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StoryLane

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From Pigeon to Warrior:
Linda's Journey to Inner Strength and
Confidence through Yoga & Mindfulness

From Pigeon to Warrior: Linda's Journey to Inner Strength and Confidence through Yoga & Mindfulness

"Bring your right knee forward between your hands and place it down for Pigeon pose." - I lie there, feeling the tension in my hip. Tears immediately well up in my eyes. What I feel is not physical pain but emotional pain. In almost every yoga class, I find myself crying, especially during hip-opening exercises. More than once, I've asked myself why I do yoga if I'm the one who ends up crying halfway through the class.

Even though it was difficult and required overcoming obstacles, I had a gut feeling back then that yoga and mindfulness were critical companions on my journey to finding myself again and healing my emotional and spiritual wounds.

How my love for yoga began

At the beginning of my yoga and mindfulness journey, I was far from being who I am today. In my early twenties, I was shy and often relied on others for guidance. After a traumatic experience, I lost all my self-confidence. In essence, I had also lost most of my joy for life. I questioned whether I even wanted to continue living like this. The more I pondered this question, the clearer it became that I wasn't willing to give so much power to a single experience. I consciously chose to confront my fears and work on myself. I went to a therapist twice a week. With her help, I aimed to gain control over my fears, traumas, and stress-related eating disorders. Besides work and therapy, there wasn't much going on in my life. My family and friends were a tremendous support for me. The real challenge was finding my way back to myself, being independent, making decisions, and even doing things alone. Hobbies like going for a run were inconceivable to me at that time. My fear of being outside alone was too great. I also didn't want to go to the gym. Too many strangers. That's why I started going to yoga twice a week.

I always went to the same studio with the same teacher and almost always saw the same people. This routine and stability made me feel safe in the yoga studio. Everyone there was on the same wavelength, and everything was fine. One day, I found myself alone on my mat in the middle of the class, tears streaming down my face. At first, it scared me to be seemingly helpless to my emotions on the yoga mat. The only thing that kept me from getting up and leaving was that it would have been really embarrassing. Towards the end of the class, I found calm again, and it felt like a part of the burden I carried had rolled off with my tears onto the mat. Over time, I learned I wasn't as helpless as I thought. I could face a small portion of my pain, feel it, and sometimes even let it go, one yoga class and one Pigeon pose at a time.

This went on for about a year - work, studies, therapy, and yoga, yoga, more yoga. Gradually, I became more confident and learned to cope with my fears. Then I slowly reconnected with life. At the same time, I completed my studies and signed up for my first (definitely not last ;)) yoga teacher training. It was a big step for me to travel alone for two weeks of yoga training in Berlin. Fortunately, I already knew some other participants, so the training wasn't entirely unfamiliar and new to me. I intended to learn more about myself and immerse myself in yoga for two intense weeks, so I enrolled in this yoga teacher training. At that time, I couldn't imagine that I would be teaching myself just a few weeks after this training.

On the edge of my comfort zone - my first yoga teacher training

Until that point, yoga was something that happened to me. In the classes I attended, I was merely a passenger, going from point A to point B. That changed dramatically with the training. In those two weeks, I was kicked out of my comfortable passenger seat and put behind the wheel of my own vehicle. I had a wealth of new yoga and meditation knowledge and was ready to take the lead. I started doing yoga and meditation almost daily. Some days it looked textbook-perfect, while others resembled a child rolling around on the floor, and on some days, I simply lay on my mat and cried.

All of it was important and gradually made me feel better in my body. I learned to trust my body through arm balances and other challenging postures. It supports and carries me in every situation. My body became more flexible and stronger, and I grew mentally and emotionally stronger. Above all, I became more comfortable in dealing with my emotions. I learned that it's okay to have unpleasant feelings, anger, fear, and sadness and that the only way out usually leads right through them. The path between ignoring feelings and being overwhelmed by them can be narrow. Over time, I became better at listening to my intuition. I sensed when it was the right time to take action and what I needed.

**Sharing is caring - my path to becoming
a yoga and mindfulness coach.**

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It has been almost five years since my first teacher training. A few weeks ago, I completed my third comprehensive yoga training. I haven't been in therapy for nearly four years now. Although my fears occasionally make themselves heard, I have learned to manage them well. Most importantly, I have rediscovered my joy in life! Moreover, I have learned to live more in the present moment and soak up all the adventures and magic life offers.

Motivated by my experiences, I have immersed myself in yoga and mindfulness over the past years. I have read numerous studies and even conducted my own research on Mindful Leadership. I was fascinated by the study results indicating regular meditation can change the brain's structure. Everything I have learned and tried over the past years, I did for myself because it helped me. From working on myself and my meditation practice to the yoga classes I attend and teach and even leading my team until recently, I have noticed that mindfulness has these effects on other people and me (as the studies also show). It is my heartfelt project to share and pass on everything I have learned as a yoga teacher and mindfulness coach.

In the "Mindful Leadership" masterclass, you will learn more about integrating mindfulness into your everyday life. I will share some of my favorite mindfulness exercises and explain why I believe Mindful Leadership is an essential and helpful tool for all of us, regardless of our position or life situation. You don't have to be in a leadership position or employed to benefit from these principles.

I look forward to seeing you in the masterclass!