

# From Clinical Practice to Rediscovery: A glimpse into a Doctor's Journey Through Loss and Embodiment

This is a brief introduction of the transformative journey from being a medical professional to becoming a yoga teacher and embodiment coach.

There are themes of loss, rebirth, and the profound realisation and story offering hope and resilience, emphasising the potential for growth and discovery even in the face of personal upheavals.

This is for professionals in all fields, and I hope encourages you to see beyond roles and titles, and to fulfilment and identity in the continuous evolution of personal and professional lives.

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## **Introduction**

In the world of medicine, where assessment, diagnosis, treating, and even saving lives is the daily agenda, rarely do we discuss the lives of the professionals - particularly when they're the ones in need of support. This is a tale not just of loss, but of metamorphosis and new beginnings.

Coming from the realm of mental health, where nurturing the functioning of a person as a whole, we often overlook the personal journeys of those who are the professionals.

The arrival of a persistent illness or health challenge, brings a fog of loss, from the deep sense of disconnection from our own essence as healers. This narrative unfolds not just a story of loss, but of transformation and rebirth.

## **Background**

For 25 years, I was deeply woven into the fabric of the medical profession, a psychiatrist rising to the pinnacle of my career and recognised as a national expert in a highly specialised area. My identity, my passion, and my daily life were intrinsically linked to my work in the healthcare system. I thrived on the team cohesion and the immense rewards that came from making a difference in the lives of the people and families we helped, often working long, exhaustive hours driven by a commitment to meet the needs of a niche population.

## **The unexpected change**

However, life, with its unanticipated twists, introduced me to a chapter where I became the 'patient', facing persistent health issues that no amount of determination or medical intervention seemed to alleviate. The realisation hit hard that the very system I had devoted my life to could not restore my wellness in a way that would allow me to continue my work.

## **The journey of grief**

This acceptance did not come easily. It was akin to a process of grieving, mourning not just my career but my identity. I had lost not only my vocation but the future I had envisioned. But within this cocoon of grief and loss, transformation was quietly taking place.

## **New beginnings**

The necessity of leaving medicine led me to explore who I was outside of the medical framework. This exploration took me down paths I had never envisioned for myself. I trained as a yoga teacher and a coach, and found myself drawn deeply into the world of embodiment - the practice of understanding and engaging with the body's wisdom, and recognising ourselves as whole beings - a whole body, not separated into sections.

It did not occur to me that I was creating a new pathway at the time, as it unfolded so organically, I was carried on a current of curiosity and excitement.

## **Surprise and adventure**

To my surprise, not only did new passions and meanings in life emerge, but I also discovered a new identity. I developed programs that leveraged the lens of embodiment for two distinct groups—fellow medical professionals grappling with their own stressful lives and challenges and individuals facing persistent health issues, whose lives had been shattered much like my own.

## **Supporting Others**

For my peers still in the throes of their medical careers, I offered support and insights into managing their well-being through embodiment practices, recognising the profound stress and demands placed upon them.

For those who, like me, found their lives irrevocably changed by health challenges, I crafted a program fostering resilience, self-compassion, and a rediscovery of joy and purpose beyond their conditions. Along with this has developed a real community, offering mutual support and understanding between members.

This work has proven to be incredibly fulfilling, resonating with a deep truth that I had always known as a practitioner - wellness is not solely the absence of illness, but the harmonious unity and understanding of the mind, body, and spirit, all as one body.

### **The message of hope and discovery**

In sharing this introduction of the story, a glimpse into my own transition from a medical professional to a yoga teacher, an embodiment coach, facilitator, teacher, the message is one of hope and resilience. The grief process is real and can feel all-consuming, especially when what is lost is so intertwined with our sense of self. Yet, within this space of loss, there is immense potential for rebirth and discovery.

### **A message to others**

To those in the medical profession, and indeed any profession, facing similar upheavals—know that while one chapter may close, sometimes painfully, endless pages await to be written. Life has a way of guiding us into spaces where we can flourish in ways we never anticipated, offering us the chance to contribute and find fulfillment in new, meaningful ways.

The transition from healing others to facilitating my own process of healing and then offering it outward again has been a profound lesson in embodiment itself. It underscores a fundamental truth that our work and professions, while significant, do not wholly define us. Rather, it's the continuous evolution of our identity, our willingness to engage with our deepest selves, and the impact we create from that place of authenticity that truly defines who we are.

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