



Profile on...

Our Yoga Journey

By Wendy Jacob
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Wendy Jacob is a writer and yoga teacher. She teaches classes, pregnancy yoga and the BWY Foundation Course in York. Her interest in yoga is inspired by the teachers she meets and by exploring styles of yoga that are practised around the world. This is part of an ongoing journey of exploration and development which she shares with Spectrum.

Yoga is a journey in many ways – a personal journey that challenges, supports and accompanies you throughout your life. A lifetime of learning and discovery, influenced by teachers who share their wisdom and experience, guiding you along the many paths that yoga offers. Wendy Jacob has been talking to some of today’s leading teachers about their own yoga journey, influences and commitment to yoga.

Diane Long - Scaravelli

Diane Long is in the UK staying with friends in their idyllic, newly-constructed cottage outside Bath. Injury has encouraged her to cut back on some of her teaching, although there is little sign of any lasting damage. She moves with grace and poetic ease, offering a warm welcome and sparking an inner connection as she communicates her deep-felt and enduring commitment to Vanda Scaravelli who has influenced her life and teaching.

She is best known for teaching Intuitive Yoga, following 23 years as a devoted student of Vanda Scaravelli. Born in North Carolina, Diane moved to Italy in the early 1970s where she met Vanda, who invited her to become her student. Diane began teaching in the late 1970s in Italy and later in Canada, England and the United States.

Diane rarely uses the word ‘yoga’, but describes the depth and fluidity of movement as being a personal experience: “It is about knowledge of our own body and personal expression. There is a need to search – exploration without ambition – which never stops.”

Diane was 29 and Vanda was 68 when they met. Diane was athletic – Iyengar and Tai Chi challenging a naturally strong and flexible body. A chance meeting, when Vanda noticed her at a class, and an invitation to lunch initiated a lifetime of commitment: “When I saw her move, I knew what I was looking for,” Diane recalls. She explains that other influences in body movement had not offered the ‘riches’ of what she describes as the Scaravelli ‘approach’. “It is not a system or definable. It allows you to free places within yourself and wake up and address these. When I met Vanda, I could ‘do’. I had to find something different in myself which allowed me to transform within these postures.”

Diane is humble about her own teaching, explaining that when Vanda encouraged her to teach in London, instead of her, she did not feel ready. “I am a slow learner,” she explains, “I loved the teaching, but felt the responsibility and wanted to learn more.” The learning continued, with Diane seeing Vanda two or three times a week and gaining trust in her own ability. “Vanda was in her 80s and I realised she wouldn’t live forever. You