

Physiomatters

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10 Years... the challenge

This year sees us enter our 10th year of business. To celebrate we are undertaking our '10 Year Challenge' which will include some personal challenges and '10 Acts of Kindness' in the local community to raise money for selected local charities.

How it all began

When Liz pointed out that I was entering my 10th year in business I have to admit I was shocked. 10 years! That means that my youngest son, Matthew, had only turned 1 when I started out.

August 2008, Paul and I dismantled the dining room table and set up the new treatment couch that my mother-in-law had so kindly bought for me. I had no patients, no-one knew who I was. I had walked away from a steady part time position in another practice that should have been good enough whilst the boys were younger. What was I thinking?

I hadn't given up my corporate career, spent three years studying for 'good enough'. Working in the private sector, showed me that you could truly use the manual skills, intellect and reasoning that physio school had taught me. But I wanted more.

I wanted the freedom and the choices that being my own boss would give me.

Armed with a one-page web site and an A-board, I dragged out of hibernation the sales and marketing skills that my 6 years in corporate account management had taught me; I went looking for clients.

And slowly, slowly they came, they found me online, and they sent their friends and family.

A chance meeting on the river bank with the ladies' coach at Bradford Amateur Rowing Club, led not only to a valuable source of clients but an ongoing friendship. In the years since I met Julia, we've cycled the Dales, the Great Yorkshire bike ride and the Coast to Coast, and although I could no longer keep up with Julia's herculean rides every Sunday, it's unlikely that I would ever have done those things without her. Not to mention how organised she is the half day she's in the office.

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Whether you believe in luck or that we make our own fate, another chance encounter resulted in the addition to the business of my first physiotherapist. Right at the point when I was looking to expand from my dining room and take premises in Bingley – Katie contacted me about a job. All the stars lined up that day and 6 years on she continues to be invaluable, not only to the success of the business but to all her clients and to me personally.

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'Yoga Joe'

Joe, former competitive cyclist & runner, found yoga through wanting to improve his running and lessen injury risks. He now devotes 12 hours a week to practice & teaching. Here Joe explains how this transition occurred...



What first led you to commence on your yoga journey?

I'd been competing in off road marathons and trail races for a while, and I really didn't do a great deal of post run stretching other than the cursory quad stretch at the front door. As my mileage increased I intuitively felt that I needed to offset this somehow. My wife had a yoga DVD that had been sitting on the shelf for ages, and I thought I'd give it a go; I was looking for a short sequence that I could stick to which would help me to create a regular regime of stretching and core work. I wanted to feel a little more ease in my body when I wasn't running rather than for performance gain. I soon started to develop a regular home practice, 3 or 4 times, of 15 minutes or so in the morning before breakfast. A few months later I turned up at my first class.

Yoga benefits runners by increasing flexibility, improving mobility, but how does your running now benefit your yoga practice?

That's an interesting question. During my yoga teacher training, and the following year, I avoided running entirely. I felt that my body needed

some space to adjust to what was by then a more vigorous style of yoga (Ashtanga) after a lifetime of cycling and running; this is still a work in progress I have to say! After the break from running, I was reticent about starting again, in case it affected my yoga practice. Eventually I ventured out on the trail, and as long as I keep the runs short I feel that running can benefit my practice. Ashtanga is particularly demanding of the upper body, and a quick blast on the trail nicely loosens me up. When I started running again, I also noticed a feeling of additional strength in my legs when in the standing yoga postures. I couldn't do the yoga practice that I do now and do the running that I used to do however, you have to dedicate yourself to one or the other.

'Runners mindset' – how have you harnessed/calmed the competitive side of your brain?

Competition is at odds with the practice of Yoga, but you still need drive and motivation to get on the mat every morning, especially at this time of year, so I think that the discipline and focus that I had when a runner has helped me in my yoga practice. On the flip-side, when out training or racing, I found that trying to cultivate an attitude of openness and acceptance to circumstances as they arose, a attitude taken from my yoga practice, helped me to be more relaxed in my running, mentally and physically, whilst still battling to perform as well I could of course!

How has your body changed since changing the balance to more Yoga?

My posture has definitely improved, and of course I have a greater range of movement as my flexibility has increased, and my breathing feels freer. I also have much more core and upper body strength than when I was just running.

Would you say you are healthier now?

From a cardiovascular point of view, I think that I was very much fitter when I was running more. But am I healthier? A regular Ashtanga yoga practice has helped me to increase the openness and flexibility in my chest, giving me more space to breathe. Physically I have better all round strength and flexibility. I think it is all about getting the right balance. Perhaps ultra distance running is a little extreme, but very attractive to a certain type, of which I was (am?) one!

Would you recommend Yoga to someone interested in improving their general health and well being?

Yes! It is a great way to improve strength, balance, flexibility, and general body awareness. It requires dedication to keep up a practice and to start to see some of these benefits, but you may still leave your first class feeling more relaxed, contented, or even energised. From there, who knows where the practice may take you?

There are many different types of Yoga, how would someone work out which is the right one for them?

As long as you have no major physical difficulties (not being physically flexible doesn't count!) then the most important thing is to seek out a class that is at an appropriate level; suitable classes might be billed as "level 1", "beginners", or "open level". Another great introduction to yoga is through a beginners course. You will soon know if a style, or even the teacher, is right for you.

What would you say has been the greatest benefit from your Yoga practice?

It has given me more self awareness, from both a physical and mental point of view, from which I hope to be in a position to better respond to life!

Joe teaches at HeatherYoga in Saltaire www.heatheryoga.co.uk

A Tale of Two Knees Prue Kiddie

Prue Kiddie explains how she is finally seeing the benefit of all her hard work after years of living with bad knees.

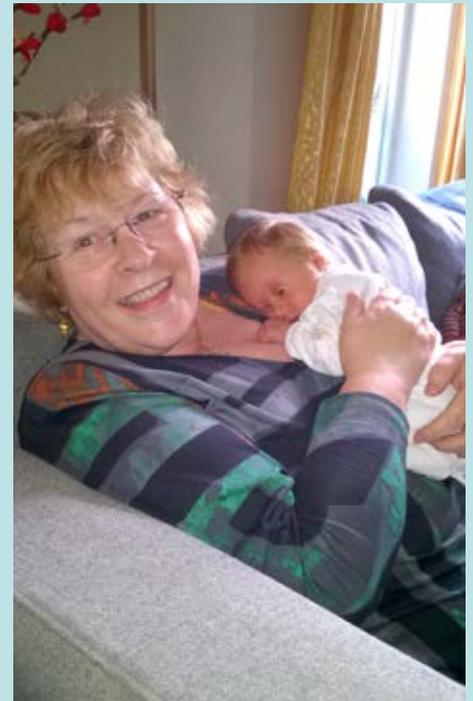
In 2013, my GP decided that my alarming headaches were caused by my arthritic knees and not a brain tumour.

Jacqui diagnosed how my whole body had adapted to the dodgy knees and helped me with hands-on therapy and an exercise plan to walk more efficiently and with less pain. However, it was clear that I still needed a left knee replacement but the surgeon wouldn't do the operation until I lost a significant amount of weight. While I was working on the weight loss, Jacqui helped me to manage the knees.

Shortly after the knee replacement, with some expert physio and targeted exercises, I had a totally straight leg and a wonderfully neat scar (I didn't realise that manipulating scars was another of Jacqui's skills). The

operation changed my life, and my quick recovery seemed like a miracle. It was then time to deal with the right leg that was seriously affecting my walking and causing back pain. I'd done so well after my first operation that my surgeon had no hesitation in replacing the right knee in October 2015.

Within three years, I went from an almost immobile lump to someone who was walking normally and going to the gym three times a week. Now, at 65, I continue to exercise regularly, walk everywhere and have lost 4 stone (and counting). I can't remember when I felt so well. Advancing years and the occasional overenthusiastic gym session mean I still sometimes need a "tweak" from Jacqui plus regular massages and reflexology from Liz, to keep myself in full working order. I now have every intention of staying fit and healthy forever.



RECIPE

Curried Sweet Potato Soup

4 servings

This bright and flavourful soup for the cold winter months that uses sweet potatoes for its base and ginger, curry powder and coriander for flavour. It is an excellent source of nutrients to reduce inflammation.



Ingredients

- 1 tbsp canola oil
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, smashed
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 1½ pounds sweet potatoes peeled and chopped
- 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh ginger
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- Chopped coriander for garnish

Directions

1. Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic and curry powder, and cook about 30 seconds, stirring constantly.
2. Add sweet potatoes, onion, ginger, and broth, and bring to boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until sweet potatoes are easily pierced with a fork (about 20 to 25 minutes).
3. Working in batches, purée soup in a blender or use an immersion hand blender to blend soup until smooth.
4. Divide between four bowls and top with chopped fresh coriander. Serve with naan bread.

SKINNY BOB'S CORNER

Did you know that the largest bone in the human body is the femur? It can support 30 times the weight of a person's body.

Bone is five times stronger than a steel bar of the same width, but it is brittle and can fracture on impact.



Front page article

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It took a little while longer before Matthew joined us. Another crazy connection – his mum was my health visitor and had supported me whilst I cried on her shoulder frequently about how I couldn't finish my physio degree with a 3 month old baby! Of course I did finish it and when Matthew qualified a few years later, we began on our exploration through the world of physio, coffee and chocolate together!

My initial intention had been to create something that would provide me with a vehicle to challenge myself intellectually and satisfy my own personal desires to learn whilst being a mother. Once I stepped off into the precipice of involving other people on my wanderings it has become so much more. My ambition became to build an environment where all those who make a connection with it will thrive and be fulfilled in their lives. Wow! That sounds a bit naff when I actually write it down.

What I mean by this is

- Firstly, my desire is to offer exceptional care to all my clients – use those 'magic manual' skills so that everyone has the opportunity to live a full and active life.
- Secondly, to deliver that care in a place where the therapists can flourish and develop - to go and do interesting things and be interesting people.

Have I got anywhere close to achieving that? You'd have to ask them.

I will keep on climbing to see where the next 10 years will take us.

It's not always been easy, in fact it's been hard! But I've always had a choice ... and that is the most empowering feeling to have. I get the pleasure of meeting people and getting to impact their lives and share in their joy (and often frustration) as they find their way back to where they want to be. I hope that those who have crossed our path would echo this.

Since Liz sowed that initial seed of the idea of a 10 year Challenge, it has grown to something that I aspire will Make A Difference over the next 10 months.

The '10 Acts of Kindness' aims to make a difference, even a small one, to the lives of people in the community – some that we already know and many that we do not... well not yet.

Our personal challenges - Running races, open water swimming, triathlons, learning to horse ride, speak Dutch, walk the Yorkshire 3 Peaks – we don't know what Matthew has decided to do yet – he's most probably hatching some grand plan to take over the world with his mind-altering powers. There's no doubt that the past 10 years have been a roller-coaster and the ride is most definitely not over.

Many of you that know me will know how much I love rugby and reading and I discovered some thought-provoking Maori proverbs in a book I read about the All Blacks called 'Legacy':

"Aim for the highest cloud, so that if you miss it, you will hit the lofty mountain."

Sport Massage the whys and wherefores

What is Sports Massage?

Sports Massage combines the use of Swedish massage with additional, more intensive techniques for the prevention and treatment of sports injuries. It's a versatile treatment and can be used as:

- part of a training programme to help prevent injury,
- part of a rehabilitation programme to treat injury,
- part of a warm up of an event,
- part of the cool down after the event.

Where does it come from?

The modern history of sports massage started at the 1924 Olympic Games. Paavo Nurmi from Finland brought a personal massage therapist to the running competition and won 5 gold medals. Nurmi claimed that his train-

ing program included this special massage treatment.

But It wasn't until the 1972 Olympic games, that it finally caught on, when Finnish track and field star Lasse Viren (aka the Flying Finn) won gold in the 5km and 10km running races and credited his wins to the deep friction massages he got before and after races.

Now we can't promise that you'll win Olympic Gold, but we'll help give you the best chance to achieve it!

Can it benefit non-Sporty people too?

Like other forms of massage, Sports massage helps improve the suppleness and flexibility of muscles and joints. It improves lymph and blood circulation and assists the body systems in functioning at their optimum level.

But there is an alternative if you find Sports Massage just that bit too intense! Holistic Massage can offer the same deep tissue benefits but in a more relaxing environment, so you gain the benefits of relaxation too! And do remember, that every treatment is bespoke to you and your level of comfort.

