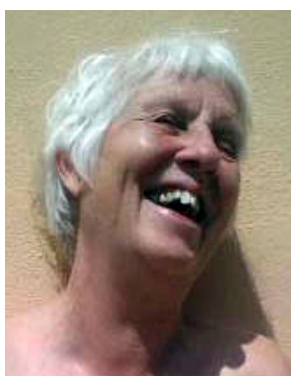


**NATHALIE DRIESSEN'S INTERVIEW WITH YOYO ON 'SEX AFTER 50'
FOR 'WOMAN' MAGAZINE**



Yoyo van der Kooi (73) is a painter, bodyworker and ‘midwife for the second birth’. She founded her centre for the Art of Living in Arnhem (NL). Here she guides people towards a fulfilling life. After having had various relationships she is now single.

“For me intimacy is more important than sex.

It’s been sixteen years since I last had sex with a partner. The last one I shared my bed with was a Serbian artist with whom I spent a couple of passionate nights. This was in the period when I was married to a South African photographer/puppeteer (who – though no longer my spouse – still is one of my best friends).

In my younger years, in art school, I was pretty wild. But with none of my lovers (mostly one-night stands) I managed to have an orgasm. That, I could only give to myself. Until about age thirty a fiery lover – with whom I had a 2-year relationship – taught me how this worked. Since that time I’ve had beautiful orgasms with all the partners that came after that: I now knew how a woman can move and give guidance to make sure she gets the right stimulus in the right place.

After a few relationships that did not give me what I was looking for, I started the search for ‘myself’. In the course of that quest I landed in the ashram of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in Pune. And was initiated by him.

The drive for my search had sprouted from an involuntary childlessness – and from the struggle with my painting ‘Contact with yourself’, that didn’t come out the way it should. I was asking myself questions like “How long can partners captivate each other in a one-one relationship?” And “Can another person make you happy at all?”. My parents, for instance, divorced twice, got married three times and were still not really happy

When I came back from India after seven weeks, my sexual need had considerably diminished. What I had found there was far more satisfying than sex (I elaborate on this in mijn book ‘Blossoming in the Bog’, which can be ordered via yoyo@laborint.nl).

Even my longing for a child had vanished. Of course my then partner was not happy about my lack of sexual appetite. It just couldn’t turn me on any more. Finally this led to the end of our relationship.

In my work with people of all ages and backgrounds, however, I experience a lot of intimacy. People exchange nurturing massages, cuddle up together or have a good cry in each other’s arms. The relaxed atmosphere that is created causes the sexual drive to naturally move to the background.

I do still enjoy masturbating from time to time. However, the images that come up are not of naked men or organs, but of waterfalls, hurricanes, volcano eruptions and solar systems exploding!

What touches me is when students let out long withheld emotions, or when liberating insights break through. For me those are orgasmic experiences. When we can open up to trust, love and creativity, an energy runs through our system that equally warms up our body, heart and soul.

The ecstasy that I experience now just watching all of creation and at the same time feeling part of it is greater than the best orgasms I have had with my lovers. I feel more complete within myself, the yearning has gone. Of course, sex was the first step back to that feeling of oneness – and I see sex as an indispensable phase in our spiritual development.

When sex is good, ‘you’ literally ‘disappear’ – and that gives a feeling of bliss that becomes more and more intense and permanent as you grow towards what I call the inner beloved: a metaphor for feeling connected with all and everyone.

'Oh, my Love
Now that I am no longer searching for you
I am finding you everywhere'

And yet: should I ever fall (or rather ‘rise’) in love again with a ‘special’ person, I would certainly not exclude sex as part of our getting together. However, this can only happen with someone that resonates not only physically, but also emotionally, mentally and spiritually with my being.”