

'How Yoga Helped Me' Article

HOW YOGA HELPED ME

the healing art of  
**Yoga**



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I tried yoga years ago but never really dedicated any time to it, as with any other exercise I had tried like running, aerobics videos and bike riding. The novelty always wore off and the weight piled on and on over the years from the usual bad eating habits, an under-active thyroid and antidepressants which seemed to affect me the worst out of the lot, piling on the pounds despite my diet staying the same.

However it was in 2002 at a weight of 13 stone (I'm 5'2), my heaviest, 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 and I just thought even I can do that!

So I bought the DVD and started doing ten minutes a day at first, then thirty, until I could work up to the whole eighty minutes. Within a week of doing just ten minutes, I had lost four pounds and I hadn't really changed my diet or anything at that time so thought it could only be the yoga. From then I was hooked, even doing it sometimes 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 that kind of food.

After a year and half of doing yoga DVDs and self-teaching, I was 6 stone lighter and feeling better than I ever had. I was eating healthier, although still had my weekend naughtyies! I even started teaching it to my partner as he saw the obvious benefits it had given me and was into it much more than I thought he would be, and both of us 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 nine years had committed suicide. What can be said about this? There are no words to describe how this feels. Your mind cannot comprehend it in the slightest, that my partner didn't die naturally or by accident, but chose to.

I was so numb and at first yoga was nowhere in my mind, except for trying to sit and empty my mind of the whirring 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 that even to this day, I don't know where it came from or why, but things I previously felt unconfident in regards to were no longer an issue.

Slowly, little by little, yoga crept back in and it helped. It helped calm the myriad of questions and emotions I had swimming aimlessly in my head, and it calmed my breathing when anxious and tired from crying and I felt I still had to do it for him, so therefore there was 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 mine. My life had to go on.

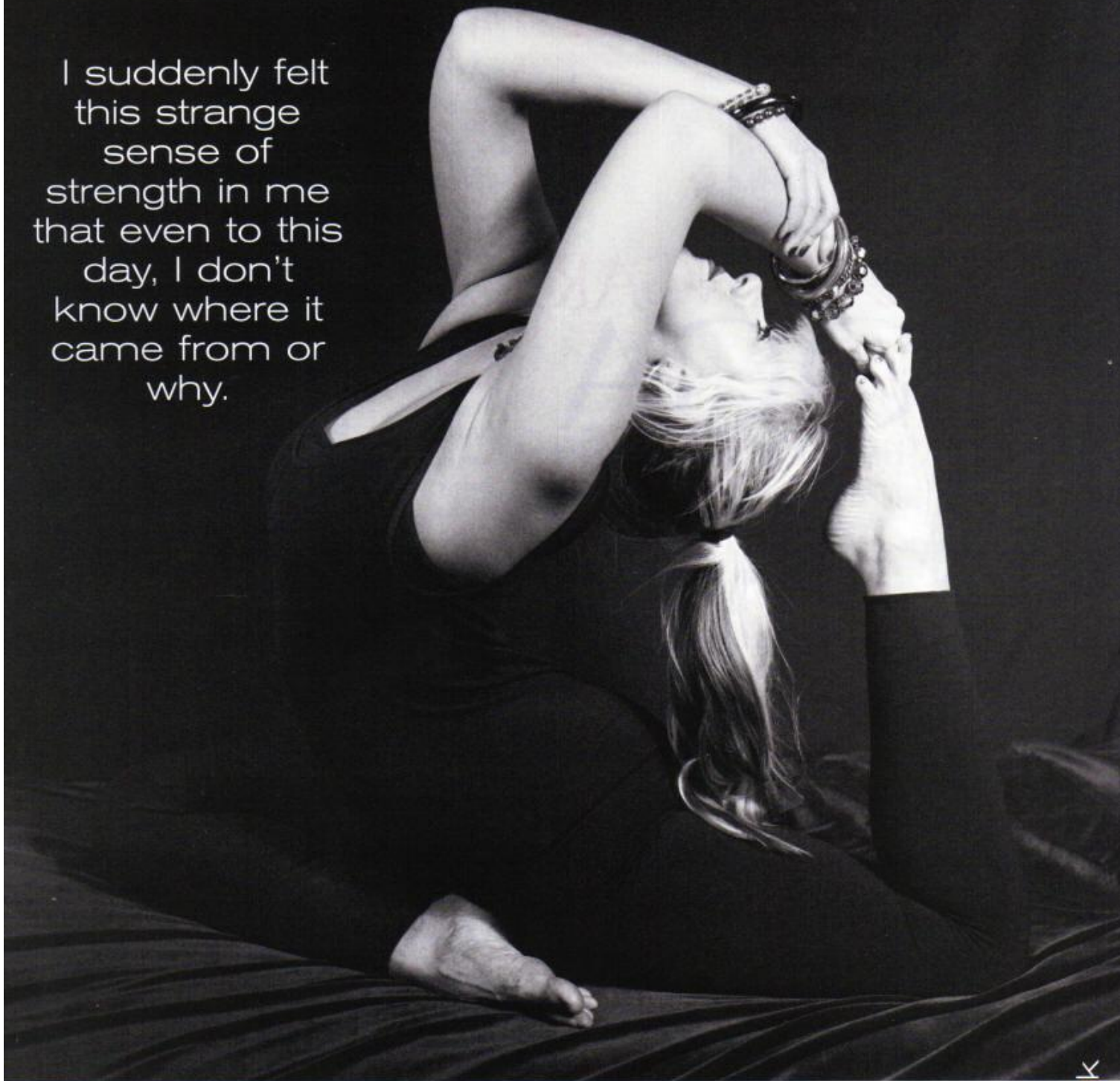
Hence to say there have been other situations since then that have tested me. As in everyone, life and yoga has been there for me through them, even if I wasn't able to concentrate fully on it, I could still do a little when I needed, I could study its philosophy, I could still learn.

**That is what's so rich about yoga; there is always something new to learn.**

And it was this that then led me on to wanting to teach others yoga, but I also wanted to counsel other people that had been through what I had. A lot of the time I per-



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sonally just wanted to talk to someone who knew how I felt and had been through it, and I didn't know who to turn to a lot of the time as there didn't seem to be any group that I knew of solely for suicide "victims" (or "survivors" might be better).

I not only wanted to teach yoga but I wanted it to be more one-to-one, as at my heaviest I never wanted to go a class because I was too self-conscious and didn't know if I would be able to do it. Well of course I could do it, anyone can, but I didn't know that before I started and a lot of people feel like this.

I wanted to combine the two things for both body and mind even though yoga already does this; I wanted to expand on that.

Yoga tailored to individual's needs through yoga therapy and counselling for the times when you just want to talk and someone to listen or when you need help with certain issues.

So I studied for counselling, psychotherapy and yoga teach-

ing/therapy and more, resulting in the umbrella title of life and fitness coach.

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.

**For more information on anything mentioned in the article, please contact me on 07906 337594 or email [vernette\\_thecounsellor@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vernette_thecounsellor@yahoo.co.uk) or visit the Sanctuary website [www.vernyoga.cd2.com](http://www.vernyoga.cd2.com)**

