

## My yoga journey....

### ...the transformative power of yoga

My first experience of yoga was as a child going to ballet classes after school. My teacher knew someone who taught yoga and used some pranayama to calm us down after our hectic day at school. She always said our balance and concentration were much improved after just 5 minutes of yoga at the start of the class and I loved the feeling of stillness it gave me.

Then I had a boyfriend with a bad stammer who was recommended to a yoga class by his doctor, so we went along to a local school for a Prana Yama class. This was taught by a willowy, silver haired lady called Cath – a teacher taught by Yogini Sunita who brought yoga to the West Midlands and one of the generation that passed their teachings to another of my teacher's - Maureen.

I drifted away from yoga for most of my twenties and thirties, and lost my way in life, ending up with agoraphobia in my mid-30s. Having been made redundant, suffering from panic attacks and fearful of leaving the house, my eye was drawn to a leaflet in my local library. It advertised a Prana Yama yoga class just round the corner from where I lived. Full of trepidation and anxiety I went along and met Maureen in July 1991.

Maureen gave me exactly what I needed – a non-threatening environment, total acceptance, understanding and the opportunity for me to do what was right for me at that time. Lying down made me feel dizzy and felt too open, so, without any fuss being made, I was invited to sit in a chair. The pranayama techniques that she taught started to give me a way out of my imprisonment in the agoraphobia. Over the years, she saw my potential to teach, but I didn't feel ready for that. She is a wonderful teacher and I'll always be so grateful that she was given to me when I needed her.

In November 2003, I was guided to a charity day of yoga, with the opportunity to experience different styles of yoga. Dru yoga was one of them, and I remember leaving full of joy having participated in one of the flowing, heart-opening techniques of Dru, knowing that I wanted more! A year later, Ruth showed up in my life when I went to an amazing Dru workshop. Recovering slowly, I still had problems going far from home, but Ruth taught in Wolverhampton so I went to her classes and continued my healing process with the transformative power of Dru yoga.

Two years later, in 2006, the first Dru yoga Midlands teacher training course began in the centre of Wolverhampton, which was absolutely perfect for me as I still needed to be close to home. With Ruth's encouragement, I started the course and qualified in 2008. I was transformed from someone who was afraid and lacking in confidence into someone who can now stand in front of a class to pass on the teachings .

It's been a 'long and winding road' but I feel like I've been led along it for a reason. Looking back, it's even clearer that it has been more than a series of co-incidences. I've learned so many lessons along the way, had some inspiring teachers and look forward to continuing to share my love of yoga with others.

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