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I've always felt happiest moving and participated in various dance styles growing up. In my late teens I joined the group fitness scene and later went on to teach classes of my own. For me, movement is my connection to source and when I am moving nothing else seems to matter.

I attended my first yoga class during a period of intense anxiety. My work as a high school counsellor was full on and I was exhausted; working full time and teaching exercise classes in the evening.

That first class shocked me to my core. What I thought would be a leisurely stretch was far from it. I sweated more than I knew possible and worked muscles, tendons and ligaments that I didn't know existed. I had moved for so many years but had never experienced anything like this. It was love at first asana.

What struck me the most was the connection between movement and breath. I had suffered from asthma my whole life and it often got in the way of my fitness and dance yet my breathing was something I had never seriously considered. I began to apply the breath work I had learned in my yoga class to my other movement practices and the results I saw were phenomenal.

I realised that for me, any exercise could become 'yoga' and the exquisite union between breath and movement transferred into my dancing, weight lifting, walking and running. My lung capacity increased, my sense of calm grew and my meditation practice deepened.

As my love for yoga evolved I delved eagerly into the spiritual teachings and began to understand yoga as a whole. It was through ancient teachings such as The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali that I began to realise the untapped potential we as human beings possess. The strange thing is, the more I studied the more I remembered. It is as if I've learnt them all before and my soul consciousness is simply reminding me to take heed. These are now principles by which I guide my life.

It was a particularly intense meditation session that led me to one of the biggest breakthroughs of my life. I realised that if my mind could create anxiety and fear it could also create something beautiful and it was at that point my life changed for the better. I began to use my breathing techniques when the grip of an anxiety attack took hold, or a meditative visualisation when preparing for a big interview. My life unfolded in front of my eyes and day-by-day the anxious fog began to lift.

Of course, I still have days where things are tougher than I would like but I know now that I have the tools to deal with whatever comes my way. Most recently I was faced with a challenging health condition and I managed to support myself through surgery and recover with positive visualisation, meditation, pranayama and post-surgery asana.

Today I not only use yoga in my personal life but I am lucky enough to teach classes and clients 1-1 on a weekly basis. I believe there are many routes to the same destination which is why I imbue yogic teaching, movement and philosophy into many of my classes and not just the yoga sessions. It doesn't matter what we call it, where we do it or what it looks like. It simply matters that we're moving, we are breathing and that we are coming back to ourselves. It is this that reminds me of the beauty of this practice every single day.

WRITTEN BY

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