

I Am **CHANGE** Magazine

DOES YOUR EX
DESERVE ANOTHER
CHANCE?

"How Do I Connect with
Myself?"

OBSERVE YOUR CHANGE

CODE RED FOR HUMANITY

**YOYO &
THE ART OF
LIVING**

Photographer: Frank Kouws
www.fankkouws.com

A close-up portrait of an elderly woman with short, white hair. She is wearing a vibrant red shawl or scarf draped over her shoulders. She has a gentle, serene expression and is looking slightly off-camera to the right. The background is a soft-focus view of green foliage and a dark grey fence. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

Yoyo Van Der Kooi

THE ART OF LIVING

World War II. Rotterdam, May 1944. I am three months old. The city is regularly bombed by Germans or the Allied forces.

With each air raid, my mother clutches me (her first-born) in her arms and hides in the broom closet under the staircase. She is just recovering from uterine surgery. I am suffering from pyelitis.

We had to leave the hospital prematurely because of the alarms. At about the same time my father, who had just started to take care of us at home, was arrested by German soldiers who were picking up young men for the labor camps. However, when the transport slowed down at the German border, he managed to jump off the train and escape. It took him a week to get back to us – on a stolen bike without tires – finding his way through several enemy lines.

Thankfully reunited, my parents left the destroyed city and moved to The Hague, where less bombing was expected. They went into hiding in a backroom made available by friends and were to stay there until Liberation Day, May 5, 1945. They survived the Hunger Winter of 1944/'45, thanks to my mother who, apart from feeding me, delivered mother's milk to the local hospital, where she received food coupons in return.



YOYO AS A NEW BORN WITH THE HAPPY PARENTS



YOYO AS A BABY



YOYO WITH HER DAD AT THE FAIR



DADDY IN RAF TRAINING AFTER WWII

This story is the background of my arrival in a world of duality.

When five years later my parents divorced, never to see each other again, my understanding that duality is the foundation of life on earth was complete. The pain of this separation – I missed my father very much – awakened in me a deep longing to find ways of bridging seemingly irreconcilable opposites.

I became ‘mother’s little helper’, taking care of my three younger siblings while being a diligent pupil at school.

By the time I was eleven my mom had found out that as a single mother with four children it is hard to find another (steady) partner, so she agreed to cede the two youngest to my father and his second wife for their further education.

Seven years later, when I was in my last high-school year, the unwanted advances of my mom’s second husband (nine years my senior) caused me to seek refuge with my father. By then he had left his second wife (who refused to agree to a divorce) and lived with the parents of the woman who would later become his third wife.

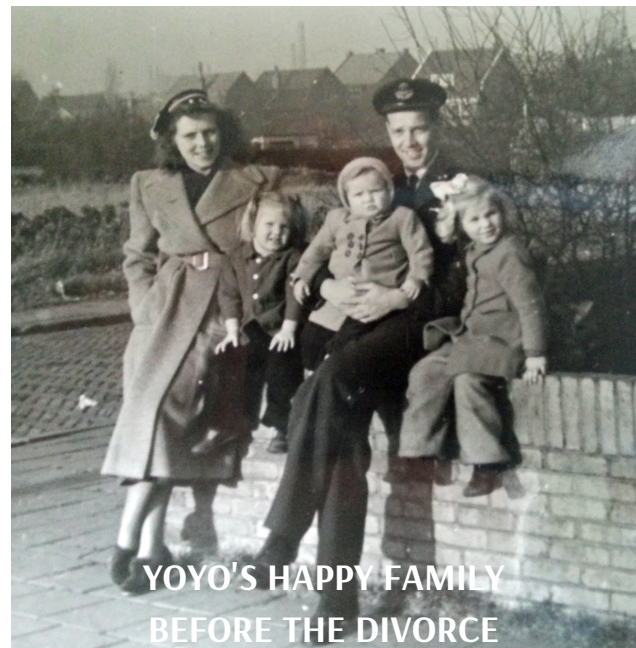
This woman was in love with my father and not with his three children. Nevertheless, when her parents threw us

out after they learned that my father was still officially married, she took it on herself to help him take care of us. Over the years, however, she gradually turned into the archetype of the wicked stepmother. In the end, we broke up in discord, one by one.

The secretarial course that my father had suggested I take allowed me to make a living. After working as secretary to the director of the local Fine Art Museum for a couple of years I felt that what I really wanted was to be an artist myself. My boss helped me to obtain a scholarship and I moved to Arnhem, where my 'wild life' began.

The arts appeared to be the outlet I needed to come to terms with my challenging childhood. Painting became not only a source of income but also an effective form of self-therapy. Until age 34 I got stuck in an assignment for three paintings about "Contact". "Contact between husband and wife" and "Contact between the generations" went smoothly. But the last one, "Contact with your Being", landed me in a serious painter's block.

This, combined with my unfulfilled yearning for a child (my partner already had two children and was firm in refusing to have another one) was the beginning of my spiritual journey.



Shortly after having watched a TV program with the Dutch psychiatrist and author Jan Foudraïne – who had just come back from a retreat with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh – (now better known as Osho), I was on my way to India. I spent seven weeks in the ashram of this non-duality teacher and went through deep inner processes in the groups and dynamic meditations that were offered there.

I came back as a sannyasin (initiate) clad in orange and continued to wear the robes and the mala (108-bead necklace with the portrait of the Master) for eight years, as a reminder of my pledge: learning to 'walk alone (all-one)'.

On my return, the yearning for a child had miraculously evaporated, never to

come back. The portrait of a radiant old man, 'Contact with your Being', was completed within a month and became the 'pièce de résistance' of my contribution to an outstanding art exhibition in Brussels, winning me first prize for European painting.

From that point on, my life gained momentum. I started offering painting, drama, clowning, and massage classes. Then I took training in therapeutic body-

work and emotional integration so as to help my students loosen up and enhance their creative output. Towards the end of the eighties, I engaged in half a year of intensive spiritual work with a shaman woman in the Tantra cradle Khajuraho, India, for my own further "loosening up". She exposed my deeply- hidden 'shadows', assumptions, and (self-) judgments and launched me into a 'dark night of the soul' that lasted for a year.





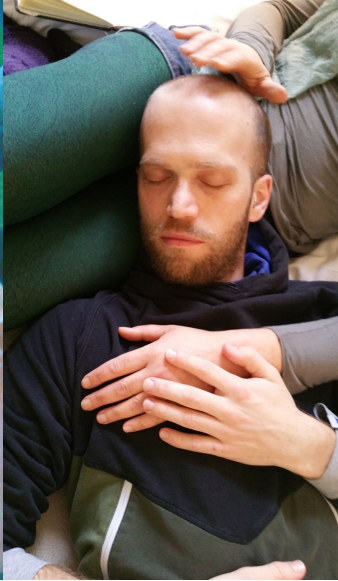
With the help of “A Course in Miracles” I slowly resurfaced.

At the beginning of the nineties, I started my practice for counseling and body awareness and for ten years dedicated myself to learning and teaching “Avatar” mind-shifting, with Star’s Edge in Florida. Meanwhile, I honed my skills in clowning and voice release.

Towards the turn of the century, I felt ready to start my own school for Awakening and the Art of Living. People came to me to deal with physical, emotional, and mental blocks that prevented them from unfolding their full (creative) potential – and ultimately: to (re)connect with the Self behind the persona. For this, I took them on inner journeys (in courses and retreats) that I called ‘Flowering’.

With ups and downs, I learned how to manage a business. One day, after having done a few brash investments, I found





myself with a shortage of 16,000 guilders. I was devastated and about to give it all up. Then, one of my clients, an 80-year-old ex-nun, came to me, opened her purse, and handed me an envelope with exactly that amount!

“I am old,” she said, “and may not have long to live. These savings have just been

lying in a cupboard, and I don’t need much for myself. My only heir is my brother, and he is very well-to-do. So, I prefer to donate it to you, because I think the work you do must continue.”

From that moment my school began to thrive, with just a few setbacks during the economic crises between 2008 and 2012.

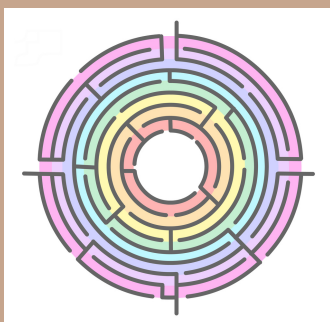
More and more I am in awe of the beauty and mystery of life. My gratitude continues to grow exponentially. And now, with the Corona era as a teacher, I am learning new skills that allow me to connect online with ever-widening circles of people looking for ways ‘to bridge seemingly irreconcilable opposites’...

Yoyo Van Der Kooi





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YOYO Van Der Kooi

She took on this name, derived from her second birth name Yoanna, after she had a life-changing breakthrough in 1994. For her, the yoyo is a symbol for 'dealing with the ups and downs of life in a playful way'.

She sometimes calls herself a midwife for the second birth, as her mission is to help people caught in the personality through the labor pains of resurfacing as their true Self.

In her Laborint (laboratory/labyrinth, labor internus) school for the Art of Living she offers individual (online) counseling and seminars, Flowering courses, as well as intensive retreats in various countries. The next ones are planned for October 11-18 in Samos (Greece) and June 3-12, 2022 in Portugal.

In 2005 she started writing and her first book appeared in 2012. Over the past seven years, the English translation has taken shape, and it will soon be launched as an ebook under the title "SACRED SHIT – The Secret of the Lotus"

Yoyo is available for online counseling/coaching and lectures/interviews on:

- Survival strategies and belonging
- Intimacy, sexuality, and relationships
- Ego, ambition, and authority
- Compassion and wider circles of love
- Pure communication and resonance
- Duality and beyond
- The Wise man and the Fool
- Ecstasy, the art of dissolving