greater effect because he will do it for his own reasons. JUDITH HANSON LASATER



SOLE RESPONSIBILITY Runners in Ottawa, Canada, donate used athletic shoes overseas. solesresponsibility.org

SOLES4SOULS This organization helped victims of the 2004 Southeast Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina and has given away 3.1 million pairs of shoes. soles4souls.org

SOLESUNITED Your worn-out Crocs will be recycled, made into new pairs, and donated. So far 1 million pairs of Crocs have gone to countries like Malawi, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic. solesunited.com