

Letting Go

Karen Baxter enjoys a Gong Kundalini Yoga class with **Universal Resonance**

Determined to tick off at least one of my New Year Resolutions for 2013 before the year ended, I rushed out on the first cold evening of November to 'Try something new.' After a busy day at work, I was convinced that it would take a severe electric current to the brain to relax me. So I was pleasantly surprised that when I arrived (late) at the Universal Resonance studio in **Twickenham**, my blood pressure fell very quickly.

The majority of the 1.5 hour class took place seated, other than the last part which involved lying down. I've tried all sorts of yoga styles from Bikram Hatha yoga, (strenuous work in a 40 degree heated studio) to practicing Raj Yoga (anywhere, anytime) meditation, but none as playful as Kundalini Yoga. There was something about it that made me smile. The exercises are not particularly strenuous, but the simpleness of sitting cross legged and upright for a long period of time certainly works the core strength.

All the movements are performed with closed eyes, and when I peeped, I was reassured by the fact that no one was watching me rather clumsily rotate my arm in the air. Movements were accompanied by relaxing breathing exercises, most performed to a suitably calming soundtrack.

A unique and exciting feature of the class was the sound of the gong being played, which proved to be a great way of stilling the chatter of my brain, whilst also giving it something on which to focus. The class ended with relaxation under a blanket, listening to the incredible resonance of the gong.

As with any type of yoga you really do have to 'go with it' to feel the benefits. Finding myself able to let go, I was rewarded by feeling my lower back melting into the ground, and felt grateful for an oasis of calm in an otherwise hectic day.

Extra

Universal Resonance holds Gong Yoga classes in the **Twickenham** area. For further information, visit www.universalresonance.co.uk