

yoga behind bars

A regular column from The Prison Phoenix Trust
From Danielle, HMP Buckley Hall

Just read a caption by Albert Einstein: 'A human being is part of the whole world called by us 'universe,' a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness.' It made me gasp! Seriously! This may seem minor to you, but to me a major realisation has just occurred. I've been trying to figure out what I mean when I say 'I didn't feel real as a kid and still don't.' I've not been able to put it into words, just like, I've always known there was more. I don't know what it is I've always felt or what 'more' is, but I feel it. Only now I know what I feel is right. What I've just written may not make the slightest bit of sense to you; I just feel really excited so I'm finding it hard to explain myself.

'Real' is what I've been searching for since I was 5 or 6 years old. I've tried my damndest not to believe in God and have come up with every argument possible to deny that God exists. But something freaky's going on here. I don't understand why but I feel like laughing, this smile won't leave. It's like, 'Ha ha Danielle. Explain that one with your big words and all that philosophical thinking.' Do you know what I'm trying to say?

... I've just done a little Yoga and meditation. It was quite nice this morning. I feel a lot less scatty than I did when I wrote you last. . .

... Lots of really strange things have happened over the last few days. Yesterday my inner child spoke to me . . . The letter and books really have come at just the right time. I was stuck you see, finding it hard to get out of the pit. But I now see there's a light up there and a ladder for me to climb out.

The Prison Phoenix Trust encourages prisoners in their spiritual lives through the practices of Yoga and meditation, working with silence and the breath. We offer support to prisoners through teachings, workshops, correspondence, books and newsletters. We also support prison staff and train and support well qualified Yoga teachers for the challenging, rewarding and wonderful work they do in institutions all over the UK and Ireland. For further details, you may contact The Prison Phoenix Trust, PO Box 238, Oxford, OX2 7HF or visit www.prisonphoenixtrust.org.uk.

