

# how I came to yoga

by Vernetta

I tried Yoga years ago but never really dedicated any time to it to. As with all the other forms of exercise, such as running, aerobics and biking, the novelty always wore off and the weight piled on and on over the years due to the usual bad eating habits, under active thyroid and antidepressants.

In 2002, weighing in at 13 stone (I'm 5'2), my heaviest, I decided that I really needed to do something about it. I saw an advert on the TV for a Yoga DVD that said you only had to do 10 minutes a day. I thought, 'Even I can do that!' So I bought the DVD and started doing 10 minutes a day at first, then 30, until I could work up to the whole 80 minutes. Within a week of doing just 10 minutes, I had lost 4 pounds and I hadn't really changed my diet or anything else. So, from then on, I was hooked on Yoga, practising sometimes even twice a day!

Slowly I felt my tastes and attitude towards food were changing and I only seemed to want or crave 'naughty' foods at the weekend and in smaller amounts. The rest of the time I just didn't want it. After a year and half of following Yoga DVDs and self-teaching, I was 6 stone lighter and feeling better than I had ever done. I was also eating more healthily, although I still enjoyed my weekend naughty's! I even started teaching Yoga to my partner as he saw the obvious benefits it had given me. We started practising together and studying its history and philosophy. All was going so well when I was suddenly struck out of the blue by the devastating news that my partner of 9 years had committed suicide. What can be said about this? There are no words to describe how it feels.

I was so numb and at first Yoga was nowhere in my mind, except for trying to sit and empty it of the whirling bustle of emotions and thoughts that kept invading. After what I believe was about a week, (although everything seemed to be going in slow motion), I felt a longing to do Yoga, if only a little. I suddenly felt this strange sense of strength in me which, even to this day, I don't know where it has come from or why, but things I previously felt unconfident about, were no longer an issue.

Slowly, little by little, Yoga crept back and it helped. It helped calm the myriad questions and emotions I had swimming aimlessly in my head, calmed my breathing when anxious and tired from crying. I felt I had to carry on for my partner's sake. So I had a focus, a focus I so desperately needed at that time.

It took nearly three years to get through it, I wouldn't say get over it as I don't think you ever get over it, but you learn to live with and except it and realise it was that person's choice, not your own. My life had to go on.

There have been other situations since then which have tested me. Yoga has been there for me through them all, even if I wasn't able to concentrate fully on it. I could still do a little when I needed to. I could study its philosophy and could still learn. That is what is so rich about Yoga. There is always something new to learn. It was this that led me to want to teach others Yoga. But I also wanted to work as a counsellor, to help others who had been through similar experiences to myself.



**"I wanted to combine both Yoga and counselling to help both body and mind."**

I not only wanted to teach Yoga but I wanted to do this one to one, as at my heaviest I didn't want to go a class. I felt too self conscious and didn't know if I would succeed. Well of course I could do it, anyone can, but I didn't know that before I started which I think is a common reaction.

I wanted to combine both Yoga and counselling to help both body and mind. I know Yoga already works on both levels, but I wanted to expand on this further - Yoga tailored to individuals' needs through Yoga therapy, and counselling for the times when you just want to talk and have someone to listen or when you need help with certain issues. So I studied counselling, psychotherapy and Yoga teaching/therapy.

Born out of this was Sanctuary, my own website and business, entirely run by myself dedicated to Yoga, fitness, counselling and alternative therapies to which I have had many positive responses and outcomes. I hope that if my partner were here now, he would be proud of me carrying on with something so wonderful and worthwhile. Yoga is the best gift you can give yourself and others.

Further information from Vernetta Butler on Tel: 07906 337594, e-mail: [vernette\\_thecounsellor@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vernette_thecounsellor@yahoo.co.uk), or visit [www.vernyoga.cd2.com](http://www.vernyoga.cd2.com).

