

A YORKSHIRE LASS

A Yorkshire Lass

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A Yorkshire Lass

As a young child I was very timid and shy, brought up in an atmosphere of 'you didn't speak unless you were spoken to.' I was the eldest daughter with three younger siblings and brought up in a variety of Yorkshire villages. I never had the experience of being around aunts, uncles, cousins, but I did have two grandmothers.

Ours was a closed and very insular family unit with Dad being self-employed as a Butcher and Mum helping in the shop. From being ten years old, my job was to take meat orders out on my bike and make sausages on Sundays. My escape route from all the responsibility was to engross myself in a book called *The Golden Wonder Book*, which was gifted to me by my Nana.

Along with this book she also gave me a wonderful teddy bear made by Merrythought which had a growler inside when you tilted him back and forth. The Golden Wonder Book was filled with stories from Hans Christian Anderson, The Little Mermaid, The Little Match Girl, and beautiful poems such as The Lamb by William Blake.

It was such a treat to lay in bed with this precious book propped on my knees, reading it on Sunday mornings in bed with my teddy bear who never had a name except 'bear.' I never wanted to get dressed and leave these amazing stories.

So, reading became my favourite pastime but my upbringing was peppered with so many incidents that never gave our family unit a chance to bond in the way that families normally do. I soon found my adult independence at the age of eighteen.

I married at the age of twenty and eventually had four children. I delighted in celebrating their birthdays with parties, home-made birthday cakes and games, inviting their friends around to join in.

I was living my life through my children, making a comfortable home for them, buying books and toys, making Christmas a special time for family until one day, suddenly they were all grown up and living their lives as adults. Now they have children of their own. The nest was empty. Where had all the years gone?

I had been supporting my partner with his business but that was not satisfying my soul. I began to search for a new meaning to my life. I had lived through losing both my parents and grandparents. Our children were having children of their own, and I found myself seeking ways to understand menopausal feelings, emotions and how the physical body needs to be cherished, fed, and loved as it ages.

I bought books about personal and self-development, exploring ways how nutrition was vital in helping the physical body to maintain health. All this was leading me to finding a new ‘me.’

Along this journey of self-discovery, I was drawn into researching a new healing energy called ‘Reiki’ ~ meaning ‘universal life force.’ My curiosity began during a trip to Inverness in Scotland after visiting The Findhorn Foundation. I was intrigued by a Reiki practitioner giving taster sessions, so I signed up for one. All I can say now is that this was the beginning of my ‘story behind the story.’ As soon as she put her hands on me, I began to sense tears trickling down my face ~ I felt like I had ‘come home.’

The love I was feeling was from the ‘Universe.’ I was being held and supported, loved, and cherished by something I couldn’t see, only feel. My journey had begun.

My Healing Journey

I remember thinking, ‘if only I could bottle this experience of being loved unconditionally,’ it would be wonderful.

I feel I’ve achieved just that by channelling this feeling into not just one – but two teddy bears:

The Original Reiki Bear® for adults.

Dodl Bear® for children.

They both epitomize everything I felt that day and all the moments of reading the Golden Wonder Book that meant so much to me so many years ago as a child.

After that first Reiki session in Inverness, I was guided to a Reiki Master who lived in York, not too far away, so I contacted him.

This is when my journey into becoming a Reiki Master began. I became a Reiki student in November 1995, then advanced to Reiki 11 in July 1997, finally becoming a Reiki Master in April 1998.

During the preceding years I had also begun a practise of meditation, and during one of these sessions, I saw the outline of a kind face looking at me. It wasn't a human face; it was the face of a teddy bear. Initially I didn't think too much of it, but during my Reiki Workshops I was asking students to bring a surrogate to act as a person whilst giving a Reiki 2 Distant Healing.

Simultaneously, I was also working within a cancer day care centre using a teddy bear for clients during their therapy sessions. They seemed to find it easier to talk through the bear about their feelings and anxieties. So, I was using bears quite frequently and because of cross contamination, often I was gifting the bears for clients personal use at home.

After I became a Reiki Master, I made a promise to myself to make a Spiritual Quest to Japan, to Mount Kurama, where Dr. Mikao Usui had discovered Reiki and pay homage to him. It was whilst sat on the top of Mount Kurama in meditation that once again I saw the same little face.

This time I also heard some profound words. “Plant the seed and watch it grow.”

When I arrived back from Japan I drew the face I had seen in meditation. I knew I had to somehow create a bear, with significant features which were:

- A heart shaped face
- Amethyst eyes
- Eyebrows
- Purple Paws and feet
- A small button nose
- A kind smiling face

Then I set about finding a company who could make this for me in England.

My first thought was to contact Merrythought who had created my own first teddy bear. I wondered how they would react to my request. So, I made arrangements to meet with the owner and the Head of the Design Team of the company and set about explaining my needs.

They were very pleased to help and within a few weeks and several more visits we had a proto-type bear that was to become The Original Reikibear®.

I had a special display box made along with a silk cushion for him to sit on. Then I created a manual with instructions of how to use him for healing purposes.

Reikibear became very popular and soon I was guided to create a baby bear with the same features for children – Dodl Bear®.

His name is an acronym for:
Doing Ordinary Deeds Lovingly.

Creating a Magical Children's World

This is how Dodl Bear came into the world, as a helpful playmate and best friend for children everywhere.

The Original Reikibear, and Dodl Bear were now created, and in 2007 I was guided to spend a few months writing within a spiritual community, The Findhorn Foundation in Scotland. After only intending to be there for three months - this became three years!

I lived on The Field of Dreams, the perfect place for inspiration as a writer in a beautiful eco-house. During this time, I was scribbling ideas down for children's stories. Soon, my 'imaginary folk' and a community of fictional characters was slowly coming to fruition.

I had ideas buzzing around my head and when I returned to Lincolnshire, I had quite a few ideas written down and in 2012 these all began to spill out on pages as magical stories in a fictional world:

The Magical World of Fingley®

- Dodl Bear
- Dottie
- Skye the Pixie
- The Fingley Fairies
- Ozzy the Guardian Owl
- Amber Queen of the Fairies
- Aura The Pegacorn
- Professor Horatio Plenticus
- Avalon the Swan Queen
- Fingley The Talking Tree
- The Elbacs & Scawingers

... and lots of other Fingley Folk.

Since then and after more years of research, writing and development my vision has expanded by collaborating with Illustrators, Script Writers and Brand Development:

Our Passion Is To Make The Magic Happen.

On 1st October 2012, the next ‘miracle’ happened that has enabled this story to grow. I was searching for an assistant and also an Illustrator that could bring my stories to life. Florence and Taryn both arrived on the same day in my office. Florence was looking for a new career and Taryn was a gifted illustrator. It was a pivotal day in ‘the story behind the story.’ For a time, Taryn was our initial Illustrator who brought Dodl Bear and The Magical World of Fingley to life, for which I will forever be grateful.

Then in 2013 our world was brought sharply crushing down as we were affected by a Tsunami Tidal Surge which flooded the land where our office premises and storeroom were located and damaged our stock. We were out of full operation for nearly three years but came back stronger than ever, with new ideas and stories.

Having overcome that, we began to publish books for other writers and Authors and in 2020 after the expansion of the business, Florence accepted my invitation to become a Company Director. We have lived through so many other obstacles including the world-wide crisis of Lockdown, along with all that this entailed and once again we feel we have come back stronger than the setback.

We have new office premises and a store which also includes a Workshop space for Creative Writing, plus expanded our Team.

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We are open to accept submissions at:
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Through each setback, we have grown into a spirited and award-winning International Publishing Company, and in March 2021 we were blessed to collaborate with Happydesigners, an Illustration Studio whose ethics mirrors our own.

This enables us to accept more children's submissions and since our first introduction to each other, by partnering and collaborating we can now offer our partnership and first-class services to other authors and writers around the world.

We have also seen our professional relationship blossom into a Happy Partnership, which is resulting in The Magical World of Fingley® and Dodl Bear®, along with their personal projects embarking on exciting Media avenues.

At Partnership Publishing, our common aims and objectives are to work from our heart centre, offer professional advice and service, and give a voice and presence to all the wonderful people who contact us daily.

