



# HEALTHY LIFE

We met up with 58 old yogi Yvonne Hansen and had an inspiring talk about yoga and WHY yoga is so good for us



# YOGA HAS NO AGE

THURSDAY JUNE 22ND, 2017 BY ANJA POULSEN

For this post I had a talk with Yvonne Hansen , a wonderful 58 years old woman that for sure is a great inspiration to all of us. We talked about her personal journey with Yoga, getting introduced to it at a young age but she didn't really fall in love with it until years later. And now today, she is teaching her own classes and seminars and is about to release her 2. yogabook. Read the great interview [HERE](#)

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**Tell us a little bit about your journey with yoga, when did you first fall in love with it and start to practice and teach for real?**

Yoga came to me early in my life, but I never held onto anything back then. I shopped around a little in the different offers that kept popping up. But in 2005 I decided that enough was enough. It was time for me and my

interests. I wanted to be in good shape and learn more about my body and my mind. First I took a two-year yoga course. Then a one-year pilates course, alongside learning about anatomy and movement. I did it for my own sake, but got thrown into teaching at the beginning of 2006, and discovered that I loved it. Since then it's only grown. I thought it was late to change direction at the age of 46, but there were actually several people who were even older than me at the courses, and more or less all of them have fantastic careers in yoga and pilates today (even though they're over 60 or even 70 years old by now). So it's never too late. I can only recommend doing it, for your own sake if for nothing else; you don't have to teach.

**I think it takes lot of self control to actually keep doing something every day for years; what motivates you, and what benefits does yoga give your body?**

When I was first introduced to Yin Yoga in 2007, it was love at first sight. It's a fantastic supplement to our lives and other forms of exercise. It improves everything in your life. Even though I can't brag about practicing it every day, I still find ways to implement it into my everyday routine. Even if I'm just watching TV or checking social media, I'll sit in a yin pose or lie on my stomach on the floor. Five minutes in a pose a day is better than nothing. I was often dealing with minor injuries from the many hours of pilates, so Yin Yoga became my way of taking care of myself. One thing is for sure: I'm sticking to Yin Yoga, and always will, as I feel a significant difference in my body.

**A lot of people think Yoga is a bit time consuming in our busy life today, is it possible to integrate yoga as a small daily practice that doesn't take hours? If yes, do you have some great poses that are amazing for the stress and tension we all feel because of the need to always be available?**

In everyday life you can do as previously described; implement a pose or two in your routine. It quickly becomes a good habit. Start by spending more time on the floor.

If you really need to calm down, I have two good exercises. The first one is "legs up the wall". Even if you don't have a wall available, put a pillow underneath you (see photo). You can use it as a time-out, a nap in the afternoon, or to calm down with before going to bed. It can remedy insomnia and increase the quality of your sleep. You calm way down, your nervous system relaxes, and your body rests and digests. Blood pressure decreases while a bit more blood flows to your brain. Your whole back lies stretched out, relaxed, and heavy. Imagine how good it would be if there were time for just five minutes like this in the middle of the day. Not only for the nervous system, but also to give the spine a break and give the intervertebral discs a chance to absorb nutrition so they're more shock-absorbent.



Another good little exercise is a combination of a breathing exercise and a meditation. You calm down completely and live in the infamous now, where the body always is.

**Breathing exercise for tranquility and presence: (excerpt form Vol. 2)**

**Sit with crossed arms and a hand in each armpit, so your four fingers point backward and your thumbs point ahead.**

**Press your hands lightly to your chest, close your eyes, and breathe evenly into both hands.**

**Sit like this for 1-5 minutes until your breathing is even and you feel calm and in a better mood.**



**Since you started yoga later on in your life, have you ever felt like your body missed out on a lot of things? Or is yoga something that's never really too late to start practicing?**

It's never too late to start. I have participants over the age of 80, for whom it's made an incredible difference. In Yin Yoga the pose doesn't have to look at certain way. It's about whether you feel a stretch, so you stimulate the connective tissue into becoming stronger and more flexible and make the energy flow. We all have different bodies with an array of infirmities. So it's your anatomy, your body, and your health that determines how you carry out a pose. Do you need another variation? Is there need for additional aid, or maybe an alternative pose?

**Why did you decide to write your book Yin Yoga? Was it an easy journey?**

I wrote "YIN YOGA – Stretch Yourself to Wellness Vol. 1" because I couldn't help myself. There's been written a lot of book about yoga and the different branches of yoga, but only a few about Yin Yoga, and none in Danish until now. My lovely participants were the ones that encouraged me when I moved to Stockholm in the fall of 2012. The move gave me the time and opportunity to write. It was like a seed being sown. A sprout that kept growing and continues to do so.

Previously I primarily taught pilates, but I could tell that the participants lacked flexibility in order to feel comfortable in their bodies, like I, myself, had experienced. Therefore I introduced them to Yin Yoga. They would've never signed up for it if they hadn't known me already. Yoga can, for some people, be associated with incense and Lotus poses. To include this demographic in the book, my approach became no nonsense, easily accessible, and without sanskrit names or too many yoga terms. And I hit my mark.

It's been a satisfying and educational journey. A huge piece of work, but the satisfaction is great when the book gets received as intended. I'm happy.

At first I contacted different publishers, but was told there weren't many yoga books out there. They didn't didn't address the fact that Yin Yoga, specifically, is a bit different, and a newer branch of yoga. I decided to publish myself; make a website and all the other practical stuff that follows. You have to keep yourself going when you get older. Learn new things, they say. That's what I've done and continue to do, and it's a major satisfaction and privilege.



**You're actually releasing another book after the summer, what's it about?**

**YIN YOGA – Stretch Your Way to Wellness Vol. 2** is written as a continuation of the ground book, **YIN YOGA – Stretch Yourself to Wellness Vol.1**, but can easily stand alone and be read as an independent book. It's for those who already practice Yin Yoga, but want to be inspired to go a little deeper with their practice. Vol. 2 contains, amongst other things, the poses from Vol. 1 with new variations, a lot of completely new poses, 20 programs lasting 20-30 minutes each, suggestions for weekly programs, meridians and other energy terms, relevant anatomy, and meditation with exercises.

**And do you have any other exciting future projects you want to share?**

My next project is to make audio files for the programs in Vol. 2 so you can close your eyes and practice whilst being guided through them. At the same time I'm considering making a poster or postcard or the like for all the poses from Vol. 2 so it's always easy to bring with you or hang up where you practice.

When I wrote Vol. 1, the hardest part was picking and choosing. I have too much I want to share, but for the message to remain simple, I had to scrap about 75%. So I've always felt that I have three books in me. Maybe there'll be a Vol. 3, but for now Vol. 2 has to come out first. I won't reveal any of the content of Vol. 3 right now, since I know from experience that nothing is set in stone until the writing process starts.



**And lastly, if you could pick 4 healthy things that you think everyone should do because it really makes a difference health-wise, what would that be?**

1. Move and preserve yourself – it's important to exercise your whole life. Walk or run. The most important part is finding the kind of exercise that makes you happy.
2. Spend more time on the floor – like indigenous peoples, you can remain strong and flexible your entire life if you just spend a bit of time on the floor every day. It doesn't have to be a special Yin Yoga pose. Lie on your

stomach, sit in different positions, and don't make it harder than it actually is.

3. Meditate – Formally – sit down and focus on your breathing, as explained above. Informally – be present in all that you do. Try it; it provides self-awareness in behavior and patterns and increases quality of life.

4. Be thankful just once a day – Say thank you for everything you have, and everything that comes your way, even if it's "just" access to clean water, a roof over your head, and the fact that you can breathe. Focus on the good and it will come your way.

<http://www.my8days.com/2017/06/22/yoga-no-age/>

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