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The Journey of a Rock N' Roll Touring Yogi

by [Renee Sharpless](#)

I've never written about myself before. In fact, no one has ever asked and I've never offered. From living a rock n' roll touring/weird/unique/seemingly unattainable lifestyle to stabilizing in one place, I've come a long way from being that young gal who grew up in rural Northeast Ohio.

My history:

My senior year of college was a wild one, drinking every night of the week that summer after graduation. That's what you want to hear about the past of a yogi and healer, right? My thought exactly, but there is something to be said about the past that a person grew from.

I spent that year interning at music venues, and during that time became a vegetarian...a thought that popped into my head the first time I made chicken breasts for myself at my apartment. I wondered, "what am I doing with the *muscles* of an animal? This is disgusting."

Not eating animals was the beginning of my true healing journey. It led to me work in marketing for an animal rights organization, and from there, I began touring the country with bands, speaking to people about animal rights. As it went, the more I networked "in the industry" the more I became known until I was a full blown tour manager for a number of bands. From punk to pop, I was living an amazing lifestyle, and after 7 years....well, I had had it. Flying internationally, time zones galore, demanding artists, logistics for 15 people, set times, security, etc. etc.. No one really knows what goes on behind the scenes of a successful band, but I did...and it was costing me my sanity.

My transition:

I took a break one season, moving to a Sivananda ashram in Northern California to take my first yoga Teacher Training Course. I thought I was going to learn to teach "an exercise class" – but I ended up truly understanding the meaning of life. I understood how I could control my actions, my stress, my anxiety, my breath, and my mind. *I* was the one in control, not the outside world around me. I'm moved to NYC to live in a yoga center and absorbed every single minute of that experience. I was a teacher. I continued on this path of healing education and became a Reiki Master. I was all in. THIS was the life I had been longing for without even knowing it.

I headed back out on the road for a couple more years, teaching yoga to bands and crew as I went. I was still a tour manager in the eyes of my colleagues, but inside I was transitioning out.

I made a bold move – left a successful, profitable, "glamorous" career. It wasn't easy and I had many conversations with family and friends to the point they were sick of it – but I needed that time to process my next move.

I fell into the right place at the right time with the right people – right, right, right. I was all right...and I was moving forward.

I headed back into the ashram life in the dead of winter in the Bahamas and advanced not only my teaching certification, but my understanding of deep yogic philosophy, which has guided me to this point today.

I am in control of my life and those moments when it seems I am not, I accept and invite them in because everything changes. Nothing is permanent, and that, in fact, is the gift of this world.

Hari Om Tat Sat,
Renee Sharpless, 500RYT
Yoga Acharya

Renee is a classical Sivananda Hatha Yoga Teacher, Reiki Master, and an iRest® Yoga Nidra Meditation (Level I) Instructor.

For more information on courses, workshops, and private sessions, please visit

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