

Enough-ness, is a concept that I have carried with me my whole life. If I work harder, I will be good enough. Once I can do the splits, I will be good enough to be a yoga teacher. Maybe, I should start all over again to prove I am enough. Self improvement in order to be 'enough' has been a goal of mine in many areas of my life. This idea that once something is achieved, I will be joyful and free. This reflection is the journey of an ego lead yoga practice based on self improvement that evolved into a felt sense approach that allows me to fully express what is true. When finding my new chapter, I began the journey of finding myself, through the self.

My yoga practice has been a constant in my life, both through asana and meditation which has adapted through my seasons. After having a stroke, I leaned on my yoga practice to ease my thoughts, aided me to find movement accessible when I was often fatigued and to get to know a body that I felt so disconnected from. It was in these moments I felt the calling to become a yoga teacher, to hold space in another form of creative expression that would help others the way it helped me. To finally become who I was meant to be. In the book *Tantra Illuminated*, Christopher D Wallis states, "The great Master Abhinava Gupta suggest to us that if your practice from the perspective that you are not good enough as you are, or that there is something wrong with you that need fixing, then your yoga cannot fulfil its ultimate purpose because it is a practice founded on the wrong understanding." This challenges the perception that using yoga as a form of escaping or self improvement gives the practice limited purpose. When I relate this to my own agenda of fulfilling my yoga teacher career, I am able to make comparisons in how my ego mind has pioneered my practice. When practicing yoga I had often intended to escape from my racing thoughts and try to transcend to somewhere else completely in order to find freedom. The intention when I arrived on my mat was that I would leave feeling a renewed sense of self, a better sense of self than what I was when I first landed on the mat. This was often achieved by being in another reality and ignoring the feelings that would arise. However, in truly arriving in the moment I could start to fully accept myself and not strive for self improvement. In the weeks that followed during my yoga teacher training, I had one intention when I arrived on the mat, which was to fully arrive in this moment and to honour the courage it took to get there. Each time I arrived; my

perception of self shifted. I listened more, I accepted more, I felt more. Every practice was a different dance that I expressed and allowed to move in and around me, but was true in that moment. I would lose myself in the dance of life but would find myself at the same time. I began to feel all the parts of my physical anatomy and their felt sense to uncover deeper levels of self. When I connected to my skeleton system, I would feel its grounding and stability and the fluidity around it. When I felt my muscles, I could feel their alertness and heard their stories of growth and loss. When I felt my nervous system I felt the rivers of it's communication allowing my inner and outer world to become one. Through my endocrine system I found balance and hidden layers of awareness

All my parts spoke to me and all I had to do when I arrived on the mat was listen. This is supported in 'Wisdom of the body moving' as Linda Hartley suggests that by "embodying a specific system, you can pattern yourself into a certain mind to suit the activity." Hartley also states that psychological imbalance is expressed in the organs which reflect the function which is disturbed. This brings me back to why I began my yoga teacher training. I felt disconnected in my body after having a stroke, an imbalance in my heart that forced me to slow down physically and mentally. Through the heart "love and compassion, for ourselves, others and life itself - are felt and expressed." This dances with the principle of - if we can not fully love ourselves, our whole self, we cannot fully express that love to others and therefore not fully express ourselves in life. Hartley also furthers this notion by stating "Life can no longer sustain when the heart stops beating." Emotionally, at the time of my stroke, I was not living fully. I had lost the meaning of life and my values. I was not listening to my truth and therefore not expressing my love for others and life itself. Now when I connect to my heart, I feel her power and strength. I feel how she holds my expression and connectivity the world. When my heart speaks, she lets me know we are enough, this is all enough.

All I strived for was always inside of me. I just had to listen.

When I look back on my yoga practice before I started my yoga teacher training, I see how it was used to escape from myself or to fix what I perceived as broken. After completing my 200 hours I now step onto my mat with full exploration and acceptance of the moment. What I wanted to gain from my

teacher training was a 'new beginning.' The notion that I would be a changed person, a new person. However, through body, mind centering and embedding the principles of tantra into my practice I have not necessarily become a new person I have just woken up. Now every time I move and listen to what my body has to say. I allow what is inside of me move and with that I feel everything else around me move. Underpinning the tantric system of thought that within us is the universe and within the universe is us. There is no more fixing or searching for something more, just being what is, and knowing that is enough. I am enough.