

Getting Comfy with Discomfort

An essential ingredient in the quest for your yoga teaching mojo!

I grew up in the 80s in New Zealand and wore a lot of 'turtle neck tops' or what mum would call, 'skivvies'.

Have you ever tried to put on a skivvy that's too tight? You pull and pull and pull, your face gets kinda squashed travelling the loong neck tube, your arms increasingly constricted as they push towards the tapered ends... cue a rapid anxiety acceleration and before long, a frenetic limb thrashing dance in an attempt to get the damn thing off as fast as possible! Once free of this skivvy scourge with said item flung far away, the essential jump and shake session occurs to rid yourself of the resonant sensations before reaching for your trusty sweater.

Been there? I have, many times.

What's this got to do with yoga? Well...the intense constricted, raspy, disorientating & suffocating feelings that characterise this 'too tight' skivvy episode, I think, are the perfect descriptions of 'discomfort'. And as a yoga teacher seeking more than the 'cookie cutter' teaching style, learning how to get comfy with discomfort is key.

The quest for what really drives you as a teacher begins with the recognition that the discovery process is not going to be that comfy and I'm afraid, nor is finding your footing as that teacher with the Mojo. But I promise you this, teaching as you, teaching from your experience, unashamedly sharing your perspective, inviting people to research and journey with you is one of the most delicious and humbling experiences.

I really want to understand my agency, teach from a place of authorship, and boldly articulate my ideas lived through the filter of my particular and unique perspective. I think this is the most juicy, provocative and rewarding communication out there. It is deeply affecting & powerful teaching.

Much of the time, meeting your self ain't pretty. Even when it is and you're besotted with your own reflection, you're socialised not to enjoy that space either. When it comes to putting you, your passions, your ideas out there in front of people, it can be terrifying and embarrassing. Not to mention the hours spent convinced of your fraudulence! But it is a fact that friction forges evolution.

You may know mentally what discomfort is and some general situations that make you uncomfortable, but actually feeling into discomfort it self and really examining when it arises is a fascinating and highly productive process. It not only helps to identify road blocks which are sabotaging your growth and only serve to perpetuate the easier dance of playing small, but this examination enables you to appreciate what you already know implicitly. Your discomfort is in fact essential to your forging as a skilled facilitator, mover and shaker in your community. Friction is critical to your living and continued development – it is in fact your friend.

So, your mission: take yourself to your nearest Op Shop, buy a 'too tight' skivvy and put everything you've got into getting that thing on and wearing it. Watch what comes up. Then come join Olivia Bryant and myself for *Turned On Teacher - Module One of our Indie Teacher Training Series, next weekend - 17th & 18th May.*