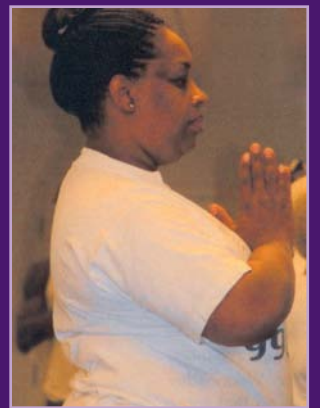


Kripalu



# Yoga Service Resource Guide



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to start by thanking the yoga teachers and organizations listed in this Yoga Service Resource Guide for their dedication in bringing yoga and meditation to those in need. It is truly an honor for us to support certified yoga teachers who desire to work with populations such as military veterans, trauma survivors, people who are homeless, those who abuse substances and alcohol, inmates, people with chronic conditions, and more.

This Guide wouldn't be possible without the following people: Lisette Cooper, Cassandra Banks, John Kepner, Jasmine Cherazi, and Jennifer Heller.

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## INTRODUCTION

*We would like to thank yoga teachers from all traditions who so graciously offer yoga to those in need.*

*The organizations found within these pages offer trainings, inspiration, and practical tips for bringing yoga to a wide range of underserved populations, including military veterans, trauma survivors, people who are homeless, those who abuse substances and alcohol, inmates, people with chronic conditions, children in Title I schools, and others. The teachers and directors of these organizations have all seized the opportunity to work toward a better, healthier world by following their calling: to bring the benefits of yoga and mindfulness to unserved and underserved populations.*

*For inclusion in our next printed edition, please contact [sashabcohen1@gmail.com](mailto:sashabcohen1@gmail.com).*

*This publication is a joint service project of Kripalu Professional Associations and the Give Back Yoga Foundation.*



*Vandita Kate Marchesiello for Kripalu*



*Rob Schware for the Give Back Yoga Foundation*



## DIRECTORY OF SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

### Abundant Well Being

Website: [www.abundantwellbeing.com](http://www.abundantwellbeing.com)

Email: [nd@abundantwellbeing.com](mailto:nd@abundantwellbeing.com)

Phone: 917-385-2005

Location: Hudson, New York

Trainings offered:

#### ❖ *Yoga of the Heart: Cardiac and Cancer Certification Training*

This is a yoga therapy training for yoga teachers and healthcare professionals who would like to share yoga with those at risk for or living with heart disease, cancer, and other life-altering illnesses. The focus of the training is on allowing the heart to expand through compassion and love for self and others.

The training includes asana, pranayama, deep relaxation, imagery, and meditation as applied to disease and general health. It also explores the virtues of a low-fat, vegetarian diet and the psychosocial aspects of disease. The focus is on evidence-based approaches used to expand compassion through love of self and others.

Products and Resources:

- \* *The Abundant Well Being Series* 4-CD series, used in the Dean Ornish program for reversing heart disease
- \* *The Healing Path of Yoga*, by Nischala Devi

### The Art of Yoga Project

Website: [www.theartofyogaproject.org](http://www.theartofyogaproject.org)

Email: [info@theartofyogaproject.org](mailto:info@theartofyogaproject.org)

Phone: 650-924-9222

Location: Palo Alto, California

Trainings offered:

#### ❖ *Using Yoga and Art to Support and Empower At-Risk Teen Girls*

The Art of Yoga Project specializes in working with incarcerated teen girls, offering trauma-informed and strength-based programming. This training, offered each spring, is for yoga teachers who want to expand their knowledge in working with at-risk girls in their own communities or with other organizations that work with this specific population.

Participants will learn about The Art of Yoga Project's integrated approach to teaching yoga in juvenile detention facilities, the value of integrating creative expression into yoga classes, and tips and techniques for understanding and effectively handling issues specific to teen girls.

Course covers the following:

- The Art of Yoga Project's gender-responsive, strength-based, and trauma-informed programming approach

- How to effectively partner with juvenile justice facilities for integrated rehabilitation of female teen offenders
- Issues facing teen girls and how they manifest in the classroom (such as trauma, substance abuse, sexual trafficking, eating disorders, and other mental-health disorders)
- Tips and techniques for teaching yoga to at-risk teen girls and how to effectively manage behavioral problems
- How and why to integrate art into yoga classes with girls and a sample lesson plan based on The Art of Yoga Project's Yoga & Creative Arts Curriculum.

Products and Resources:

- \* "Yoga Therapy in Practice: *The Art of Yoga Project: A Gender-Responsive Yoga and Creative Arts Curriculum for Girls in the California Juvenile Justice System*," (Harris and Fitton, 2010), *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, No. 20, pp. 110–118.
- \* "Trauma among Girls in the Juvenile Justice System" (2004), National Child Traumatic Stress Network Juvenile Justice Working Group, [www.NCTSN.net](http://www.NCTSN.net)
- \* "Yoga Therapy in Practice: Trauma-Sensitive Yoga: Principles, Practice and Research," (Emerson, Sharma, Chaudry, Turner, 2009), *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, No. 19, pp. 123–128.
- \* *Waking the Tiger*, by Peter A. Levine (North Atlantic Press, 1997)

### Calming Kids (CK): Creating a Non-Violent World

Website: [www.calmingkidsyoga.org](http://www.calmingkidsyoga.org)

Email: [info@calmingkidsyoga.org](mailto:info@calmingkidsyoga.org)

Phone: 303-530-3860

Location: Boulder, Colorado

Trainings offered:

#### ❖ *Anti-bully and non-violence education using classical yoga practices and Ayurveda.*

Calming Kids (CK): Creating a Non-Violent World is an intelligent, fun, relaxing and enlightening training for educational professionals, counselors, health care providers, yoga teachers, interested parents and all child facilitators. Participants learn how to implement a yoga program to increase concentration, communication, relaxation, and fitness and to decrease violence and bullying for pre-school through high school level students. The CK Training Program presents a curriculum that inspires a positive, peaceful, physically strong

and self-confident attitude with a system of relaxed communication. The CK practices ultimately lead to empowering children to manage their own feelings for self-preservation, in order to make them feel safe within themselves and their surroundings and to give them a greater capacity to succeed in school and in life. The program's emphasis is non-harming to oneself and toward others, learning to respect personal space, with a high level of concentration practices that enhance academics and cultivate non-violent behavior. Participants will also find calming techniques useful for themselves, enabling them to become an effective model for students.

The workshop provides a step-by-step curriculum which includes the *Calming Kids: Creating a Non-Violent World* training manual with handouts and coloring pages and a yoga booklet for quick reference explaining how to teach these practices to school-aged students. Support materials available: the *Calming Kids Tool box*—a set of colorful toys and objects used to teach breathing and alignment.

A four-year research study with Boulder, CO students and Harvard University proved the efficacy of this program <http://www.calmingkidsyoga.org/StudyResults.html>

The CK Training can be taken as a Continuing Education experience:

- One day (8 contact hours)
- Two days (16 contact hours)
- Four days (32 contact hours).

To become a Calming Kid's Educator participants study for a minimum of:

- Two days (16 contact hours) studying the age group of choice
- Practice teaching the curriculum (six non-contact hours)
- Submit a short journal of the teaching experience.

Certified Adult Yoga teachers can receive Children's Yoga Teacher Certification as designated by Yoga Alliance by participating in:

- The five day CK Training (40 contact hours)
- Teach children classes (six non-contact hours)
- Submit a journal of the teaching experience.

Continuing Educational Credits are available for the University level, Local School District and Yoga Alliance.

*Products:*

For audio, e-books, CDs and more go to [www.calmingkidsyoga.org/ProductOrderPage.html](http://www.calmingkidsyoga.org/ProductOrderPage.html)

## ChildLight Yoga

*Website:* [www.childlightyoga.com](http://www.childlightyoga.com)

*Email:* [lisa@childlightyoga.com](mailto:lisa@childlightyoga.com)

*Phone:* 603-343-4116

*Location:* Dover, New Hampshire

*Trainings offered:*

✿ **ChildLight Yoga Teacher Training**

Childlight Yoga Teacher Training is a basic, 2.5-day children's yoga training (17 contact, 10 non-contact hours) designed for educators, parents, therapists, and other professionals interested in sharing yoga with children. The program includes a comprehensive, fully illustrated manual and a CD of yoga songs for children.

*Products and Resources:*

- ✿ *ChildLight Yoga Instructor Manual* (available to ChildLight Yoga Trainees)
- ✿ *I Grow With Yoga: Yoga Songs for Children* CD, appropriate for ages 2–8

## Every Kid's Yoga

*Website:* [www.everykidsyoga.com](http://www.everykidsyoga.com)

*Email:* [craig.hanauer@gmail.com](mailto:craig.hanauer@gmail.com)

*Phone:* 212-924-2840

*Location:* New York, New York

*Trainings offered:*

✿ **Teaching Yoga to Children with Special Needs: An Integration of Yoga, Creative Arts, and Play**

This training covers the many ways that yoga can promote the healthy development of children, ages 4–12. Participants learn how the practice of yoga parallels and supports other therapeutic modalities in addressing difficulties with attention, self-regulation, speech and language, learning, and motor skills.

This experiential workshop provides a strong foundation to teaching yoga to children with the following special needs:

- Those who are easily over-stimulated
- Those who are potentially impulsive and/or distractible
- Those who exhibit poor social skills and boundaries
- Those who are learning disabled, with an emphasis on speech- and language-based learning disabilities
- Those who are potentially oppositional and/or disruptive
- Those who present with high or low muscle tone.

Diagnoses to include the following:

- High-functioning autism/Asperger's syndrome
- Sensory Processing Dysfunction (SPD)
- Learning Disabled (LD)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Mild cerebral palsy.

The primary focus of this training is on working with groups of higher-functioning children with special needs who are essentially physically able. This training does not address working with severely physically, developmentally, cognitively, or emotionally challenged children. Basic information is provided throughout the training to assist participants in understanding the needs and challenges of the population outlined above. Professional therapists may benefit from this training by learning creative, developmentally appropriate, fun ways of engaging and supporting children with special needs in the practice of yoga.

This program is appropriate for yoga teachers and parents, teachers, and therapists with a personal yoga practice who are interested in incorporating yoga into their work with children.

As a result of taking this program, program participants will be able to:

- Structure a class for potentially impulsive children using behavior management and limit-setting techniques
- Modify postures for this population
- Teach breathing exercises, meditation, and relaxation to children
- Integrate props, chanting, Thai Yoga Massage, and partner yoga
- Employ visuals for children with language-based learning disabilities
- Use yoga to support speech and language, sensory processing, memory, and reading comprehension.

#### ❖ *Bringing Yoga into the Special Needs Classroom*

This one-day workshop is open to all classroom teachers, administrators, school counselors, phys-ed teachers, therapists, and others seeking to bring simple yoga and mindfulness techniques into the classroom or similar setting for a more peaceful, productive class day. Absolutely no yoga experience is required.

#### *Products and Resources:*

- \* *Every Kid's Yoga Teacher Training Manual* and accompanying DVD (purchase on website)

### **Hala Khouri, M.A, E-RYT**

*Website:* [www.halakhouri.com](http://www.halakhouri.com),  
[www.offthematintotheworld.com](http://www.offthematintotheworld.com)  
*Email:* [hala@halakhouri.com](mailto:hala@halakhouri.com)  
*Phone:* 310-663-4644  
*Location:* Los Angeles, California

#### *Trainings offered:*

#### ❖ **Teaching Yoga to Those At Risk**

This 18-hour training provides participants with the skills and tools to work with those considered at risk due to poverty, violence, abuse, accidents, or neglect. Participants gain understanding and

confidence in addressing the challenges that can arise in teaching yoga to these communities.

The focus of this training is on understanding the physiology of trauma and how it shows up in the body. The majority of people considered “at risk” have had significant trauma in their lives. Hala shares important tools from Somatic Experiencing, a technique that helps to resolve the symptoms of trauma such as dissociation, anxiety, chronic dysregulation, depression, and addiction. Participants leave with an understanding of how to incorporate these tools into a yoga class.

#### *Products and Resources:*

- \* *Yoga Ed. Mind-Body Resources for Working with Those At Risk* (purchase at [www.yogaed.com](http://www.yogaed.com))
- \* *Yoga for Stress Reduction* DVD by Hala Khouri, MA

### **Healing Yoga Foundation**

*Website:* [www.healingyoga.com](http://www.healingyoga.com)

*Email:* [info@healingyoga.org](mailto:info@healingyoga.org)

*Phone:* 415-931-9642

*Location:* San Francisco, California

#### *Trainings offered:*

Healing Yoga Foundation trainings provide an opportunity to study yoga in the tradition of T. Krishnamacharya, a tradition in which the approach to healing is holistic—treating the mind, body, and spirit as a whole. This tradition sees each person as an individual, so yoga is uncompromisingly adapted to the student and not just the student to yoga.

#### ❖ *Teacher Training, Advanced Studies and Continuing Education:*

- 500-hour comprehensive Teacher Training
- 75-hour Advanced Cancer Support Training for certified teachers who wish to work with and support those dealing with a cancer diagnosis
- Advanced Studies, Continuing Education, and Intensives on various yoga-related topics, such as the Yoga Sutras, pranayama, meditation, subtle anatomy, and the application of yoga tools for supporting specific conditions and populations.

Outreach programs and trainings support participants to:

- Decrease stress and increase physical, mental, and emotional wellness in at-risk populations
- Improve self-awareness and self-esteem of clients served, leading to a greater feeling of empowerment and ability to make positive changes in their lives
- Teach tools for management of chronic health conditions and mindfulness-based behavior modification for ongoing health and wellness, empowering individuals to actively engage in their own health and well-being.



## InBody Outreach

Website: [www.inbodyoutreach.org](http://www.inbodyoutreach.org)

Email: [outreach@inbodylife.org](mailto:outreach@inbodylife.org)

Phone: 801-521-9642

Location: Salt Lake City, Utah

### Trainings offered:

Inbody Outreach provides, educates, and supports free yoga and body-awareness classes for low-income populations, people in structured therapy or recovery programs, and those in need of greater health awareness.

Inbody Outreach works in tandem with local teacher training programs, acting as a hub of information and connecting teachers with programs. Inbody Outreach also offers continuing education for volunteers who lack knowledge about working with at-risk populations.

## It's Yoga, Kids

Website: [www.itsyogakids.com](http://www.itsyogakids.com)

Email: [info@itsyogakids.com](mailto:info@itsyogakids.com)

Phone: 415-750-9990

Location: San Francisco, California

### Trainings offered:

It's Yoga, Kids® Certification Course (IYKC)

As a certified yoga instructor, parent, caregiver, educator or pediatric professional, you can enrich the lives of children through yoga. Our research-based and dynamic programs will prepare you to safely and effectively teach yoga to children.

It's Yoga Kids® for 3–7 year olds and Rocket Kids™ for 8–13 year olds, are our certification programs. Yoga Alliance certification is recommended, but only yoga experience is required.

The intensive 10-hour course takes place over two days and includes:

- *It's Yoga, Kids*® Certification Manual
- Complete curriculum for 32-classes complete with lesson plans, themes and sequences
- Expert knowledge about children's anatomy, physiology and sensory integration
- Content for toddlers, teens and children with special needs
- Principles of traditional yoga for kids
- Age appropriate application along with specific "do's" and "do not's" for yoga with children
- How to lesson plan, sequence and lead fun, creative and educational yoga classes
- Ideas for incorporating art, music, books, props and storytelling in kids' yoga classes
- Behavior management techniques to support a positive and non-competitive environment.

IYKC completion provides:

- Instructor listing on our website

- Certification for teaching yoga to kids ages 3–7yrs and 8–13yrs
- Eligibility for an internship at It's Yoga, Kids® to observe, assist and team teach.

### Products and Resources:

- \* *Kid Moves*—“read & do” interactive books for Baby, Toddler and Preschooler. Check them out at [www.Kmoves.com](http://www.Kmoves.com).

## Kula for Karma

Website: [www.kulaforkarma.org](http://www.kulaforkarma.org)

Email: [penni@kulaforkarma.org](mailto:penni@kulaforkarma.org)

Phone: 201-657-3408 or toll free 888-545-9642

Location: Franklin Lakes, New Jersey

### Trainings offered:

- ❖ 16-Hour Advanced Teacher Training: Yoga for Cancer
- ❖ 10-Hour Advanced Teacher Training: Yoga for Vets/PTSD
- ❖ 10-Hour Advanced Teacher Training: Yoga for Trauma & Addiction
- ❖ 10-Hour Advanced Teacher Training: Yoga for Children with Special Needs
- ❖ Workshops for Healthcare Professionals who serve all of the populations above.

Each of our Advanced Trainings explore: The biological and psychodynamic aspects of trauma and disease from a yoga therapy perspective and prepare practitioners to incorporate an integrative approach to healing.

Kula's Advanced Trainings and Workshops were created by Yoga Teachers, Geri Topfer, Penni Feiner and Yoga Therapist, Nancy Candea, who collectively, have spent hundreds of hours working in hospitals, schools, rehab centers, shelters and jails. Their clients have included cancer survivors, addicts, victims of war crimes and sex trafficking, veterans, incarcerated youth and adults and at-risk children and youth. We create a tapestry of consciousness, discovering the aspects of yoga which help empower individuals to live with more personal awareness and peace.

The principles behind our innovative approach include:

- Meeting students—physically, emotionally and spiritually
- Practicing flexibility of mind, body and spirit
- Demonstrating patience, tolerance and acceptance
- Learning to cultivate trust and sensitivity.

Our Kula for Karma Teacher Training Module is unique in its' emphasis on caring, feeding, and preserving the soul of those who have been broken. For those who practice with vulnerable populations, it's important to be aware of our own reactions and emotions, to know how to nurture our

own soul, find a respite when necessary and draw upon restorative powers in our own experience.

Our desire is to help each person identify the process of creating a “karmic opportunity” in their own community. Participants will be inspired through a transformational training, weaving together group process, lecture and skill-building. You will learn how to prepare and deliver effective lesson plans using therapeutic yoga, breath work, themes and meditation to empower others. By joining our community, you will become an effective agent of social change.

### **The Lineage Project**

*Website:* [www.lineageproject.org](http://www.lineageproject.org)

*Email:* [info@lineageproject.org](mailto:info@lineageproject.org)

*Phone:* 718-408-1492

*Location:* New York, New York

#### *Trainings offered:*

The Lineage Project offers a 20-hour teacher training for anyone in the community interested in learning Lineage’s awareness-based practice model for working with incarcerated and at-risk teens. Some experience with yoga and meditation is helpful, but not required.

The training covers the basics of planning and teaching classes in yoga, meditation, and other mindfulness practices for at-risk youth. You will create your own sample class based on the Lineage curriculum.

You’ll also learn about:

- Effective communication strategies
- Resiliency theory
- The psychological and environmental stresses that this population experiences.

#### *Products and Resources:*

- \* The website offers relevant reading and online interviews with significant individuals in this field.

### **Little Flower Yoga (LFY)**

*Website:* [www.littlefloweryoga.com](http://www.littlefloweryoga.com)

*Email:* [jennifer@littlefloweryoga.com](mailto:jennifer@littlefloweryoga.com)

*Phone:* 917-385-2005

*Location:* Hudson, New York

#### *Trainings offered:*

#### ❖ **Children’s Yoga and Mindfulness Certification**

LFY Teacher Training is one of the most comprehensive children’s yoga teacher training programs available. Participants learn to use yoga and mindfulness practices to engage and inspire all children, regardless of circumstance. LFY is a Yoga Alliance-certified school and offers a complete professional training. Learn to teach a holistic class that uses all aspects of the yoga practice to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of children and teens.

Participants leave training with a deeper understanding of child development, the capacity and confidence to create lesson plans that meet children’s needs, and the knowledge to teach in a safe, engaging, and effective way. LFY’s unique focus on compassionate classroom management and the challenges of working with at-risk students increase participants’ capacity to bring the knowledge they gain into meaningful implementation. The mentorship program gives real-life experience working alongside a senior teacher in a classroom setting.

#### ❖ **The Compassionate Classroom**

Are you ever frustrated by the behavior of your students or your own children? Ever frustrated by your reaction to their behavior? Feel like you don’t want to yell but don’t know what else to do? Wish you could spend more time on content and less on classroom management?

The Compassionate Classroom (and Living Room) workshop gives participants tools and techniques to keep students engaged through cooperation rather than control. Participants learn to communicate in a way that shows compassion and respect for all children, as well as to use powerful strategies to create an environment of mutual trust. LFY’s goal is to provide all children with a sense of internal discipline and offer teachers and parents alternatives to punishment methods that engage children rather than ostracize them. When you avoid unnecessary conflict and power struggles with students, you’ll be amazed at how much time can be dedicated to learning.

#### ❖ **Mindfulness & Meditation Practices for Children**

Every day children are told to pay attention, yet rarely are they taught how to do this! This course offers practical ways to introduce children to a mindfulness practice that engages them and gives them space to listen to their own thoughts and feelings. The training includes both still and moving meditations. Participants will learn to help children tune in, focus better, make sense of their emotions, make good decisions, and experience a richer and more fulfilling day-to-day experience of life.

#### *Products and Resources:*

- \* “Teaching Yoga in Urban Elementary Schools,” *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*.

### **Mindful Yoga Therapy for Veterans**

*Website:* [www.mindfullyogatherapy.org](http://www.mindfullyogatherapy.org)

*Email:* [suzanne@mindfullyogatherapy.org](mailto:suzanne@mindfullyogatherapy.org)

*Phone:* 646-205-8234

*Location:* Newington, Connecticut

*Trainings offered:*

❖ **Mindful Yoga Therapy for Working with Trauma**

Mindful Yoga Therapy for Veterans recovering from trauma is an empirically informed, clinically tested program specifically developed for veterans coping with PTSD and other trauma-related psychological disorders.

Yoga teachers participating in this training program learn about:

- Why yoga for Trauma
- The “Tool Box” and it’s practices
- Special considerations and specific techniques for helping individuals coping with trauma including a 12-week protocol
- Understanding the Veteran culture
- How to bring this into the world.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* *Breathe In, Breathe Out: Breathing Practices to Help Balance the Nervous System* CD, by Suzanne Manafort
- \* *Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation* CD, by Patty Townsend
- \* *Mindful Yoga Therapy for Veterans Coping with Trauma*, a practice guide by Suzanne Manafort and Dr. Daniel J. Libby.

Products available at [www.givebackyoga.org/shop](http://www.givebackyoga.org/shop).

**Niroga Institute**

*Website:* [www.niroga.com](http://www.niroga.com)

*Email:* [transform@niroga.org](mailto:transform@niroga.org)

*Phone:* 510-451-3004

*Location:* Oakland, California

*Trainings offered:*

❖ **Yoga4Youth Training**

This 2-day training enables yoga teachers to bring yoga to vulnerable populations such as children, youth, and young adults in schools and alternative schools, vocational training facilities, juvenile halls and jails, rehab centers, and foster homes. Niroga has trained hundreds of yoga teachers from all over the United States and beyond, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Trainings are offered in Berkeley, California, twice a year and nationally.

❖ **Transformative Life/Leadership Skills (TLS) Training**

This day-long training is for educators, health-care professionals, law-enforcement officials, parents and guardians, nonprofit organizational staff and management responsible for personal and professional sustainability. The training, offered nationally and internationally, covers tools

for stress management, self-care, and healing from secondary trauma, as well as application in institutional environments.

❖ **Certified Yoga Teacher Training (Level 1)**

This year-long training meets and exceeds Yoga Alliance requirements at the 200-hour level; in addition to in-depth coverage of asana/pranayama and best teaching practices, anatomy and physiology, yoga history, and philosophy are covered comprehensively. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from noon to 6 pm, and attendance in twice-weekly yoga classes is required. There is a service commitment upon graduation; need-based fellowships are offered to students of color.

❖ **Certified Yoga Therapist Training (Levels 2 + 3)**

These two year-long trainings, which meet the Yoga Alliance requirements at the 500-hour level, provide the knowledge, skills and experience for progression from teacher to healer: yoga teacher to yoga therapist. Level 2 focuses on common chronic conditions involving all major physical systems, while Level 3 focuses on special populations, such as cancer survivors, seniors, at-risk youth, and more. Meetings for Level 2 are on the first weekend of each month (Saturday and Sunday noon–6 pm) and meetings for Level 3 are on the third weekend of each month (Saturday and Sunday noon–6 pm). In addition to monthly project reports, Level 3 participants intern with master yoga therapists in a variety of programs in community settings. Level 1–3 meetings are in Berkeley.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* *Do Yoga, Do You! A Yoga4Youth* DVD, 20-minute yoga practice for youth with instructions in English and Spanish
- \* *Healing Yoga: 20 Minutes a Day for Health & Well-Being*, DVD containing a short and gentle yoga practice sequence for all
- \* *Raja Yoga*, DVD that includes four 30- to 50-minute yoga sequences at the introductory, beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. Includes a segment on developing and deepening a regular personal practice, and an introduction to yoga history and philosophy.
- \* *Raja Yoga: The Science of Meditation* 4-CD set containing a full translation of the Yoga Sutras, with commentary by Swami Vivekananda
- \* *Music for Mindfulness*, CD of contemplative Indian classical music, with expositions rendered in viola and flute for four different times of the day.

## Off the Mat, Into the World™

Website: [www.offthematintotheworld.org](http://www.offthematintotheworld.org)

Email: [info@offthematintotheworld.org](mailto:info@offthematintotheworld.org)

Phone: n/a

Location: San Francisco, California

Trainings offered:

### ❖ Yoga, Purpose and Action Leadership Intensive

The Yoga, Purpose and Action Weeklong Intensives are for yoga teachers, community leaders, activists, and interested students.\* Led by Seane Corn, Hala Khouri, and Suzanne Sterling, these trainings are offered throughout the year around the country. The intensives offer participants a deep, transformational process of self-inquiry and skill building facilitated by yoga asana, meditation, group process, and lecture.

Intensives include the following:

- Self-Inquiry: Who am I? What is my purpose?
- Transformational Journey Work: transforming our wounds into tools for healing
- Community: conscious collaboration skills
- Action: creating projects that make a difference.

\*At least one year of yoga experience required.

- ❖ Other training programs include the Global Seva Challenge, Empowered Youth Initiative, and Yoga in Action groups (see website for details).

Products and Resources:

- \* *Mind Body Resources for Working with At-Risk Youth* (available at [www.yogaed.com](http://www.yogaed.com))

## Prison Yoga Project

Website: [www.prisonyoga.com](http://www.prisonyoga.com)

Email: [james@prisonyoga.com](mailto:james@prisonyoga.com)

Phone: 415-868-2902

Location: Bolinas, California

Trainings offered:

Special trainings for yoga teachers interested in teaching in prisons and rehabilitation facilities.

James Fox, founder and director of the Prison Yoga Project (PYP), leads two-day trainings in various cities throughout the United States, drawing on his experience of teaching yoga and mindfulness meditation to incarcerated youth and adults, including 10 years at San Quentin Prison.

The weekend training is intended for anyone interested in bringing yoga to underserved and/or traumatized populations and includes:

- PYP's methodology for working with prisoners, including an in-depth orientation for teaching yoga in the unique social/cultural environment of prison
- A thorough investigation of the practical application of yoga for specific emotional and psycho-

logical issues, and as an aid in addiction recovery

- Strategies for establishing yoga programs in detention centers and rehabilitation facilities
- Instruction in specific asana, pranayama, and meditation practices that have been proven effective with prisoners.

Products and Resources:

- \* *Yoga: A Path for Healing and Recovery*, an illustrated yoga manual for prisoners, by James Fox. Available at <http://givebackyoga.org/shop> and <http://prisonyoga.com>.
- \* "Prison Yoga: A Path for Healing and Recovery," by Stephanie Shorter, *Yoga Therapy Today*, Volume 8, Issue 1, Spring 2012, pp. 28–29.
- \* "Leaving Prison Before Getting Out," by James Fox, *Origin Magazine*, March/April 2012, pp. 60–63.

## Radiant Child Yoga

Website: [www.childrensyoga.com](http://www.childrensyoga.com)

Email: [info@childrensyoga.com](mailto:info@childrensyoga.com)

Phone: 888-561-2126

Location: Herndon, Virginia

Trainings offered:

- ❖ *Radiant Child Yoga, Levels 1–3* (30 course hours)
- Participants learn:

- Yoga for children of all ages, from tots to teens
- How to create lesson plans using yoga song, movement, games, and stories
- How to use yoga-based activities to support and enhance the effectiveness of treatment for children with sensory integration issues
- How yoga strengthens the brain-body connection and enhances learning for all children
- Breathing techniques, yoga poses, and meditations for facilitating relaxation and focus
- Class-management skills
- Effective communication skills
- Daily yoga practice for each participant.

Products and Resources:

- \* *Fly Like A Butterfly*, by Shakta Khalsa
- \* *Yoga in Motion* DVD, by Shakta Khalsa
- \* *Happy and Cozy* CDs, by Shakta Khalsa
- \* *Kundalini Yoga Book*, by Shakta Khalsa

## School for Compassionate Action

Website: [www.schoolforcompassionateaction.com](http://www.schoolforcompassionateaction.com)

Email: [jill@schoolforcompassionateaction.com](mailto:jill@schoolforcompassionateaction.com)

Phone: 718-522-5526

Location: New York, New York

Trainings offered:

- ❖ 200-Hour Certified Teacher Training
- ❖ Workshops
- ❖ Classes
- ❖ Supervision Groups

The School for Compassionate Action's workshops and trainings couple yoga and meditation with contemporary and contemplative psychology, applying these tools to working with at-risk/in-need populations. SCA offers a holistic, integrative, and specialized approach to working with people in need and at risk by providing an essential understanding of each population as well as relevant awareness practices to work with their realities.

These workshops are relevant for therapists, social workers, psychiatrists, occupational therapists, schoolteachers, yoga teachers, parents, doctors, nurses, and bodyworkers.

Rather than teaching from concept, theory, or study, SCA draws from years of frontline experience. SCA teachers know that the practices of mindfulness meditation, yoga postures, visualization practices, and breath practices have the capacity and ability to change minds, open hearts, and empower others. Fortunately, science is catching up and providing evidence to support these results, making this an exciting and validating time. With a number of colleges and universities teaching mindfulness, and an increasing number of courses being taught that include the importance of bringing the physical body into emotional therapy interventions, SCA is on the forefront of bringing this work into a variety of communities and educating others with the skills to do the same.

Participants learn:

- Meditation practices drawn from the Buddhist tradition
- Fundamental yoga postures: standing poses, inversions, hip openers, backbends, twists, and balancing postures
- Breath techniques
- Visualization techniques
- Inner and outer alignment
- The psychology of the body
- Compassion practices
- The verbal and physical poetics of teaching
- Meditation and yoga for communities in need.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* *Vajra Yoga Mindfulness Meditation* CD, available at [www.vajrayoga.com](http://www.vajrayoga.com)
- \* "A Twisted Story," Jill Satterfield's chapter in *Freeing the Body, Freeing the Mind*. This chapter chronicles Jill's experience of healing her body from chronic pain and illness through yoga and meditation.

## Silver Age Yoga

*Website:* [www.silverageyoga.org](http://www.silverageyoga.org)

*Email:* [info@silverageyoga.org](mailto:info@silverageyoga.org)

*Phone:* 858-693-3157

*Location:* San Diego, California

*Trainings offered:*

### ❖ **Advanced Yoga Certification for Teaching Senior Students Safely**

This unique program offers the only gerontology-based curriculum for work with seniors. The Silver Age Yoga Online Certification Program is a self-study course and has successfully allowed teachers to work safely with seniors worldwide. The comprehensiveness and affordability of the curriculum ensures that yoga reaches more seniors through capable Silver Age Yoga-certified teachers.

Participants learn:

- 89 unique asanas taught through the program's detailed print and video curriculum
- Important contraindications and unique challenges of working with the senior population
- Skills to grow one's own yoga practice through Silver Age Yoga's comprehensive business toolkit.

## Street Yoga

*Website:* [www.streetyoga.org](http://www.streetyoga.org)

*Email:* [outreach@streetyoga.org](mailto:outreach@streetyoga.org)

*Phone:* 503-232-0362

*Location:* Portland, Oregon

*Trainings offered:*

### ❖ **Core Teacher Training**

The Street Yoga Teacher Training workshop is for those interested in learning how to teach yoga to youth and caregivers struggling with the effects of trauma, homelessness, abuse, addiction, and behavioral challenges. Participants will learn how to weave yoga and mindfulness practices into youth activities and therapy work and learn about the trauma-healing effects of yoga, appropriate boundaries, touch, and much more. The training is dynamic, participatory, and fun.

### ❖ **Mindful Caregiver Training**

Mark Lilly offers the Mindful Parents and Caregivers Program as a workshop for direct and extended caregivers of youth experiencing trauma. We work with parents, therapists, caseworkers, and individuals who serve in a social-service context. This training is accredited through the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for Continuing Education Units and focuses on building emotional awareness and regulation, self-care, stress reduction, and practical mindful communication techniques. Yoga and mindfulness have been shown, through extensive clinical research, to reduce chronic stress and to counter negative neurological effects of secondary trauma. Such training accentuates skills in present-time awareness, allowing greater facility in handling difficult situations. Better self-care directly correlates to an enhanced ability to provide care to others.

See the website for upcoming trainings and workshops offered nationwide.

## The Hard & The Soft Yoga Institute

Website: [www.power-yoga.com](http://www.power-yoga.com)

Email: [info@power-yoga.com](mailto:info@power-yoga.com)

Phone: 413-528-1647

Location: Great Barrington, Massachusetts

### Trainings offered:

Our director, Beryl Bender Birch, has been a student of classical yoga, Buddhism, and Jainism for over 40 years, and has long recognized the unique importance of service (seva), not only in one's life but in the practice and teaching of yoga. Our school, The Hard & The Soft Yoga Institute, has been training yoga teachers since 1985 and teaching our students to work in underserved areas with specialized populations. A major requirement for certification and graduation from our school is the development of a "give back" project. Our program asks our students to look around their communities and identify a need that they can fill. Many of the hundreds of projects our graduates have initiated are listed on our website—[www.power-yoga.com](http://www.power-yoga.com), under "Community/Right Action/Give Back Projects".

Through the success of these projects, these small seeds of service became the bija mantra (the sacred seed word) for the founding of the Give Back Yoga Foundation in 2007 by Beryl, who continues as the codirector, with her executive assistant, Lori Klein, and her student Rob Schwart, who is our executive director. Our intimate connection with GBYF and our relationship with the Yoga Service Council place us in a unique position to reach out to yoga service organizations all over the world. Whatever your field of interest might be in developing a service project, we can most likely help you find inspiration and direction. In addition to our main location in Great Barrington, MA, we have affiliate schools in East Hampton, NY; Nosara, Costa Rica; Virginia Beach, VA; Orlando, FL; San Antonio, TX; East Longmeadow, MA; Westport, CT; Newington, CT; and the Harrisburg, PA area; plus additional workshops and trainings at Kripalu in Lenox, MA and Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, NY, as well as in many other locations.

### ❖ *Teacher Training, Advanced Studies and Continuing Education:*

We offer many specialized workshops in adaptive yoga and yoga therapy for various populations, including veterans, prisoners, seniors, those with hip and knee replacements, cancer survivors, at-risk youth, trauma victims, and those with addiction issues or anxiety disorders such as depression or post-traumatic stress, plus many others. Our specialized focus in 2012 is developing yoga skills to alleviate the symptoms of trauma (depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress). Using the relevant findings in neurosci-

ence research showing the benefits of mind body practices like asana, pranayama (conscious breathing), and meditation for mental and physical health, we are developing new and exciting ways to practice and teach yoga.

- 200/300/500/1000 hour comprehensive Teacher Training Certification (All our trainings offer full credit hours toward 200, 300, 500, or 1000 hour certification.)
- A comprehensive year-round travel schedule by Beryl and senior teachers, offer easy access to frequent trainings and hours toward certification and/or continuing education in work with specialized populations.
- A nationwide network of support from affiliate studios and senior teachers opens the practice of yoga to all and offers additional intensives in adaptive yoga.

### Products and Resources:

#### Books:

- \* *Finding Peace: A Yoga Guide for Veterans and Active Duty Military Service Men and Women*
- \* *Power Yoga*
- \* *Beyond Power Yoga*
- \* *Boomer Yoga*

#### CDs:

- \* *Meditations for Everyday Mindfulness*
- \* *Yoga Nidra for Healing from Trauma and Managing Stress*

#### Asana, pranayama, lecture, and meditation classes for download or live listen:

- \* [www.betterlisten.com](http://www.betterlisten.com)
- \* [www.learnitlive.com](http://www.learnitlive.com)
- \* [www.yogaglo.com](http://www.yogaglo.com)
- \* [www.aliveyoga.com](http://www.aliveyoga.com)

## Warriors at Ease

Website: [www.warriorsatease.com](http://www.warriorsatease.com)

Email: [info@warriorsatease.com](mailto:info@warriorsatease.com)

Phone: 512-516-5031

Location: Bethesda, Maryland

### Trainings offered:

#### ❖ *Fundamentals of Teaching Yoga and Meditation to Military Communities*

Part 1: Fundamentals (webinar)

- Key distinctions between "yogic culture" and "military culture" and why they matter
- Basic information about military culture, history, structure, values, norms, and attitudes
- Cultural sensitivity skills critical to a teacher's success and effectiveness
- Ways to introduce yoga/meditation that enhance your students' receptivity and focus on their concerns
- Ways to create a safe learning container and why this is crucial for working with those suffering from trauma

- A basic understanding of war-related traumatic stress, PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), and TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury)
- Practical guidelines for working with student's emotional reactions in class
- Strategies and tips for initiating a class or workshop series in military facilities and communities

## Part 2: Residential and Practicum

- Trauma-sensitive teaching guidelines and precautions, as well as adaptive yoga asana sequence protocols and modifications for military populations:
  - ✦ Able-bodied service members with and without PTSD
  - ✦ Older veterans with chronic physical illness and PTSD
  - ✦ Veterans with MST (military sexual trauma)
  - ✦ Veterans suffering from major physical illness, TBI, spinal cord injuries, and amputations
  - ✦ Veterans and service members in wheelchairs
- The neurophysiology of PTSD and how sensory processing can be affected by war-related trauma
- How to incorporate pertinent sensory-integration treatment principles and techniques into a yoga class for military personnel or combat veterans to maximize healing
- Pranayama (breathing) techniques most effective in reducing hyper-arousal
- How to address PTSD, TBI, amputations, spinal-cord injuries, and combat-related stress by using sensory integration, yoga, and meditation to improve psychological health, help alleviate the symptoms of PTSD, and improve resiliency and self-regulation.

## Part 3: Mentoring

- Learn to further integrate the principles, information, and skills from the program in order to make them your own.
- In working with an experienced mentor, learn to identify and augment your strengths as a teacher and shore up your weaknesses.
- Deepen your knowledge base regarding trauma, depression, PTSD, TBI, traumatic brain injury, yoga, and specialized teaching skills.
- Gain certification as a Warriors At Ease teacher; completion of all three parts signifies that you have personally demonstrated the core competencies necessary for working safely and effectively with military populations.

Warriors at Ease endorses and recommends certified teachers for yoga and meditation instruction positions serving the military community.

### ❖ *Sensory Enhanced Yoga for Self-Regulation and Trauma Healing*

This three-day course is designed for occupational therapists, physical therapists and allied health

professionals who wish to incorporate evidence-based, trauma-sensitive yoga techniques into their clinical practices to maximize healing from:

- Combat stress
- PTSD
- Anxiety
- Related autonomic nervous-system disorders.

Yoga experience is helpful but not required, as participants will be taught how to safely present and sequence a limited repertoire of therapeutic yoga poses and breathing techniques for this population.

Sensory-enhanced yoga (SE Yoga) evolved from the highly successful treatment protocol used with deployed military personnel in Kirkuk, Iraq, which Lynn Stoller co-developed. It is derived from her many years of experience as a sensory-integration certified occupational therapist and registered yoga instructor.

SE Yoga addresses the core symptoms of PTSD by applying techniques from sensory-based occupational therapy practices as well as recent findings from the fields of neurobiology and trauma psychology. Participants are also taught how to create a "safe container" for students, both physically and psychologically, in which healing can occur.

### *Products and Resources:*

- \* *Warriors at Ease Resource Guide* (To obtain, inquire via e-mail)

## **Yoga 4 Classrooms**

*Website:* [www.yoga4classrooms.com](http://www.yoga4classrooms.com)

*Email:* [lisa@childlightyoga.com](mailto:lisa@childlightyoga.com)

*Phone:* 603-781-3323

*Location:* Dover, New Hampshire

### *Trainings offered:*

#### ❖ **Yoga 4 Classrooms Workshop for Educators**

This one-day workshop (online video training option also available) is open to all classroom teachers, administrators, school counselors, phys-ed teachers, therapists, and others seeking to bring simple yoga and mindfulness techniques into the classroom or similar settings for a more peaceful, productive class day. No yoga experience is required. The full-color, illustrated Y4C™ Teacher's Guide ensures the program is easy to use and sustainable. The Y4C™ Card Deck and iPhone app support the program.

#### ❖ **Yoga 4 Classrooms Instructor Training (2 Tracks):**

**3-day Licensee Track:** This track is best suited to yoga teachers or other pre-qualified individuals who are not a member of a particular school staff and wish to expand their professional offerings to teachers and schools. Y4C licensees have the ability to schedule and facilitate the Y4C Workshop for Educators. Licensees also assist schools

in becoming Y4C Schools by providing the staff development workshop, residency, and other implementation services.

**2.5-day General Educator Track:** This track is best suited to school counselors, health educators, or similar positions working in a particular school. Those who complete the educator track are qualified to share the Y4C staff development workshop and classroom residency (works beautifully as guidance curriculum) within their own school with their own staff and students.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* Yoga 4 Classrooms Teacher's Guide (available to workshop attendees)
- \* Yoga 4 Classrooms Card Deck (available on website)
- \* Yoga 4 Classrooms Mobile App

### Yoga Activist

*Website:* [www.yogaactivist.org](http://www.yogaactivist.org)

*Email:* [info@yogaactivist.org](mailto:info@yogaactivist.org)

*Phone:* 202-834-3511

*Location:* Washington, DC

*Trainings offered:*

- ❖ **Teaching Yoga to Homeless, Mentally Ill, Substance-Dependent and Trauma-Survivor Communities**

Whether you're already a yoga teacher, an avid yogi, or just someone interested in helping others, you can be part of this training to help develop mindfulness, and skills to serve various communities with yoga. Led by yoga teacher trainers, yoga outreach trainers, and social workers, this training includes hands-on yoga instruction and practice, to help you develop your skills as current or future outreach teachers or assistants.

Participants receive a social-service overview of the needs and gaps in care for the homeless, substance-abuse, and mentally ill communities, as well as how to share yoga in a way that helps these communities meet their unique needs. This training module is an excellent opportunity for anyone looking to gain greater insight and experience in yoga outreach and the communities we serve. It is not necessary to be a yoga teacher to participate and benefit from this dynamic, practical training.

Participants learn:

- Fundamentals of teaching yoga
- The most beneficial asanas, meditation, and pranayama for specific trauma-survivor communities
- Types of trauma-survivor communities and how to choose the right community for your teaching practice

- Classroom management
- How to respond to abreactions and how to hold your own emotional space
- Class design
- How to set up a program.

### Yoga Behind Bars

*Website:* [www.yogabehindbars.org](http://www.yogabehindbars.org)

*Email:* [volunteer@yogabehindbars.org](mailto:volunteer@yogabehindbars.org)

*Phone:* 425-827-4726

*Location:* Seattle, Washington

*Trainings offered:*

- ❖ **Teaching Adults and Youth Behind Bars**

This unique professional training prepares participants to be effective, powerful teachers for incarcerated adults and youth.

In this two-day training, participants hear stories from the field, learn how to increase impact as a teacher, gain a greater understanding of the prison culture, receive real-time feedback and guidance from masters in the field, and come away with a newly updated manual with years of collective wisdom.

Participants learn:

- Common challenges and tools for meeting them
- The yamas of Yoga Behind Bars
- Healthy boundaries
- Self-care
- Practical tips for teaching yoga effectively in any environment.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* *We're All Doing Time*, by Bo Lozoff
- \* *The Dhamma Brothers* (documentary film)
- \* *Trauma Stewardship*, by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky.

### Yoga Ed

*Website:* [www.yogaed.com](http://www.yogaed.com)

*Email:* [info@yogaed.com](mailto:info@yogaed.com)

*Phone:* 310-471-1742

*Location:* Los Angeles, California

*Trainings offered:*

- ❖ Learn to teach Yoga to Pre-School Children
- ❖ Learn to teach Yoga to Children Grades K-8
- ❖ Learn to teach Yoga to High School Students
- ❖ Learn to teach Yoga to At Risk Individuals
- ❖ Learn to teach Yoga to Classroom Teachers

Yoga Ed trains Certified Yoga Teachers how to teach yoga to children with the specific emphasis of teaching yoga in the school environment. Trainings include a unit on how to teach Yoga Ed Tools for Teachers, which are 4 basic yoga tools (breathing, yoga poses, games and visualizations) that can be used by any classroom teacher, with or without



yoga experience, to achieve specific outcomes such as increased concentration and learning readiness. The Yoga Ed curriculum contains 36-week lesson plans that meet National P.E. Standards. Yoga Ed is currently being used in schools throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Participants learn:

- How to teach children awareness, self-management, healthy life skills and responsibility through yoga
- How to address significant childhood developmental milestones when teaching kids yoga
- Simple yoga techniques designed especially for the classroom
- How to speak and share yoga in a universal, educator-friendly way.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* Yoga Pretzel Decks
- \* Yoga Planet Decks
- \* Healthy Me Poster
- \* Yoga Ed Pre-School, K-12 Tools for Teachers Manual

## Yoga for Cancer Survivors

*Website:* [www.tariprinster.com](http://www.tariprinster.com)

*Email:* [tari@tariprinster.com](mailto:tari@tariprinster.com)

*Phone:* 917-714-5259

*Location:* New York, New York

*Trainings offered:*

### ❖ **Specialized yoga for cancer patients and survivors**

Cancer survivors and patients need yoga more than anyone, yet some methods of practice can be harmful to this particular community and cause physical complications. Through personal experience and research, Tari Prinster has developed a yoga system that takes all related issues into consideration, so cancer survivors can experience tangible results.

This unique program is grounded in science—both the science of yoga and the science behind how cancer and Western medical treatments impact the body. The training provides information about specific tools, poses, modifications, and language cancer survivors need, instilling yoga teachers with the confidence to teach this group, along with an understanding of how yoga can deeply benefit those who come to them for help.

You will learn:

- What cancer survivors really feel and need, physically and emotionally
- Beneficial, health-building asanas along with those to avoid
- Specific healing sequences for lymphedema, fatigue, neuropathy, osteoporosis, and other survivor-related health concerns

- How yoga helps to maintain and strengthen the immune system.

The curriculum includes:

- Course manual
- Analysis of appropriate and non-appropriate poses
- Guidelines and essential elements of a class plan
- Observed practice teaching and individualized feedback for each participant
- Resources, research data, and readings
- How to get referrals and how to start a yoga program for survivors.

## Yoga for Uniforms

*Website:* [www.yogaforuniforms.com](http://www.yogaforuniforms.com)

*Email:* [sarah@yogaforuniforms.com](mailto:sarah@yogaforuniforms.com)

*Phone:* 214-600-4642

*Location:* Dallas, Texas

*Trainings offered:*

Yoga for Uniforms is dedicated to developing, supporting, and promoting healthy mind, body, and spirit for all those who serve in uniform, by providing affordable, accessible, and adaptable yoga practices.

### ❖ **Earning your Stripes**

A comprehensive 8-hour training designed to provide yoga teachers with additional tools for approaching the world of first responders.

Topics covered:

- A day in the life of first responders
- Physiological effects of constant stress
- 911 calls
- Hands-on assists
- Common injuries
- Resources for approaching your local first responders.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* Please visit our website to view a list of resources available for first responders and their families.

## Yoga Gangsters

*Website:* [www.yogagangsters.org](http://www.yogagangsters.org)

*Email:* [Marisol@305yoga.com](mailto:Marisol@305yoga.com)

*Phone:* 786-728-7266

*Location:* Miami, Florida

*Trainings offered:*

### ❖ **Yoga Outreach & At-Risk Certification**

This 3-day certification workshop, with Yoga Gangsters founder Terri Cooper, is for anyone who would like to provide outreach yoga programming in schools, shelters, and rehab facilities, or through other nonprofit organizations. Working with these populations requires special skills and

approaches so that you can connect with the participants. This course will cover:

- Introduction to trauma and how it is held in the body
- Introduction to chakras and how to “read” wounds
- Diversity and types of students
- Showing up and speaking authentically
- Appropriate touch
- Sequencing, lesson plans, and practice teaching.

### ❖ *YG2: Yoga in the Hood\**

This single-day experience will equip you with a handful of exercises to use in the classroom that will help you to feel more confident while teaching yoga to teens.

\**Yoga Outreach & At-Risk Certification* is a prerequisite for this immersion.

#### *Products and Resources:*

- \* Visit the online store at [www.YogaGangsters.org](http://www.YogaGangsters.org) to show your support by purchasing Yoga Gangsters apparel; 100% of proceeds benefits Yoga Gangsters yoga outreach programs.

## Yoga Impact

*Website:* [www.yogaimpact.org](http://www.yogaimpact.org)

*Email:* [info@yogaimpact.org](mailto:info@yogaimpact.org)

*Phone:* CO Office: 720.432.YOGA (9642)

NJ Office: 973.874.YOGA (9642)

*Locations:* Colorado and New Jersey

#### *Trainings offered:*

Teacher Training, Advanced Studies and Continuing Education

### ❖ *200-Hour Yoga Teacher Education Program*

This training meets the requirements of Yoga Alliance, focusing on creating a solid foundation to teach beginners and developing critical thinking skills to adapt to various populations. The trainings, held in both New Jersey and Colorado includes:

- Yoga lifestyle
- Asanas
- Anatomy
- Pranayama
- Meditation
- Teaching methodology
- Introduction to philosophy/history of yoga

### ❖ *500-Hour Yoga Therapist Trainings*

The Yoga Impact 500-hour Yoga Therapy Education Program focuses on teaching advanced yoga practices to yoga teachers along with therapeutic yoga modalities for injury, illness and special populations. The heart of the Yoga Impact Yoga Therapy Education Program is to give yoga teachers an understanding of the science behind the art of yoga.

This program supports the mission and programs of Yoga Impact, a 501(c)(3) organization. Upon completion of this program, each participant will be certified as a 500 hour Yoga Therapist and can choose to register as an RYT 500 with Yoga Alliance. The 500 hours of study are broken into two 10-day intensives held in two consecutive summers in New Jersey, bi-monthly webinars, elective courses of study in New Jersey and Colorado and self-study. Trainees have a choice of a variety of electives that focus on helping special populations. Trainees are asked to maintain a personal practice and are encouraged to create a library of resources during their year of study. The course work can be completed in 1–2 years.

### ❖ *Brighter Future*

The Brighter Future training is focused on developing the skills to adapt yoga modalities to teaching children and teens. As yoga teachers, we have learned how to create a life that is directed from our higher selves. Sharing this knowledge with the most precious resource in our universe, our children, will brighten all our futures. Whether you would like to share the health and well-being that yoga affords with your own children, or with “all of our children,” this training will provide us with the skills needed to adapt our teaching styles for the different developmental stages of a child’s life.

## Yoga in Schools

*Website:* [www.yogainschools.org](http://www.yogainschools.org)

*Email:* [joanne@yogaonthesquare.net](mailto:joanne@yogaonthesquare.net)

*Phone:* 412.287.4591

*Location:* Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

#### *Trainings offered:*

### ❖ *Yoga Ed K–8*

### ❖ *Yoga Ed High School*

### ❖ *Yoga in Schools Mind Body Tools for Teaching*

### ❖ *Yoga in Schools PE Teacher Professional Development*

### ❖ *Yoga in Schools Mind Body Tools for Clinicians* (Social Workers, Nurses, Psychologists, Counselors, etc)

❖ *Customized trainings for institutions*, eg. hospitals, juvenile detention centers, schools, mental health facilities (see our website for a list of institutions we have served)

This unique professional training prepares teachers and clinicians based on how the brain works and critical pedagogy using simple yoga movement and breathing exercises. It focuses on building lifetime wellness skills and exploring how the mind affects the body and the body affects the mind.

Participants learn:

- The fundamentals of movement connected to simple breathing
- Relevant parallels between neuroscience and learning/movement
- Trauma-sensitive mindfulness and yoga skills
- Practical strategies for self-regulation and classroom management

## Yoga of Recovery

Website: [www.yogaofrecovery.com](http://www.yogaofrecovery.com)

Email: [durga@yogaofrecovery.com](mailto:durga@yogaofrecovery.com)

Phone: 530-993-6020

Location: Loyalton, California

Trainings offered:

- ❖ **Yoga of Recovery for Counselors Certificate Courses**
- ❖ **Yoga of Recovery Retreats (for people in recovery)**
- ❖ **Yoga of Recovery workshops (non-residential)**

Participants learn:

- To combine Ayurveda and yoga with traditional recovery tools to offer a more holistic mind/body/spirit approach to addiction and self-destructive behaviors
- A truly empowering approach to counseling those who embark on a program of recovery
- Skills to introduce the healing potential of the holistic sciences of Ayurveda and yoga into daily life
- To fully understand the root of addiction through a holistic approach that encompasses a full range of therapies for mind, body, and spirit
- Benefits of hatha yoga, pranayama, and conscious relaxation for people in recovery
- The wider therapeutic framework of yogic psychology and philosophy
- How the healing aspects of Ayurveda apply specifically to work with addictions
- Causes of disease from the Ayurvedic perspective
- Addictive tendencies of each doshic type and their underlying needs and vulnerabilities
- How to identify likely damage caused and some simple suggestions for balance
- Counseling practices most useful for each type
- Simple, practical methods to revitalize the body's systems and boost the immune system, such as proper daily and seasonal routines
- How to be "established in the self"—to strengthen ongoing recovery and emotional stability
- Ayurvedic nutrition guidelines
- Seasonal and lifestyle suggestions
- Simple yet essential detoxification practices
- To develop more openness and compassion toward the "addict" or toward one's own lingering compulsions.

For those in counseling roles, the course will offer you additional tools and a deeper understanding of a comprehensive approach to wellness, emotional sobriety, and sustained spiritual development using Ayurveda and yoga as extension therapies to any Twelve-Step work. If you are already a yoga teacher, this course will make you uniquely qualified and more confident to teach yoga in rehabs or to people in recovery from any addiction.

Products and Resources:

- \* *Overcoming Addictions*, by Deepak Chopra
- \* *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts*, by Gabor Maté
- \* Free articles and talks on website

## YoKid

Website: [www.yokid.org](http://www.yokid.org)

Email: [info@yogakid.org](mailto:info@yogakid.org)

Phone: 703-475-0046

Location: Alexandria, Virginia

Trainings offered:

- ❖ **YoKid 20-Basic Training** (includes the following independent courses):

The aim of the YoKid Teacher Training is to give you the tools you need to effectively teach yoga and meditation to school-aged children. Our practical and informative training will provide you with what you need to teach traditional and non-traditional poses, and teach you age-appropriate language and methods for creating a fun yet calming environment for kids. You will also learn effective methods of classroom management and stages of child development in order to modify, differentiate, and make your instruction appropriate for all children.

Participants learn:

- Yoga philosophy for kids: Yoga Sutras, chakras, pranayama, meditation, yoga nidra, and guided relaxation for kids. Learn fundamental yoga philosophy and how it pertains to children. In this segment of the training, you will also learn ways to teach guided relaxation, pranayama, and meditation to children in grades K-12.
- How to teach yoga to K-5th graders: K-5 (5- to 11-year-olds) developmental stages, behavior management, teaching strategies, and methodology for your yoga classroom. This course focuses on traditional and non-traditional poses (including partner poses, games, and activities) as well as appropriate language and methods for creating a fun yet calming environment for elementary-school children.
- How to teach yoga to 6th-12th graders: 6th-12th (11- to 17-year-olds) developmental stages, behavior management, teaching strategies, and methodology for your yoga classroom.

Inspired by the Ashtanga primary series, you will learn to teach traditional hatha poses and partner poses that you can use in your yoga classroom. This Ashtanga teen series will give you the foundation you need to create a fun and challenging, yet calming and relaxing environment for teens.

❖ ***Teaching Yoga to Children & Teens: Asana in Your Yoga Classroom***

This specialty course is for those with previous yoga experience who would like to refine the language and skills needed to effectively teach yoga to children and teens ages 4 to 17.

The training includes a child/teen-focused exploration of the asanas (yoga postures), practice teaching, self-exploration to cultivate authentic heart-centered teaching, and practical tips to keep your yoga classroom fun and engaging.

❖ ***Kids Yoga Tools & Games***

This specialty training provides an in-depth exploration of the chakras for children, geared towards those with previous yoga experience who would like to refine the language and skills needed to effectively teach yoga to children and teens ages 4 to 17.

*Products and Resources:*

- \* YoKid Yoga Flashcards
- \* *The Unadorned Thread of Yoga*, by Salvatore Zambito
- \* *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, by Anodea Judith
- \* *Ready...Set...R.E.L.A.X.*, by Jeffery Allen & Roger Klein
- \* *Fly Like a Butterfly*, by Shakta Kaur Khalsa
- \* *Yoga Nidra*, by Swami Satyananda Saraswati
- \* *Stress Free Kids Series*, by Lori Lite

## INSIGHTS *from service providers and participants*

### Every Kid's Yoga

*Craig is an experienced teacher who understands the issues of students with special needs. His compassion for children and his knowledge of yoga are integrated in an educational and inspiring way. This program truly is "Every Kid's Yoga"!*

—Cathy Spack, Speech Language Pathologist,  
K–12, River East Transcona School



### InBody Outreach

*InBody Outreach has played an integral part in the University of Utah Hospital's rehabilitation inpatient clinical relaxation program. Since adding yoga therapy to our psychology-based neurofeedback program, therapists and physicians have noticed improved spirometry measures, quicker vent weaning, decreased anxiety and stress, and a reduction in the amount of PRN medications requested for sleep and pain. Because it is always a goal to make our patients, who have experienced a spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, or stroke, feel better faster, we look forward to exposing all of our patients to the healing benefits of yoga. We are currently recruiting university researchers to further measure the clinical efficacy of the Inbody Outreach therapeutic yoga program.*

—Denise M. Whitten, Patient Services Coordinator/Rehabilitation Services  
University of Utah Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

*When I entered into my first recovery program, my counselor told me that my strength in learning new behavior was in my struggle. I had no idea what she meant until we took a group yoga class. My whole life, everything had been taken away from me because of my behavior. I lost my family, my friends, my identity. After a few classes of breath and simple movement, I was able to just be with myself for a moment, actually looking inward. I learned that I was alive, valid, myself, right now. A light came on, and I was able to be present and free from the fear. I realized I acted out of anger due to this fear. It was great to discover the tool of taking a deep breath and finding peace to move me forward.*

—Volunteers of America client

*As a cancer patient, I felt a great disconnect to my body after my battle with lymphoma. It was recommended to me to take yoga as part of my recovery. What I was most thankful for was the calmness I felt after the classes. I really was having trouble sleeping during treatments and, with the help of yoga, I had fewer sleep disturbances, fell asleep more quickly, and slept longer after a seven-week yoga program. I am really thankful for this program and the gift of yoga.*

—Cancer Wellness House client



## It's Yoga, Kids

*After a life of dance, I was introduced to yoga in 1991 at YogaWorks with Seane Corn. I loved my corporate work in sales and marketing until the birth of my daughter in 2002. With the intention of creating a nurturing space where families could connect, bend, breathe and have fun together, leading classes, trainings, events and workshops at our studio and around the world, we have experienced, researched and seen the benefits of yoga for all ages and abilities, and we look forward to sharing yoga with you!*

—Michelle Wing

## Kula for Karma

*Nancy Candea is one of those rare, gifted yoga teachers, whose compassion and sense of humor create a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment. A beautiful training weekend of love, community, connection, fun, inspiration and profound teaching.*

—Rhonda Roehrich



## Little Flower Yoga

*I recently took the Little Flower Weekend Intensive Level 1 and highly recommend this course. I am an occupational therapist working in the New York City school system and have taken other yoga teacher trainings prior to this course. I can say without reservation that this was one of the best and the instructor, Jennifer Cohen, was extremely knowledgeable and an excellent and engaging presenter.*

—Sabrina Ann Kenny

*I teach yoga to K-5 at PS3 in Manhattan, and the techniques, insights, and experience that Little Flower Yoga (LFY) brings is incredible. Jennifer teaches teachers how to teach, share, and encourage their li'l yogis. I've seen a positive shift with my chicos at PS3 since I've done the LFY training, and it's with great gratitude to Jennifer and LFY that I feel like I'm making a difference in my little ones' lives. If you're thinking about doing any kind of training with LFY, don't hesitate. Do it!*

—Salvador Martinez

## Mindful Yoga Therapy for Veterans

*I've been teaching Mindful Yoga Therapy for Veterans in a PTSD Residential Treatment Program for the past five years. This 12-week residential program provides comprehensive treatment to men and women veterans who are having significant difficulty functioning in their lives. Towards the end of the 12-week residential treatment program, the veterans are often encouraged to spend their weekends at home in preparation for their graduation from treatment. At the beginning of a meditation practice, I asked the veterans about their home practice. One veteran in particular, who had been struggling with severe anger-control issues, and who had gone home for the weekend, told me, "I want you to know that I didn't get arrested this weekend, because of you." When I asked him why, he told me that an incident over the weekend had gotten him very upset and "it was going to be a bad one—I would have ended up getting arrested. But when I felt myself getting out of control, I started using the breathing practices you taught me. I was able to stay in control and not get myself into trouble." He was so proud of the results of his yoga practice, he said that he might even get the word "Namaste" tattooed on the back of his neck. This is just one story of many that have inspired us at Mindful Yoga Therapy for Veterans to do what we*



*can to bring these simple but powerful practices to as many veterans as possible.*

*—Suzanne Manafort,  
founder, Mindful Yoga  
Therapy for Veterans*



## Radiant Child Yoga

*I have used the Radiant Child Yoga Program (RCYP) in the Texas School for the Blind as well as with speech-therapy patients who have autism and Asperger's syndrome. The program has been effective in building nonverbal communication skills, improving parent-child and peer interactions, developing shared reference and joint attention, improving emotional regulation and developing creativity through symbolic play and yoga story activities.*

*The music and activity pictures have helped to develop continuity between therapy and home settings. Radiant Child Yoga has helped to develop a school program that is used in residential and instructional settings with students who need consistency and structure to benefit from instruction. The program has also provided a nice context for inclusion with typical peers and siblings.*

—Linda Hagood, M.A., CCC-SLP, speech-language pathologist, Austin, Texas

*We teach yoga to all 40 children in our school once a week for 30 minutes. The children range from 3–6 years, and we break them into groups by age. We use mats on the floor, and they are now using the new CDs put out by Shakta [Kaur Khalsa, RCYP founder]. Our teacher has taken RCYP I, II, and III.*

—Keturah Collins, Children's House Montessori School, Reston, Virginia

## Silver Age Yoga

*I am 81 years old, born May 21, 1930. In the seventies, I was introduced to yoga and fell in love with it, practicing on and off as my time allowed. In 1994, I was certified as a yoga teacher by Leslie Ferree (her school was called Spiritual Yoga Training); I was 64 years old. Since then, I have taught at Palomar College in Vista, California, for 12 years; for years at Oasis in Escondido, California; at Ed Brown Senior Center in Rancho Bernardo, California; and in several private venues including Hidden Meadows in Escondido.*



*I am a Yoga Alliance-registered teacher, and I was going on with my routine teaching when my real calling came. In 2004, I graduated from a geriatric science based hatha yoga training called Silver Age Yoga, with a mission to bring health-enhancing yoga practices to underserved seniors at no cost. I am one of their 300 graduates, teaching at Gloria McClellan Center in Vista, CA. This free class has been attended by two dozen or so seniors every week for close to seven years. I have a stack of testimonials to illustrate the magic of Silver Age Yoga. One of the most emotional classes I ever taught was when I substituted for a Silver Age Yoga teacher at the Vista Blind Center. Teaching the blind and visually impaired was an incredible experience.*

*Teaching seniors empowered me not only to bring unheard of health changes into hundreds of lives, it changed my life, too. It validated and reinforced my faith in the premise of giving back to society, just as the founder of Silver Age Yoga, Frank Iszak, a Hungarian refugee of a bygone era did, when he founded this life-changing organization. Silver Age Yoga Community Outreach with a mission of giving back. I am proud to be one who taught over 300 free classes, even though it's just a small part of the 11,000 delivered by Silver Age Yoga teachers since 2004.*

*I pray that my health allows me to carry on the mission of giving for the years to come.*

—Ayosea (Barbara) Morse



## Women's Prison Yoga Coalition

*I wanted to let you know about a recent experience I had teaching a yoga class in Maryland Correctional Institute for Women, an all-securities-level facility housing 1,000 women.*

*Classes are held in a large, cavernous gym in one of the central buildings on campus. The space is overlooked by windows from a main hallway, and has bright lights and loud fans. It is common for officers with radios crackling to walk in and out during class. In order to create a sense of sacred space in this challenging environment, we set up our mats in a circle around a basketball center court. We chant at the beginning and end of each class to further mark the boundaries of the class space and time.*

*Immediately following the class, count is held in the gym. Up to 50 women and several of officers enter the gym, talking, squabbling, and giving orders. In my experience, it is common to witness challenging and hostile language and behavior between the inmates and with the officers during count. The energy level is high and stressful. For this reason I work hard to end the class promptly, giving the women enough time to protect themselves from the intensity of re-entry to the larger prison atmosphere after their yoga practice. On the couple of occasions when I have run a few minutes late, no recognition or respect has been given to the class in progress, and the yoga students have been jolted out of Savasana by the sound of boots, radios, and raised voices.*

*I have long wanted to include restorative poses in my classes, but have been limited by lack of props. I have been teaching weekly classes at this facility for almost two years, but have only recently been granted permission to bring in blocks and blankets. As soon as I was allowed to bring props in, I taught a restorative class. After a brief centering and warm-up, we gathered blocks and blankets and moved through a series of deep restoratives, ending with supported Baddha Konasana. I watched as the women softened and relaxed, breathing gently and easily, their foreheads and shoulders releasing more deeply than I had ever seen before. So sweet was the energy and grace I felt from these women that I was hesitant to break into the moment. I realized too late that count was almost upon us. Moving as quickly as I could without wanting them to feel rushed, I started to guide the women back to a broader awareness.*

*I had waited too long. Inmates started to drift in, ready for count. To my amazement, as each woman entered, they became silent, or dropped their voice to a whisper. No more than six inmates had entered by the time class was completed, and the students stood up to join count. Additional inmates and officers continued to file in, but the peaceful energy was powerful. Despite the fact that I had put all the props away and there was no longer any evidence of the class, every new person to enter the gym quieted to a whisper. The women lined up in their cell block lines and the officers walked down each line, speaking gently to each inmate until count was completed, after which everyone dispersed as softly as they had entered.*

*The yoga students and I stood there, awed by the experience. One of the women came up to me and asked, "Did we really just do count in silence?" I said the only thing I could think of to say in the moment: "You created this peace. You used the power within you to tap into a deep calm, and you created this peace."*

*To those of you who have taught me, inspired me in my prison work and/or supported my efforts to provide these students with appropriate props, I offer my deep gratitude. Please know that your efforts ripple out and help to bring transformation into even the most restricted spaces.*

*—Kath Meadows, Founder, Women's Prison Yoga Coalition*

## Yoga 4 Classrooms

*Thank you so much for bringing us Yoga 4 Classrooms™. As representative of what I've noted personally and also heard and noticed from others in the school, I would like to share my thoughts with you about the many ways that yoga and mindfulness education have helped both our students and the teachers who support them:*

- *Yoga helps everyone to focus, relax, and get ready for the day.*
- *Working through practicing poses, breaths, and other activities and improving, or being able to do something they couldn't previously, gives children confidence, increases self-esteem, and is a reminder that anything we do (reading, writing, and math included) improves with practice and discipline.*
- *It supports respecting individual differences as students discover that what is "easy" for someone may be challenging for someone else (someone might be flexible, but struggle with balance poses, etc.). Again, this transfers so well into understanding and respecting that we are all unique, and in promoting acceptance of all!*
- *It definitely gives children a tool for when they are nervous, anxious, or having difficulty with self-control.*
- *The time we spend on our practice is not "lost" academic time (an initial concern of some teachers). It has actually increased student productivity on academic tasks. The children are more focused, alert, better listeners, more able to follow directions, and more relaxed during challenging tasks.*
- *Practicing yoga as a class promotes a positive and safe classroom environment, which enables children to feel comfortable to take risks in their learning, to try challenging tasks, and to ask questions when they are having difficulty.*
- *Practicing yoga in the classroom helps me feel more relaxed. I am more patient with the children. I am able to remain calm during stressful and anxious situations that may occur during the day.*



*I could go on and on. This program has proven to be a true gift to our entire school community, as well to me personally. I've been inspired to start my own yoga practice, as have many others from our staff. Thank you!*

*—Kathy Bousquet,  
Grade 2/3 Teacher,  
Central School,  
South Berwick, Maine*





## Yoga Activist

*For a number of years now, I have felt the therapeutic effects of a consistent yoga practice on my personal health. Yoga is a big part of my life. Personally, it is a practice that I rely on to manage stress, to address common aches and pains, and to find balance in difficult times. And professionally, as a yoga teacher and the coordinator of the Yoga Initiative at the George Washington University School of Medicine, I have repeatedly been amazed by the possibilities for the therapeutic applications of yoga across a wide range of illnesses. That is why, when I heard about Yoga Activist, I immediately knew I had to get involved.*

*I teach at a long-term recovery home, in a spacious “activities room” in the basement. The entrance of the room is lined with communal computers, and every week I go in half an hour early to clear some empty tables and chairs, and lay out the same colored mats in the same circular orientation. There are a handful of familiar faces on certain computers every week, and there are transient faces that weave in and out of the room before, during, and after our yoga class. All these faces are an integral part of our yoga class, just like all the other components that have slowly become ritualized into their respective places at the home.*

*Rituals are a huge part of our classes. Because of my background in research and public health in the field of addiction, I entered the program with an understanding of the challenges that this population faces. There are many, of course, but one of the most prominent ones is a loss of control. This is why establishing rituals has become the most effective way to reach the residents I teach. By knowing what’s going to happen, each resident is invited into a space of control and security—a space in which it is safe to turn inward.*

*We always start and end class with the same set of sequences; in between, we build up to poses that ground, stabilize, and calm the body and the nervous system. I entered the first class with a specific sequence in mind, with a good number of poses on the floor. From the very first class, I learned that all the poses I had planned for the floor needed to be thrown out the window: sitting down was psychologically and physically inaccessible to my residents. So I quickly learned to embrace chair and standing poses that provided a broader base of support. In cuing poses or breaths, I also learned that I needed to keep things simple, because years of stress of the physical vehicle had created a deep dissociation between mind and body; bodily sensations were filed either under pleasure or pain, with very little in between. So we spend the majority of our classes breaking down complex poses to their fundamental components, focusing on exaggerated movements to cultivate body awareness, linking breath with movement to establish some rhythm between mind and body, and focusing on how we can use the mind and body to embody new sensations.*

*My primary interest, as a yoga teacher and a student in the care-giving profession, is to help people at every level discover their own strength, courage, and ability to self-heal. Yoga Activist has given me this opportunity and more. It has been amazing to witness the transformations in the residents I reach through this community outreach: anxiously tapping fingers have become more still, we have less frequent urges to do sit-ups during Savasana, some students at the computers “secretly” practice the chair poses along with the class, and the ability to describe bodily experiences along a continuum of feelings (as opposed to just pleasure or pain) pops up in the most unexpected moments. I have heard the students say that the practice has helped them identify what they want in life, which is what we all hope to gain from our practice.*

*Teaching in a community outreach setting has taught me to focus on the essence of things, whether it’s the yoga, the illness, life, or the teaching. This type of outlook has allowed me to see things at their core, including the core of the challenges that arise in the community I teach. I have noticed that, at their core, the needs I encounter are strikingly similar to my own basic needs—and that, at the end of the day, we are all much more similar than different.*

*— Yasmin Pourkazemi, RYT-200, Yoga Activist Outreach Training graduate*

## Yoga Ed

*Wow! Yoga Ed. is awesome. The school year has begun and so have my Yoga Ed. classes. The response from the children to the Yoga Ed. curriculum has been fantastic. You should see the huge smiles on their faces while we're playing Yogi Benders! Starting yoga class with a game is brilliant. They're great fun and the children let off lots of steam. I'm finding that they're much more able to focus during the rest of the class. Time in, breathing, yoga poses, visualizations—now I see how it all fits together. The school halls are alive with yoga! I'm thrilled. I'm loving teaching and having a lot more fun. I actually end a class feeling energized rather than exhausted. A big, heartfelt THANK YOU!*



*We did yoga assessments with the 3rd and 4th grade classes. It was so interesting. I learned a lot about each child and how they view themselves. It was very clear who are the overachievers, who have great self-images, who are hurting inside. The simple use of pencil and paper and the individual markings was interesting. I know they learned new and interesting things about themselves, too. Both my assistant and I were amazed at their focus, their effort, and their cooperation: One boy, who has a number of challenging issues (some degree of autism, inability to focus, etc.) was able to breathe*

*smoothly and evenly during time-in for 108 seconds!*

*I also taught Yoga Ed. to a group of 8th graders. Their Life Skills teacher asked me to offer this class as a way to help her students deal with stress. She presented the challenges: a tough group, feistier than any other 8th grade, some big behavior issues, mostly boys ... and I added a few challenges of my own: very little experience working with this age group, I didn't know any of the kids ... I said yes anyway because I wanted the opportunity to try.*

*The class was AMAZING. The Life Skills teacher could hardly believe what she saw. "Wow, you had them in the palm of your hand," she told me. "They loved it." And the ultimate compliment from an 8th grade boy: "That was really cool."*

*—Deborah Van Handel, Yoga Ed. Instructor, Litchfield, Connecticut*

## Yoga for Recovery

*I don't think I've ever wanted to be here. In this body, on this plane. This 3D, physical plane where we are so easily sucked into the illusion of life, all its stories and dramas. Looking back, I realize I spent my many years of my life pretending to be someone else, or just not here at all. As a child, I was obsessed with make-believe. At 11, I was utterly confused as I was torn between "reality" and pretending. By 13, I tuned out by consuming my time with an eating disorder. At 15, I discovered alcohol, and, by 16, I was onto drugs.*

*Addicts don't think too highly of themselves, and self-esteem was a concept I struggled with for a long time. I remember being eight years old, convinced something was wrong with me because everyone around me was so creative and smart. I was convinced I didn't have these qualities. I thought I was stupid and everyone else was inherently better than me. The fact that I had very few friends, if any at all, made matters worse. My self-esteem was destroyed. Everyone hates me, I thought, everyone thinks I'm nothing. I have no friends because there's something wrong with me. I eventually became filled with so much grief that there was no longer room left for the nourishment of food. I hated myself. I hated my body. But then, one day, I got fed up. I was done with being nice to people, for if it weren't for them, I wouldn't be cursed with this awful eating disorder that had caused me to emaciate my body. It was their fault, and they had done it to me because they hated me. Everyone hated me. If you hate me, I thought, I can always hate you more. And so I did. But the negativity only made matters worse. It chewed me apart inside. I'm a loser, I'm nothing. So I turned to alcohol. That will make me something.*

## Yoga for Recovery *(continued)*

*I got drunk. I was still the same. I got really drunk. The mirror's reflection looked no different. Maybe a different substance would make me more likable? Weed? Pills? Cigarettes? Adderall? Cocaine? Drugs became how I dealt with reality, how I dealt with all the people I hated, how I dealt with school, how I dealt with my job, how I dealt with my eating disorder, how I dealt with relationships, how I dealt with myself and my reality. Drugs were my way of pretending I wasn't alive, my way of pretending this is all a dream, because, as I said before, I never really wanted to be here. I never understood this place. But perhaps my efforts to make life a dream weren't too far from the truth, because, in many ways, life is a dream, and, in many ways, I understand my dreams much better than I understand my waking life. But sometimes, there are tasks we must complete before we can wake. And I think that's the reason why I am here, and why I had to have these experiences. Throughout even the worst of my struggles, I never lost my belief in God. Perhaps, I would think to myself, I am still here because God wants me to be here. Perhaps God has a special plan for me. It was that tiny hope of some higher purpose that kept me alive many times—times when I didn't think I could take one more day, one more hour, one more minute.*

*And when I was ready, my spirit realigned. I felt that something was out of balance, something was coming. What I found coming was a spiritual reawakening, beginning with Yoga of Recovery. Through the loud clamor of thoughts and confusion, I was able to hear the quiet whispers of my soul urging me to find a higher way of being, a more peaceful way of being. And so the mysterious workings of life brought me to Sivananda Yoga Ranch in upstate New York, where I spent two weeks at the age of 18. Little did I know what was in store for me the second week of my stay.*

*I did not come to the Yoga Ranch knowing Durga would be there with her Yoga of Recovery program. I signed up for the program while at the Yoga Ranch with little better reason other than the fact that a friend I had met there was doing it, and it sounded kinda interesting. I mean, I don't have a drug problem, I thought, but at one point I almost did, so I might find the information useful towards avoiding any future indulgence. Oh, how wrong I was. Had I known I would never be able to look at drugs the same way again, I most likely would have run far in the other direction. Drugs were my safety zone—that was how I dealt with everything—and Yoga of Recovery stripped that from me. Don't get me wrong, I loved the program. I loved the sense of community and understanding I gained by sharing stories and struggles during the AA hour. I thought the concepts of Ayurveda and what it has to say about drug addiction were fascinating. It was a great week, actually. It wasn't until my return to the "real world," faced with the same people and situations of my old life, that I came to realize the profound effect Yoga of Recovery had had on me. One might question how a life I had been away from for only two weeks could now be referred to as my "old life," but you see, that's exactly the effect Durga's program had. It's not every day a drug addict comes back from a week's stay at such a program announcing to everyone their new determination to stay clean. And this is because the message of Durga's Yoga of Recovery permeated every inch of my soul. She spoke truth, and truth just makes so much sense.*

*I'm not going to lie and say Yoga of Recovery performed such a miracle that I never thought of or did drugs again. I broke many of my drug-free promises to Durga in an effort to deal with my eating disorder and in coming to terms with who I am. I was torn between the desires of my truth-seeking soul and the desires of my self-forgetting ego. But the guilt of being untrue to my Self began to outweigh my desire to use, until one day I realized how long it had been since the last time I popped a pill or had a drink. It was very strange how my clean time happened, because it occurred in such a way that felt like I had only grown out of a childish game.*

*Today I am 20 years old and studying with the California College of Ayurveda in my goal to become a Clinical Ayurvedic Specialist and to live a spiritual life.*

—Anonymous

## Yoga Gangsters

*Terri Cooper and her team are a gift to our community, as they pave a clear path of wellness for many. I was honestly not sure what to expect when I attended the Outreach Training Course, but I knew Terri from our community as a beautiful soul and kick-ass yoga teacher.*



*So when I was given the opportunity to learn about the god-given gift she and Yoga Gangsters are doing for our community, I had to experience it for myself. Wow! It was much more than I expected. It was presented in a very detailed manner, based on collective personal experiences and programming that Yoga Gangsters has done with various areas/centers in need of finding some*

*peace. What I have gathered is that whether or not you choose to go into centers that are in need or areas where individuals are dealing with trauma, unfortunately trauma is everywhere. It can show up in your super-fabulous studio yoga classes, in a loved one, or maybe even for you personally. When you hold the title of yoga teacher, people come to you for help and you may have a big karmic path to give back and help. Well...what do you do? Are you prepared for it? I was not—but now I am. This is a valuable training that provides tools to help those in need and a must-attend for all wellness professionals.*

*—Lisa Pumper, E-RYT*

*My experience at the Outreach Certification Workshop was and still is amazing. I learned a lot about myself and discovered new ways of teaching yoga. Terri Cooper creatively and authentically delivered knowledge and information that still resonates with me today. I found a new and profound love, reverence, and passion for the ancient practice of yoga and teaching the same. Most important, my heart and soul opened with a deep appreciation towards humanity, allowing myself to connect within by connecting with others, and taking my practice and teaching to the next level. This is truly a blessing of divine wisdom and New Age teacher training technique. I'm honored."*

*—Pablo Lucero, RYT-200*



*The Yoga Gangsters training has completely transformed my classes as a teacher and the students are LOVING it and asking for more class time. I'm empowered every time I step off my mat and am beyond grateful for the tools and breakthroughs!!! Thanks for all you do and keep up the amazing work!*

*—Jodi Weiner, RYT-200*



## Yoga Impact

### *From inmate to Yoga Project Manager*

*I met Nancy in the summer of 2009 when she was teaching yoga to the inmates in the Boulder County Jail. In addition to the stress of my surroundings, I was dealing with great loss and trauma from the experience that led me there. Nancy's message that we weren't broken or messed up, allowed me to find true peace. It was that message of acceptance that made its way into my heart, and over the next nine months of my incarceration, my physical and spiritual practice blossomed. I found it much easier to sit with the emotions that flooded me, as well as compassion, when others in such close quarters were struggling with their own issues.*

*Upon my release from jail and my new responsibilities, I found very little time left for my yoga practice. The old feelings of being separate from everything began creeping in and I started to feel buried under the weight of life itself.*

*I was finally able to meet with Nancy, and as she shared her own personal struggles, I once again felt that reconnection to acceptance. Just beyond a few classes, I accepted a scholarship into her Teacher Training Program and learned about "Yoga Impact." In 2011, I became a certified yoga instructor and in 2012, I started teaching yoga to incarcerated women, the place where I began my healing journey. The mission of Yoga Impact is to bring the gift of yoga to underserved populations. In the four years that I have known Nancy, she has always stayed true to that mission.*

—Traci Lundstrom

## YoKid

*I am Erica, a new teacher for YoKid and a new teacher to young people. I was drawn to the idea of teaching kids because I thought it would be fun to be around more young people, and I thought being able to bring the principles and practices of yoga to people at a younger age would be an incredible gift and opportunity. I give a big round of applause to Michelle and Ellie for creating this amazing program. Thank you for what you all do!*

*My first yoga class was at the junior college in town when I was in high school. It helped me clear my head, it gave me the space that I desperately needed, and it made me feel in control, in a healthy way. I really do think that it has helped me make better decisions, and for that I am grateful.*

*In January, I began teaching 5th and 6th graders at two Richmond City Public School System schools and the students (or scholars, as they are called by their after-school program, Higher Achievement) are a true delight, and, man, are they smart! I feel honored to be able to spend time with them. They are inspiring teachers, and they remind me to not be so serious all the time, to laugh, to be sensitive. This age is a doozy, so I just hope they can take some yoga tools with them to help them along the way.*



## YoKid *(continued)*

*I recently realized a very important aspect of teaching yoga to young people: We are more than just their yoga instructors. When I enter the school grounds, I am Ms. Erica, the yoga teacher, but I am more than that. I gather the scholars who are coming into class, well after a full school day. They have just eaten lunch, they are free from their director, and they are ready to party. Ready for yoga? Well, yes, or sometimes, but it's definitely not your typical yoga class. Energy is never lacking, there is uncontrollable laughter, there are upsets, there is attitude, there are clashing and congruent ideas. I immediately become the moderator, the negotiator, the mentor, the friend, at times the audience. We talk about their day, we talk about their jam-packed schedules, and they often feel the need to remind me that they are still kids. When I am honored by one of the students sharing something with me, it gives me a great opportunity to help them see how yoga works beyond the classroom, and it's at these times that I really feel, in my heart, that we as yoga instructors need to be in more young people's lives.*

*So even when I feel like the entire class was spent trying to get them to listen or to have them do Sun Salutations when they would rather just run in circles around the room, I can let all of that feeling of failure fly out the window, because you know what they said when I asked them what they thought about yoga today?*

*They said that they LOVED it!! It helps them feel better, it's helping them with school. A few students said that they even practice outside of class. It was great to hear that, and to get to see it on their faces was even better.*

*Yoga works in all kinds of ways, and I am finding that there is no room for perfection. When I started teaching, I was too concerned with them learning postures, I felt like I failed them if they didn't learn more than the Sun Salutations. Oh, how mistaken I was. I am more than an instructor of postures. We are teaching yoga, and that involves teaching communication—not only within the different realms of the physical and spiritual body but also between people and ideas. "Teacher" is a heavy outfit, but so worth it.*

—Erica Montoya



# Research

## Perceived Benefits of Kripalu Yoga Classes in Diverse and Underserved Populations

Angela M. Wilson, MA,<sup>1</sup> Kate Marchesiello, E-RYT,<sup>1</sup>  
Sat Bir S. Khalsa, PhD<sup>1,2</sup>

1. Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health, Lennox, MA

2. Division of Sleep Medicine, Department of Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School

### Abstract:

**Objective:** To determine if diverse and underserved populations report benefit from Yoga practices and report an intention to continue with Yoga, meditation, or breathing practices.

**Design:** This was a retrospective study using archival data from exit questionnaires acquired at the end of Yoga programs serving diverse populations. Qualitative data was also collected from the Yoga teachers.

**Setting:** Free Kripalu Yoga classes offered to diverse and underserved/underprivileged populations (e.g., minority groups, the elderly, gay populations), as part of the Teaching for Diversity (TFD) program through the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health (KCYH).

**Participants:** 220 participants, ranging in age from adolescence through old age.

**Measures:** Nine questions about the perceived benefits and usefulness of Yoga practices in everyday life were administered to participants on the last day of class. Qualitative data was collected from teachers regarding their experience teaching underserved populations.

**Results:** Of the 220 respondents, 89% reported that the Yoga class left them with a feeling of overall wellness, and 83% found the practices helpful. 98% reported that they would recommend this Yoga class to others. Participants found the individual Yoga components of the breathing, Yoga postures, and meditation practices effective and said they were useful in their daily life. Pairwise *t*-test comparisons of average scores between these three practices indicated that participants were more likely to rate breathing useful as compared to either the postures or meditation ( $p < 0.01$ ).

**Conclusion:** Diverse and underserved populations report benefit from and interest in Yoga, meditation, and breathing practices.

**Keywords:** Yoga, meditation, prānāyāma, diversity, Kripalu

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## Background and Significance

Research on the benefits of Yoga practice has grown substantially over the past several decades, documenting the positive effects of Yoga practice on coping with stress, cognitive abilities, and mood.<sup>1-5</sup> More recently, Yoga practice has been used as a therapeutic intervention for a variety of disorders, including psychiatric conditions such as depression and anxiety, breathing disorders such as asthma, endocrine disorders such as diabetes, and a variety of musculoskeletal and neurological conditions.<sup>6-8</sup>

Considering these positive outcomes, it is not surprising that Yoga practice has increased in popularity in recent years. According to a study published in 2004,<sup>9</sup> approximately 15 million people in the U.S. have tried Yoga in their lifetime, and 7.4 million are current Yoga practitioners. These Yoga practitioners tended to be well-educated, urban-dwelling women between the ages of 34 and 53. Of those who had used Yoga in the past 12 months, 63.7% reported using Yoga for wellness, 49.7% for health conditions, and 21.0% specifically for back or neck pain. A more recent study published in 2007 showed that the majority of Yoga practitioners were white women who had annual incomes of at least \$35,000.<sup>10</sup> Although it is clear that Yoga practice is gaining in popularity and therapeutic use, the demographics of this group consist predominantly of white, highly educated adult females.

There are a few plausible explanations for the disparity of Yoga use across income levels, minorities, ages, and genders. It is possible that diverse groups are less interested in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), including Yoga. However, in a survey on CAM usage, nearly 68.3% of African Americans and 55.0% of Latinos had used some form of alternative medicine (including prayer) in the past 12 months.<sup>11</sup> These results suggest that minority populations are interested in some types of CAM, so the question remains as to why not Yoga? It is possible that culture plays an important role in the initiation of Yoga use and other forms of physical activity. For example, Marquez and McAuley found that Latina women's physical activity depended on their degree of acculturation, suggesting that initiation of some physical activities is at least partly mediated by cultural influences.<sup>12</sup>

The disparity of the use of Yoga in minority groups (specifically low-income populations) could also reflect the costs involved in participating in this practice. As Barnes and colleagues report, one of the most practiced CAM modalities is prayer, a practice that is financially accessible to all income levels.<sup>11</sup> Given that Yoga practice can be an expensive

fee-based service, it might be challenging for low-income populations to use this health modality. Geographical access to Yoga classes may also be problematic for disadvantaged populations.

For the purposes of this study, we use the term "diverse" to refer to both underserved populations (e.g., ethnic minorities and low-income populations) and vulnerable populations (e.g., the elderly and children). Although there have been hundreds of clinical and basic research studies on the benefits of Yoga and meditation, only a handful have been conducted with diverse and minority populations. It has been documented that minority and low-income populations are at risk for stress-related disorders such as cardiovascular disease,<sup>13</sup> and a Yoga practice could play an important role in reducing this risk.

The few studies that have been conducted on Yoga and meditation practices among diverse groups have produced encouraging results. Yoga practice has been shown to reduce hostility scores for racially diverse women,<sup>14</sup> and meditation practice reduced absentee and suspension rates in African American youth.<sup>15</sup> Yogic relaxation training and Yogic breathing improved quality of sleep and self-concept, increased well-being, and reduced stress in a group of female minorities attending college in India.<sup>16</sup> A study on ABC Relaxation, a technique that includes breathing and Yoga stretching, showed reductions in depression and increases in relaxation states in a group of elderly Puerto Ricans.<sup>17</sup> A study on a 12-week Yoga class for urban breast cancer patients, of whom 42% were African American and 31% were Hispanic, found increases in quality of life, emotional well-being, and social well-being.<sup>18</sup> Blumenthal and colleagues found significant increases in reported quality of life for elders who completed a Yoga program.<sup>19</sup> Reductions in systolic and diastolic blood pressure have been found in youths who engaged in meditation practice, as well as elders who engaged in Yoga practice.<sup>20-24</sup>

However, not all findings were equally encouraging. One study examined the effects of a ten-week Yoga program, including a home practice, on blood pressure and psychological well-being in African American and Caucasian elders. Compared to African American elders, Caucasian elders were more likely to complete the home practice and experience significant improvements in blood pressure and psychological well-being.<sup>21</sup> This difference calls into question whether or not African American elders are interested in Yoga, and how they can be encouraged to practice at home.

The current study is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of whether or not diverse groups find Yoga and meditation interventions beneficial and useful in their daily

life. To address this question, we surveyed participants and teachers in the Teaching for Diversity (TFD) program. TFD was started in 2001 by the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health (KCYH) to extend Yoga practices and principles to underserved populations. TFD is sponsored by KCYH and is funded by KCYH private donors and organizations. Each year KCYH financially supports more than 25 teachers who wish to offer Yoga classes to underserved populations all over the country. Underserved organizational sites include community centers for the elderly, women, gay populations, and youth. Organizational sites are selected based on need and nature of the organization.

## Methods

### Sample

Teachers for the TFD program were required to locate an established organization that serves diverse and underserved populations and set up classes for a minimum of eight weeks. Teachers were also required to be members of the Kripalu Yoga Teachers Association or the International Association of Black Yoga Teachers. Once approved, they were required to provide written evaluations from the host organization and students, as well as a written account of their own experience.

Yoga classes were offered by teachers at organizational sites one day a week for 8-21 weeks. All Yoga classes were taught in the Kripalu Yoga tradition, which emphasizes conscious awareness, deep relaxation, meditation, breathing exercises, and Yoga postures. Most classes were hour-long and included all aspects of the Kripalu Yoga tradition: *āsana* practice (both static and flowing), *prānāyāma* (breathing) techniques, and meditation. In addition, basic Yogic psychology, philosophy, and lifestyle were introduced. Though teachers varied in their combination of these practices, all components were included in each class and program. The number of participants in each class varied, depending on the organizational site, interest in the class, and space availability. In most classes, attendance was not mandatory, and additional participants were almost always allowed to participate as the program progressed. Attendance was not monitored by the teachers. Programs were held once at each site.

### Measures

Archival data was collected from the 2005 TFD programs. Both students and teachers completed exit questionnaires at the end of each program. The student exit questionnaire consisted of nine questions about their experience

in the program, eight on a 1-4 Likert Scale (answers ranging from “not at all” to “a great deal”), and the last in yes/no format (see Table 1 for items). Students responded anonymously. The exit questionnaire was administered in pencil and paper format by the Yoga teachers on the last day of the class. Only students who were in class on the last day of class received the exit questionnaire. No identifying information was written on the questionnaires, which were returned to the Kripalu Center and kept with program documentation. In addition, the TFD program collected qualitative information from teachers on their experiences. The teachers mailed their reports to the Kripalu Center within a few weeks following completion of the program.

1. The activities in the Yoga class left me with an overall feeling of wellness.
2. The breathing exercises I learned to calm me were effective.
3. I will use these breathing exercises to help me in my daily life.
4. The Yoga postures and stretching exercises I learned reduced the stiffness in my body.
5. I will use these Yoga postures and stretching exercises in my daily life.
6. The meditation techniques I learned calmed my mind.
7. I will use these meditation techniques in my daily life.
8. In general what I have learned in this class will be helpful in my everyday life.
9. I would recommend this Yoga class to others.

Table 1. *Items of participant exit questionnaire.*

Descriptive analysis on questionnaire results used calculated percentages of responses in each category and average scores with standard deviations (S.D.) were calculated by assigning numerical values to the answers from “Not at all” = 1 to “A great deal” = 4. Comparisons were made using the paired *t*-test.

## Results

A total of 220 students from 26 sites completed the questionnaires. The sites included: 6 centers for youths ages 13-18 (including 1 for gay youth), 4 correctional facilities, 3 women’s domestic violence shelters, 3 substance treatment centers, 2 senior centers (ages 70+), 2 psychiatric centers, 1 cancer treatment center, 1 AIDS treatment center, 1 vocational center, 1 immigration assistance center, and 1 physi-

cal disabilities center. Of these centers, 11 were for women, 3 for female teens, and 1 for women and children. Though specific demographic information was not collected, teacher reports revealed that many sites had a large number of African American and Latino members. All sites served either low-income and disadvantaged individuals (e.g., ethnic minorities) or vulnerable populations (e.g., elders and youth), as per the mandate of the TFD program at KCYH. All teachers completed the qualitative questionnaire. The number of participants in each individual Yoga class varied from 6 to approximately 25. No information was available on total attendance of the classes.

Figure 1 shows the mean survey scores of the students for each item, and Figure 2 shows the percentage breakdown of responses for two particularly important items. 57% of participants reported that they felt a great deal of overall wellness from the Yoga class, compared to only 1% who reported Yoga did not leave them with a sense of wellness. 44% and 39% reported that what they learned in Yoga class would be a “great deal helpful” and “moderately helpful,” respectively, in their everyday life, compared to 3% who reported that they did not find what they learned in class to be helpful. Of the 219 respondents who responded to item 9, “I would recommend this Yoga class to others,” the vast majority (98%) reported that they would recommend the class to others, compared to 2% who reported they would not recommend the class.

The majority of participants found the Yoga postures and stretching exercises helped to reduce body stiffness a great deal (48%) or moderately (37%). Almost half of participants (49%) reported that the meditation techniques helped calm their mind a great deal, compared to 2% who reported that meditation did not help them at all. Finally, 55% of participants reported that the breathing exercises were effective to a “great deal” in calming the mind, compared to 2% who reported they were not at all effective.

Were respondents likely to use what they learned outside of the classroom? Over half (58%) of respondents reported that they were moderately likely to use the Yoga postures in their daily life, compared to 6% who reported they would not use the postures at all. 59% responded that they were moderately likely to use the meditation techniques in their daily life, compared to 7% who reported they would use them a great deal, and 6% who reported they would not use them at all. Interestingly, 24% of participants reported that they were a great deal likely to use the breathing techniques in their daily life, compared to only 10% who reported being very likely to use the postures, and 7% for meditation (see Figure 3). As measured by paired t-tests, the averaged response scores for likelihood of using breathing ( $3.24 \pm 0.87$  S.D.) were significantly greater than those for meditation ( $3.07 \pm 0.92$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and Yoga postures ( $3.10 \pm 0.93$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ). No other pairwise comparisons were significantly different.

The open-ended comments from teacher questionnaires were analyzed qualitatively. A total of 26 teachers completed questionnaires about their experience of working with their students. The following comments were most frequently mentioned by Yoga teachers: 13 reported that they would teach this population again, 9 reported that teaching diverse groups required flexibility and patience, 7

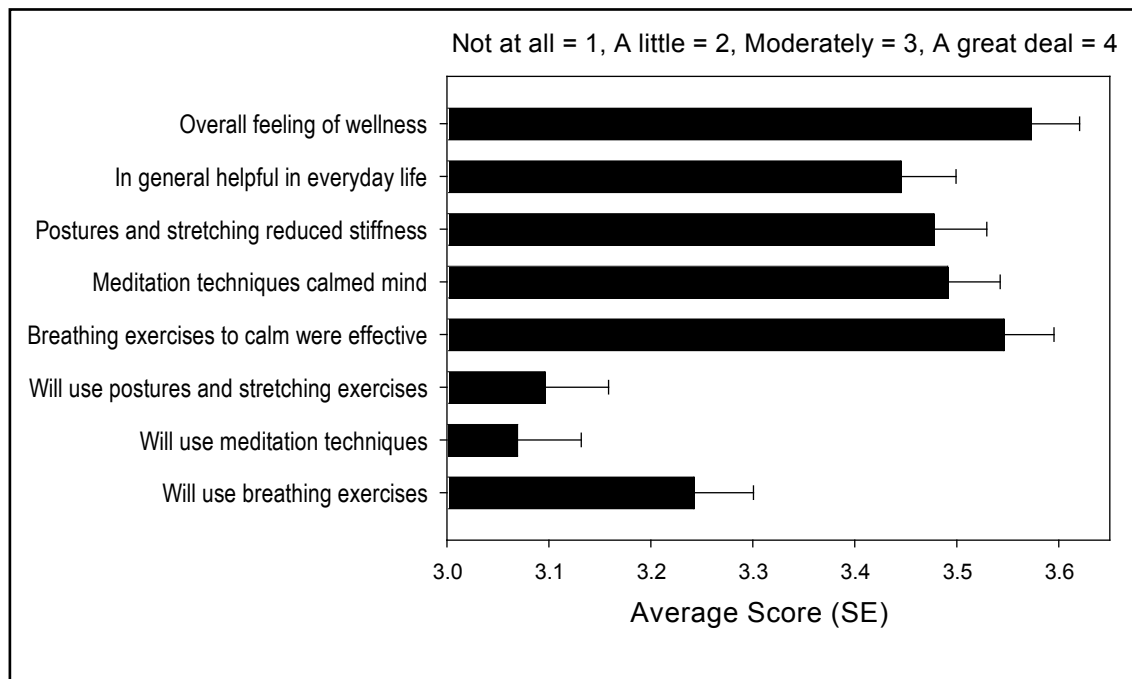
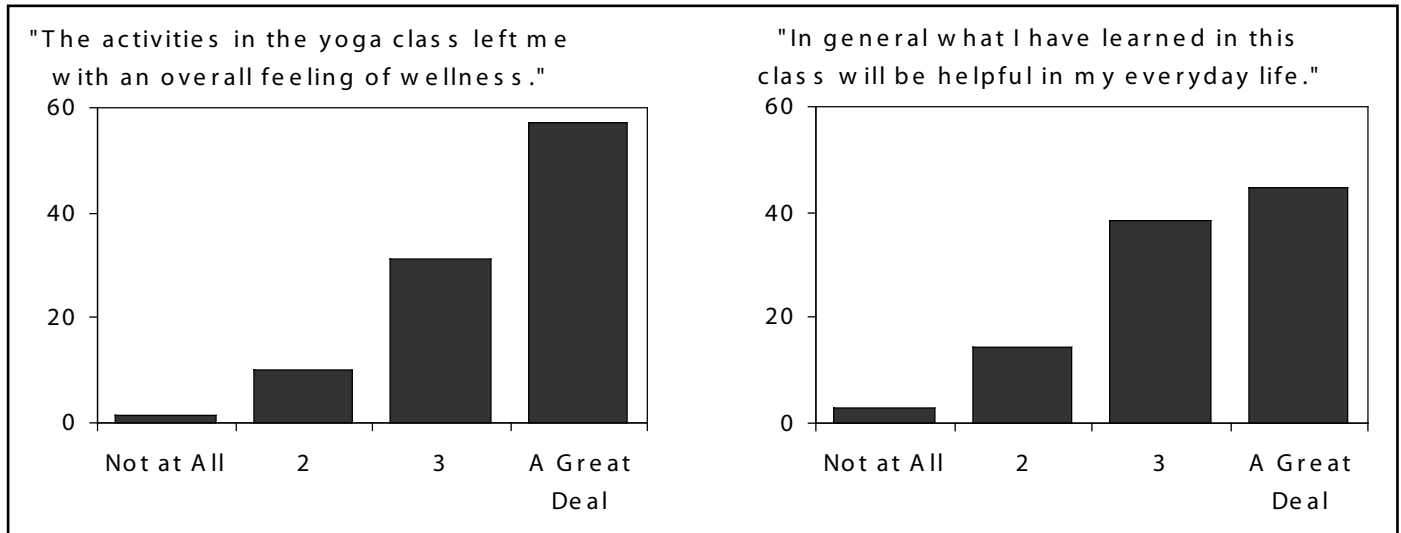


Figure 1. Mean and standard error for student responses.



**Figure 2.** Scores of questions 1 and 8 from the participant exit questionnaires.

teachers felt that teaching a population that might not otherwise have access to Yoga was very rewarding, 7 reported that students appeared more calm and relaxed after class, 6 reported that maintaining attendance was challenging, 6 reported that it was a challenge to teach such a variety of different levels in one class, and 6 reported that the Yoga classes fostered closer relationships among students.

Because teachers were not asked specific questions about these topics, it is important not to assume that teachers who did not make the above statements would disagree with them. Rather, the statements reflect what teachers found most important to mention in describing their experiences.

## Discussion

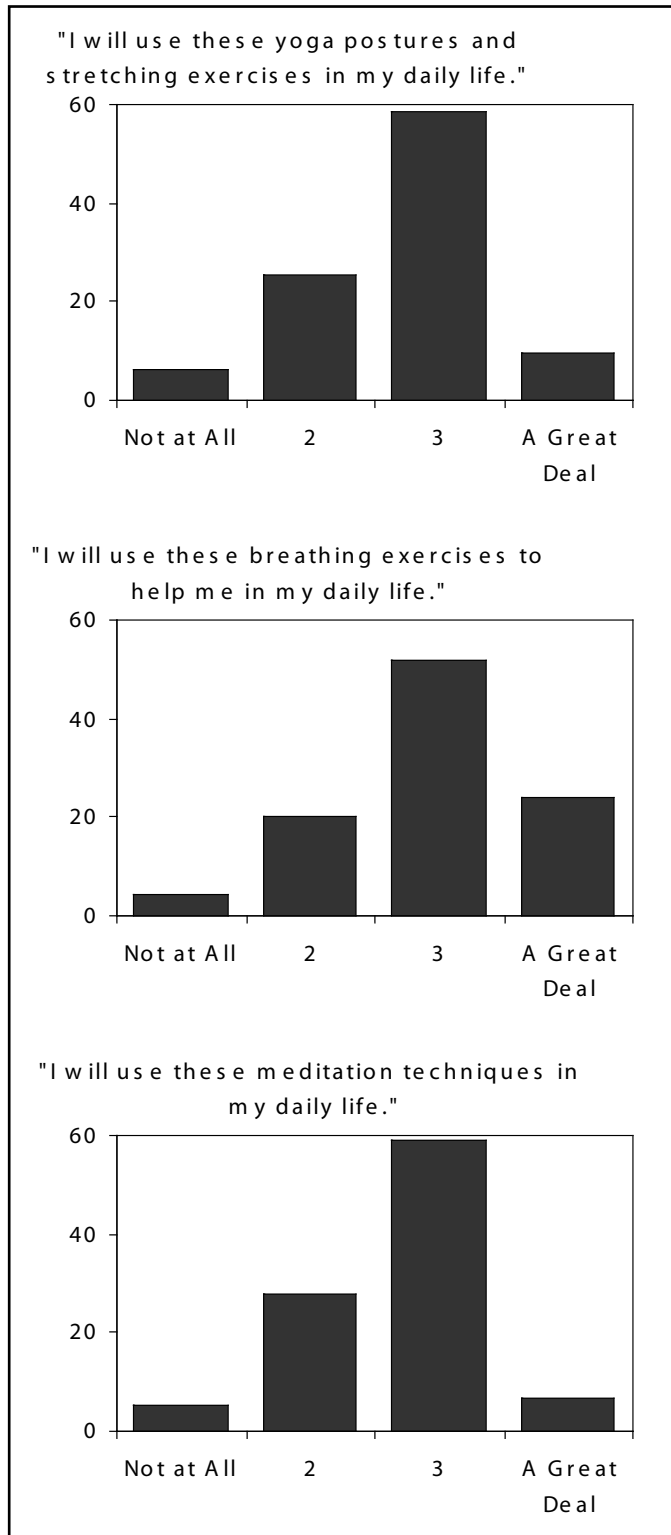
The results of this report suggest that in general, diverse and underserved populations find benefit in Yoga practice and perceive it as useful. Participants reported that Yoga, meditation, and breathing techniques created a sense of overall well-being, helped to reduce body stiffness, and had calming effects on the mind. Almost all (98%) would recommend Yoga practices to others. Of all the practices taught, the breathing exercises were significantly more likely to be used in daily life than Yoga postures and meditation techniques.

This last finding was unexpected but is consistent with results of a recent survey study by Barnes and colleagues, who reported that 11.6% of the U.S. population had used deep breathing exercises in the past 12 months, compared to only 7.6% who had tried meditation, and 5.1% who had tried Yoga.<sup>11</sup> Why breathing exercises are used more fre-

quently than other practices, what specific techniques are practiced, and what particular benefits people gain from them are questions that deserve further investigation.

Half of the teachers reported that the experience of teaching diverse populations was rewarding and that they would teach a similar group again, and no teacher reported major disappointments or dissatisfaction with the experience. This may encourage other teachers to reach out to underserved and diverse populations. Several teachers highlighted specific challenges of teaching diverse populations, including creating classes that suit students of different physical ability, and maintaining order and interest in the classroom. It may be useful for teachers who wish to work with underserved and diverse populations to consider these challenges in advance.

As a retrospective study of archival exit survey data, this analysis has several limitations. Participants were not required to attend every class, and attendance was not recorded. Therefore, it is not possible to determine how many classes each person had completed. Furthermore, students completing the survey at the last class may not be representative of the entire program population, since efforts were not made to acquire surveys from students who had withdrawn from the program. This creates a bias favoring positive responses, because data from participants with more negative impressions may not have been included. In addition, even though the responses were anonymous, students completed questionnaires in front of their Yoga teacher. It is possible that the students might have wanted to portray a positive outcome to their instructor, or may have subtly felt pressured to report a more positive outcome of their experience.



**Figure 3.** Scores from items 3,5,7 on participant exit questionnaire: Use of specific Yogic practices in everyday life. Participants were significantly more likely to use breathing exercises compared to Yoga and meditation ( $p < 0.005$ ).

Future studies would benefit from a prospective study in which more thorough information on demographics, previous experience with mind-body practices, and class attendance could be taken. In addition, using standardized outcome measures might better reveal the benefits of Yoga practice. Finally, the question of whether or not certain diverse populations are more interested in some Yoga practices than others, and whether or not different groups would benefit from different practices, is worthy of further exploration in future studies.

The use of Yoga practice for diverse groups appears encouraging. This study suggests that given access to Yoga practices, diverse populations benefit from these practices in a classroom setting, and that they anticipate using them in everyday life. Further investigation into how Yoga, meditation, and breathing exercises would benefit diverse populations is needed.

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Direct correspondence to Angela M. Wilson at Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health, PO Box 309, Stockbridge, MA, 01262. Tel: 413-448-3274. Email: [angelaw@kripalu.org](mailto:angelaw@kripalu.org).

# Yoga Therapy in Practice

## Perspective

### Yoga Therapist, Heal Thyself: A Reflection on *Ahimsa* and Service

Rob Schware, PhD

*Give Back Yoga Foundation, Takoma Park, MD*

I grew up a pacifist. Along with an entire generation of anti-Vietnam War youth, I was devoted to and energized by the Gandhian principle of *ahimsa* and other ideas of nonviolence. Still true to these influences in later life, I cofounded the Give Back Yoga Foundation, which supports teachers who bring yoga and meditation to underserved populations.

But the younger me might not have predicted that part of its core mission would be to bring yoga to veterans, active-duty soldiers, and their families. Or that my son's oldest and best friend, someone very dear to me, would be serving in Afghanistan, while my youngest daughter joined the Israeli Defense Forces. Thus, now in mid-life, I find myself standing in what appears to be a contradiction: I profess to be guided by *ahimsa*, and yet people I love, as well as those served by Give Back, are trained not just to defend but also to attack.

At times I allow myself to wallow in the apparent contradiction and can be quite convinced of the righteousness of my confusion. Other times I understand that even the appearance of this so-called contradiction is itself based on unfair and toxic judgments that are buried deep within me and that I even nurture and protect. Sometimes I confidently paddle around in my private sea of judgment; sometimes I can clearly see the whirlpool in which my judgments have caught me.

Recently, I joined a teleconference class called "Teaching Yoga in Military Settings." The class was offered by Warriors At Ease, an organization that trains and certifies yoga and meditation teachers to work effectively within military culture and safely with combat-related injuries and conditions. Our first homework assignment was to examine our own thoughts and opinions about serving this military population. After three weeks, I still had not completed it. I found it

so difficult to overcome the contradictions I had uncovered in myself. I was holding onto old feelings based on conflicting judgments about people's choice to serve in wars. I needed to do some work on myself before I could do the homework.

I turned for help to the wisdom of Patanjali and his Yoga Sutras, in which he defines *ahimsa* as "nonviolence." I figured out that for me, actively practicing *ahimsa* means replacing the judgments I cling to with compassionate acceptance, kindness, and forbearance of thought. This task will take me this lifetime, at least.

I'd hazard a guess that I'm not the only yogi who's a prisoner of his or her judgments. Many people have an aversion to working with specific populations—whether it's the homeless, incarcerated youth and adults, people with HIV, or people trying day by day to beat alcoholism or substance abuse. The challenge of working with underserved populations is the everyday practice of looking at that aversion and finding the common humanity in us all.

The Give Back Yoga Foundation and many other nonprofit organizations are dedicated to helping yoga teachers reach such underserved populations. Two of the most important things we do may be to model how we work with our own judgments and to help others do the same. It is this inner work that can help all of us feel inspired and empowered to step up and get involved.

**Rob Schware, PhD**, is a founder and director of the Give Back Yoga Foundation ([www.givebackyoga.org](http://www.givebackyoga.org)). Direct correspondence to P.O. Box 11470, Takoma Park, MD 20913. [info@givebackyoga.org](mailto:info@givebackyoga.org).



## Osteoporosis: An Opportunity to Serve

Matthew J. Taylor, M.P.T., R.Y.T.

### Abstract

*Osteoporosis is a significant, serious health challenge that offers Yoga therapy an important opportunity to serve both the public and the health care community. A review of the etiology, incidence, and risk factors of osteoporosis is followed by a discussion of known medical risk factors for Yoga students. The problem is then presented from a Yoga therapy perspective, offering additional insights, opportunities, and challenges for Yoga therapists. Practical action steps and practice development recommendations support a concluding call for Yoga therapists to bring their transformative service to this worldwide pandemic.*



“ . . . Let go of the forecast you heard  
when you were younger  
than the child now clattering  
up the backstairs all  
laughter and gasping  
for what we’re here to do.  
Look down. Look at the stars.  
We’re here so briefly, weather  
with bones.”<sup>1</sup>

The term “osteoporosis” has recently become familiar to most of us. To many it is synonymous with “old age,” “thin/brittle bones,” “hunched over seniors,” and “fractured hips.” The forecasts we have heard range from a gloomy “it’s inevitable and devastating; they can’t do anything anymore” to the equally extreme “it’s an overhyped condition by the pharmaceutical companies and only those . . . with severe, deforming problems are really at risk.” Given this wide range of forecasts, what are we, as Yoga therapists, here to do for our students?

This article is written from the premise that osteoporosis is a significant, serious health challenge that offers an ideal venue for introducing the emerging profession of Yoga therapy to the public and the health care community. We as Yoga therapists are here to bring reasoned sanity to the above-stated extremes and a compassionate depth of service to ourselves and our students who are influenced by osteoporosis. After reviewing what is known about osteoporosis, I will bring a yogic perspective on its challenges, followed by a review of what forms of care are presently available and the limitations of each. From those limitations emerges a discussion of the richness of Yoga therapy to serve and address them, including how to identify those at risk and how to modify current programming, as well as ideas for new programming. Our ability to offer both depth and breadth of service will place Yoga therapy as a peer

among the many professions that address osteoporosis and its life-altering effects. After all, from our own practice we know deep within that as “weather with bones,” what affects the health of one field of weather will stir or moderate the weather in the entire community.

## What We Do and Do Not Know

We do know that of every female student over 50 years of age in our classes, 1 in every 2 has low bone density and is at risk for fracture.<sup>2</sup> We also know that osteoporosis is not for women only: One in every 2 women and 1 in every 4 men aged 50 or older will suffer an osteoporosis-related hip, spine, or wrist fracture during their lives.<sup>3</sup> Further, we know that most osteoporotic vertebral fractures are caused by the stresses of everyday life such as bending over, reaching, and sneezing, not falls or traumatic accidents,<sup>4,5</sup> and that students who have already experienced at least one vertebral fracture have a 500% increased risk of additional fracture within 1 year.<sup>6</sup> Related to exercise movements for people with osteoporosis, as far back as 1984 Sinaki and Mikkelsen<sup>7</sup> found that 89% of the people who performed only flexion exercises suffered additional fractures during the study, while 53% of those with flexion and extension exercises experienced additional fractures. Only 16% of those that limited their movement to extension suffered additional fractures. Clearly flexion exercises create harm when they are performed by students who have osteoporosis, and this has been noted in later literature.<sup>8-10</sup> Keep in mind that rotation of the spine increases compression forces on the vertebral bodies and

that side-bending postures can be a very risky combination of flexion and rotation.

Extrapolating this information to the tidal wave of aging baby boomers should generate a sense of urgency regarding the need to address how we protect our students from harm. “Why isn’t this information widely known?” and “What is osteoporosis?” are good beginning questions to increase our awareness as Yoga therapists.

Osteoporosis was only officially recognized as a disease by the World Health Organization in 1994. The disease is a silent, insidious process that affects both women and men, and to this day in many cases it remains undiagnosed by physicians, even after fracture.<sup>11-13</sup> Were it not for aggressive marketing by pharmaceutical companies and the dairy industry, awareness would almost certainly be even more limited than it is. It is not surprising that it is rarely screened for and identified by current movement and health providers, including Yoga teachers.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation medically defines osteoporosis as the gradual and silent loss of bone. It is *not* a normal aging process, and as a systemic skeletal disease it is characterized by low bone mass and microarchitectural deterioration of bone tissue, with a consequent increase in bone fragility and susceptibility to fracture.<sup>14</sup> Bone mass, or more specifically, bone mineral density (BMD) is the amount of bone tissue in a measured volume of space. Medicine measures the BMD through a variety of scans, the most common of which is the DEXA (dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry), which usually measures the lumbar vertebrae and hip. An individual’s measure-

ments are compared to a table of measurements for healthy normal adults (25–30 years old), resulting in a “T-score.” Students who score -1 to -2.5 standard deviations below the average are said to have osteopenia, or mildly reduced bone mass (10%–20%), a precursor to osteoporosis. A score of more than -2.5 indicates osteoporosis, and for every one-point drop below the average, the risk of fracture doubles.

While density of the bone is important, the other half of the definition is the microarchitectural deterioration, or the construction of the bone tissue within the space measured. Presently this cannot be measured by medicine, though its importance is easily recognized. It is because of the latter that some people with average BMD suffer osteoporotic fractures while a few people with low BMD never experience a fracture. The best analogy for understanding this dilemma may be to recall the high school physics contest where students are given a fixed amount of material (Popsicle sticks rather than bone) and are asked to construct a bridge. Some bridges collapse easily, while others containing the same mass (same number of sticks) can hold great amounts of weight. This design factor from a yogic perspective is key to the power of proper alignment and movement in *āsana* practice. The essential point to remember for the present consideration is that we do not know which students with test scores below -1 have bones with the “strong bridge” design, only that all of them are at increased risk.

We do know these students are at increased risk, and given the limited public awareness, a properly designed health history form may be the first time students become aware

of their risk status. Many risk factors account for the increasing rates of osteoporosis and fractures, with sedentary living and calcium deficiency as two of the major components. Types of diseases that increase one's risk for osteoporosis include genetic disorders, rheumatic and autoimmune diseases, endocrine (including thyroid) disorders, hypogonadal states, digestive diseases, blood disorders, alcoholism, congestive heart failure, multiple sclerosis, emphysema, end-stage renal disease, epilepsy, idiopathic scoliosis, eating disorders, and depression.<sup>15</sup> Table 1 lists many of the key risk factors, and any student answering yes to the questions, especially the first three, should be encouraged to seek evaluation by a health care professional who specializes in osteoporosis. They also should be taught as an "at risk" student until proven otherwise.

Classifying someone as osteopenic (T-score: -1 to -1.5) is

another area where there is insufficient information to clearly identify risk for fracture. Betz<sup>16</sup> makes a strong argument for a conservative approach and states, "... all exercise specialists should use the same precautions for clients with osteopenia as for those with osteoporosis." She notes that there is a dangerous combination of risk resulting from the fact that bone density decreases from the cervical to the lumbar spine, while bone size and ability to distribute force load decreases in the opposite direction. Someone who has osteopenia measured from the lumbar spine scan may have osteoporosis of the thoracic spine<sup>17</sup> with a decreased size and ability to distribute the forces. For those with osteopenia, we cannot know their complete status for certain and should err toward caution.

Other topics related to osteoporosis, including diet, long-term effects of drugs prescribed to limit bone loss, exactly which variations

of movements are dangerous, and the ability to reverse bone loss are still very much unknowns in the literature (although the importance of calcium with vitamin D seems certain). The reader is cautioned against the temptation to jump on the latest book, anecdotal story, or personal experience and apply it across the board to all students. Bottom line, there is just too much we do not know about this disease process. We thus move ahead holding *ahimsâ* as our standard with the aim of discovering how much we as Yoga therapists can do to support our students at risk.

## A Yogic Perspective on Osteoporosis

Imagine the frustration and dilemma osteoporosis would present to the Yoga teacher who equates Yoga with *âsana*. How could he or she teach a class if the student needs to avoid forward bends, twists, side bends, and

**Table 1: Partial List of Risk Factors for Osteoporosis and Fracture**

<b>History of fractures</b>	<b>Physical inactivity</b>	<b>Lithium</b>
<b>Postural deformity:</b>	<b>Smoking</b>	<b>Methotrexate</b>
<b>Scoliosis/kyphosis (humpback or rounded shoulders)</b>	<b>Late menarche</b>	<b>Thyroid hormone therapy</b>
<b>Height loss (more than 1 inch) Caucasian, Northern European, or Asian ethnicity</b>	<b>Irregular menstrual cycles</b>	<b>Daily use of corticosteroids (prednisone, glucocorticoids)</b>
<b>Family history</b>	<b>Amenorrhea (all causes)</b>	<b>Early menopause (before 45)</b>
<b>Menopause</b>	<b>Previous/early hysterectomy</b>	<b>Irregular periods</b>
<b>Phenotype: small, fine bones</b>	<b>Anorexia/bulimia</b>	<b>Nulliparity (childlessness)</b>
<b>Limited vitamin D/calcium</b>	<b>Anticoagulants (e.g., heparin)</b>	<b>Lactose intolerance</b>
<b>High caffeine consumption</b>	<b>Anticonvulsants</b>	<b>Neurological impairment</b>
<b>Alcoholism</b>	<b>Chemotherapeutic drugs</b>	<b>Balance impairment</b>
	<b>Gonadotropin-releasing hormone agonists</b>	<b>Intestine or Crohn's Disease</b>

most inversions? Fortunately, Yoga is far deeper and richer than *âsana* alone. Kraftsow<sup>18</sup> presents an age-based model of practice development that describes midlife as *sthira karma* (to stabilize), during which *prânâyâma* becomes the most important aspect of practice. This is followed by the senior years, or *laya karma* (to merge), during which meditation and prayer become most important, with *âsana* and *prânâyâma* practiced in service to meditation and prayer. Keeping in mind the primacy of the *yama ahimsâ*, we can use such a model to broaden our perspective of osteoporosis as a cultural pathology to which we bring a fear-based understanding to the teaching opportunity it offers both students and ourselves.

It is important to understand that osteoporosis is not an isolated mechanical design flaw in certain individuals. As Yoga therapists we know that the strength and form of our bones is a physical manifestation at the *anna-maya-kosha* level of not just the individual's human experience, but also a reflection of the collective human experience to that point in time. Figure 1 illustrates just a portion of the interwoven tapestry that influences bone health.

Yes, there are genetic and ethnic influences, but there are also large systems factors, including work environments, technology, food supply, health care, marketing, culture, fashion, and so forth that all manifest in the huge collective bone-health challenge outlined above in the description of risk levels.

While proper alignment and movement are critical to generating quality bone development at all stages of life, from a yogic perspective these are just one part of the offerings of Yoga. Within the many layers of connection are unlimited

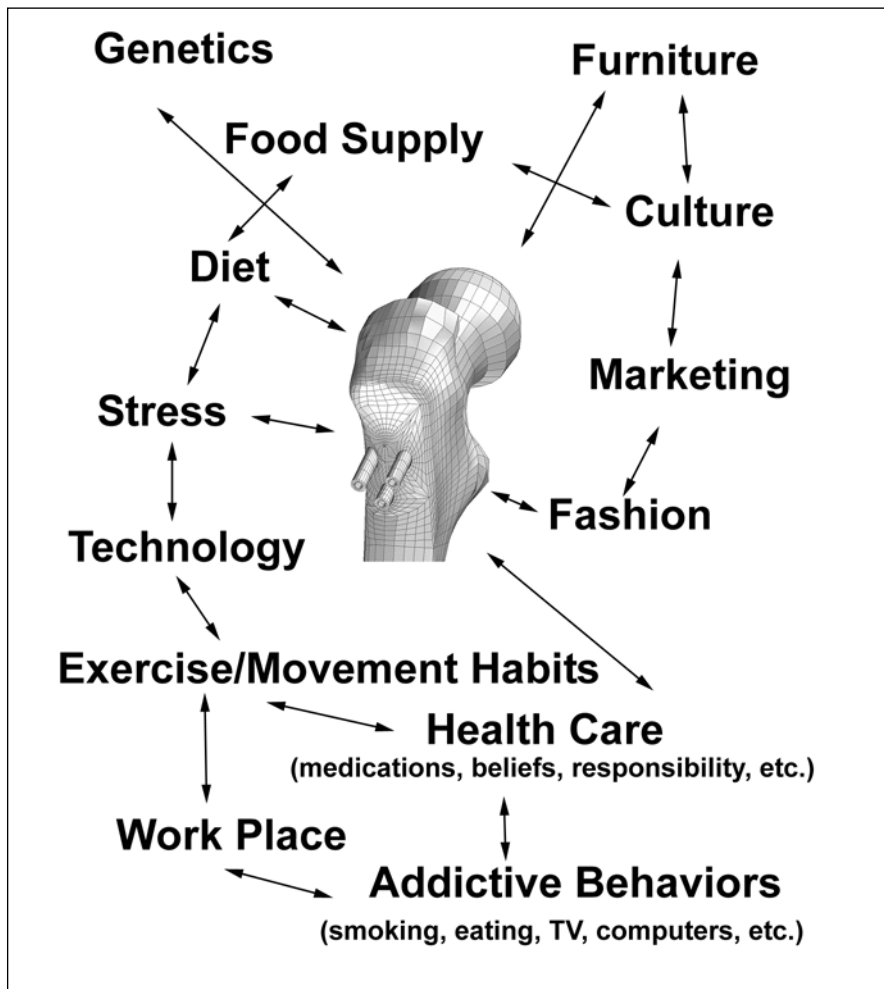


Figure 1: Factors influencing bone health  
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opportunities to facilitate awareness of the unbroken unity of all reality. As teachers of this expanded consciousness of unity, we should not waiver in the face of what can seem an insurmountable tangle of systems complexity. In the words of organizational management expert Peter Senge<sup>19</sup> in Senge et al.'s recent work *Presence*, "What is most local is most systemic." When our students learn that the effects of what they eat, how they breathe, how they sit, or how they move all influence their bone health, the transformation has only begun locally. In addition, this new knowledge awakens them to act within the larger systems to change consumer

demands, modify home and work furnishings, stand up to incomplete or poorly informed health care, and so on. Beyond the material or food-body *kosha*, students are empowered to explore and honor the more subtle effects of osteoporosis, including the fear, tension, pain, breathlessness, social limitations, body image, and spiritual isolation the disease may generate.

The ripples of influence fostered by this multiple-level healing bring about deeper awareness of self-care. The latter then transforms the larger community consciousness surrounding *ahimsâ*. Constantly remembering to literally keep the front of the spine open and long, a practice rec-

ommended for those with low bone density, metaphorically and energetically opens one's heart. This creates the courage (Fr. "large heart") to act with conviction in bringing change to the larger macrocosm the disease of osteoporosis represents. The pressing need for such integral, comprehensive yogic instruction is clear when one considers the limited focus of most sources of support for those with osteoporosis.

## Current Services and Limitations

There is a wide variety of services that support people with low bone density. Each has strengths and weaknesses in its current approach as described in Table 2, including general Yoga instruction.

The current gaps or weaknesses in services reveal areas where the new profession of Yoga therapy can provide a service not presently offered. As it develops, Yoga therapy will build on the strengths of movement, community, and awareness available in general Yoga instruction. By assuming even higher standards of competency in safety, bringing an emphasis on health over pathology, and offering the full breadth of integral service, Yoga therapy will become a key profession to which to turn in the twenty-first century when addressing complex, whole-person health challenges like osteoporosis.

## Yoga Therapeutic Service

Yoga therapy can become a key resource for those challenged by compromised bone health and at risk for skeletal fracture. In order to take its rightful place among other professional services, the profession must adopt a level of understanding and education beyond the current

Table 2: Current Osteoporosis Services		
	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<b>Health Clubs &amp; Personal Trainers</b>	Variety of equipment and environments; cost; proximity; social atmosphere	Level of supervision; limited training for bone health; lack of screening; supplement emphasis; athletic and "front of the body" emphasis
<b>Physical Therapy</b>	Risk awareness; movement knowledge; evaluation skills	Cost; emphasis on mechanics only; narrow focus of programming; no social support
<b>Chiropractic</b>	Ease of access; cost (initial)	Varied exercise/movement instruction; no social support; tendency toward dependent relationship; narrow focus of programming
<b>Physicians</b>	Testing; pharmaceutical support; evaluation of contributing medical conditions	Cost; lack of exercise knowledge; limited focus to tests; emphasis on pharmaceuticals
<b>Yoga</b>	Can address all aspects of the human experience; many tools to support safe movement and balance, posture, and awareness; fosters community support	Often unaware of risks; failure to communicate the risks when known; may resist safety measures due to fixed preconceptions of what "yoga" is
<b>Pilates</b>	Promotes posture, flexibility, and core strength	Limited training for bone health; does not address psycho/social/spiritual issues

Yoga teacher training standards. A case in point is Lew. Lew presented to the author as an 81-year-old client with back pain, sciatica, post-cardiac bypass, and osteoporosis. It is beyond the scope of this article to

provide a full case report for Lew or instruction in thorough student management from a Yoga therapy perspective. He is instead introduced here to illustrate the need for the higher standards necessary to support our future students. He also is introduced to demonstrate the powerful results our profession can offer if it is more accessible to and better accepted by the public.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate Lew's complex pre-instruction posture. Figure 4 shows the significant effects of 35 minutes of initial modified *āsana* instruction, including decreased forward head, improved kyphosis, and change in arm posture. Figure 5 shows one of the adapted *āsanas* that addressed his unique and complex presentation, including accommodation for (A) lumbar stenosis and (B) nerve root adhesion, using (C) thoracic roll for kyphosis and (D) cervical roll.

Not included in the photographs is work we did concerning:

- social support to balance 1) Lew's loss of peer-group support through death of its members and 2) pressures from his more active spouse to keep up with her
- psycho/social/spiritual issues about the fragility of life and Lew's declining ability to function in his vocation as an outdoor nature photographer
- maintenance of Lew's empowerment to be active yet safe, including functional instruction in lifting and traveling in his RV
- nutritional modifications

No other therapeutic service provides such a broad, comprehensive, and health-focused approach. The ability to provide such care



Figure 2



Figure 3

brings with it the responsibilities of advanced study and, most importantly, knowing one's limits as a therapist. The Yoga therapist also must know how to work cooperatively with other professionals to ensure the student's safety and optimal outcome. We need to increase our learning and experience to include studies such as Greendale et al.<sup>20</sup> on the effect of Yoga on hyperkyphosis in women. In the meantime, the reader can immediately begin to create opportunity out of the challenges raised by this new awareness of osteoporotic risk in your student population.

Following are some practical tools and immediate action steps to help transform our Yoga therapy practice.

## Right Action for Bone Health

Consider moving with firmness and flexibility to:

1. First determine your own bone health. Get your baseline bone density test and learn if you are at risk. Teach by modeling non-harming behavior, including having students model certain postures if they are inappropriate for your own bone health.
2. Institute a health history tool for all your students that includes screening for fracture risk. Offer a letter for those at risk to give their primary physician to alert him or her regarding the safety concern you have identified and ask for the physician's help. You become the "safe" Yoga therapist to whom the

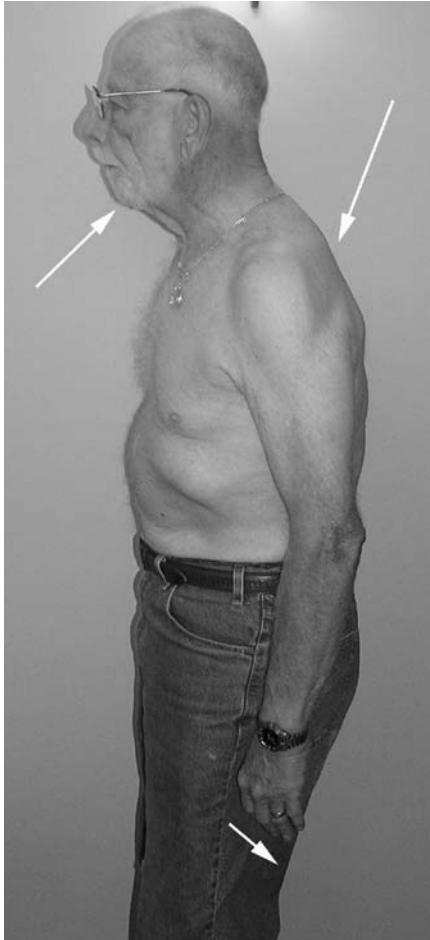


Figure 4

physician can refer his or her other patients with confidence. (See the “Resources for Osteoporosis” table below for samples of both the health history tool and the letter.)

3. For those students at risk, eliminate forward bends, twists, side bends, and most inversions until you receive additional training in appropriately modifying *âsanas* and evaluating student movement for safety. Practice *ahimsâ* and err in favor of safety.
4. Create special classes for bone health and postural care. Make them fun and positive and guarantee postural results. Pre-class postural photos and post-class graduation pictures are great

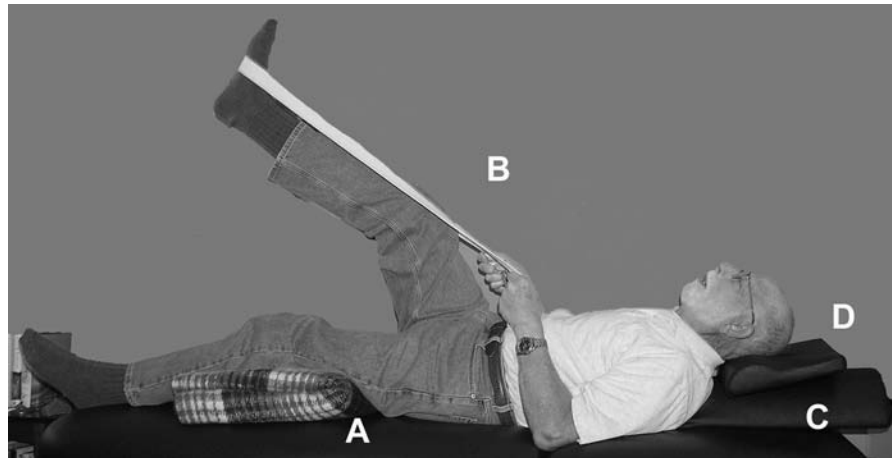


Figure 5

motivators and wonderful advertising for your practice.

5. Offer special workshops on functional Yoga off the mat to include hobbies, gardening, sports, and work.
6. Spread the word at service organizations, social clubs, bookstores, senior centers, etc. Bring along before and after photos and offer words of encouragement and possibility. No one else talks openly about the fear, social isolation, and spiritual void that osteoporosis can create—be a voice of empowerment.
7. Sara Meeks, P.T., describes osteoporosis as, “. . . a pediatric condition that manifests in adulthood.” Create programming for youth to begin making deposits in their bone banks and offset the effects of videogames, computers, and other teen postural hazards and habits.
8. Network with your local health care community to offer joint programming on bone health. You will gain additional knowledge while sharing the power of Yoga therapy as an integral health practice.
9. Study voraciously, read across disciplines, and ask many questions.

Be wary of anyone that professes to “know” the answers regarding osteoporosis.

10. Join the International Association of Yoga Therapists ([www.iayt.org](http://www.iayt.org)), to contribute to the development of this exciting new profession for the twenty-first century. Working together, we will create a fair forecast, as we learn what we are here to do in our brief time as weather with bones.

## Resources for Osteoporosis

Sample Health History:

<http://www.myrehab.com/healthhistorydsr.pdf>

Sample Referral Letter to Physician:

<http://www.myrehab.com/docreferral.pdf>

“Ask a Therapist” discussion board:

<http://www.dynamicsystemsrehab.com/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=22>

Safe Yoga for Osteoporosis Training:

<http://www.sarameekspt.com>

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Please direct correspondence to:  
Matthew J. Taylor, M.P.T., R.Y.T  
Dynamic Systems Rehabilitation  
10213 N. 92nd St., Suite 102  
Scottsdale, AZ 85258

Tel.: 480-699-4867

Email: [matt@dynamicssystemsrehab.com](mailto:matt@dynamicssystemsrehab.com)

Websites: [www.dynamicssystemsrehab.com](http://www.dynamicssystemsrehab.com)  
[www.yogatherapy.com](http://www.yogatherapy.com)



## Training Resources: A Guidebook for Teaching in Prisons

By Elizabeth Duncombe

### Awakening Compassion

It can be argued that the most vital human quality that prison programming can cultivate is compassion. With compassion comes the responsibility to ensure that one's actions do not hurt another. Without it, even intellectual or vocational growth may merely embellish hardened hearts, capable of continuing destruction to self and others.

The good news is that compassion need not be taught so much as awakened from dormancy. It is innate, in therapists, Yoga teachers, prison staff, and inmates alike. The means of awakening compassion are already in place, in the healing traditions and practices of many cultures worldwide. Several such practices have been gathered under the canopy of Free Inside, a program I designed for prison use.

### A Program for Healing, Peace, and Compassion

The Free Inside program began in 1999 as a workshop for Maine State Prison in Thomaston, Maine. Free Inside classes were continued the following year in the chemical dependency program of a Hawaiian homeless shelter, and then spread to the inmate population at the Maui Community Correctional Center. In the summer of 2004, Free Inside moved back to the state of Maine, and is presently taught at Hancock County Jail, the Downeast Correctional Facility, and for post-release clientele and their families in the Blue Hill community. Classes have been taught to an array of inmate groups, including violent offenders and

drug-related offenders, men and women, and mandated and voluntary participants.

A year-long study was conducted in 2003, at the Maui Community Correctional Center, to examine the efficacy of the Free Inside program. Both quantitative data (in the form of questionnaires that measured depression, self-esteem, hope, physical/mental wellness, and life outlook/compassion) and qualitative data (in the form of recorded interviews) revealed a clear association between inmates' participation in Free Inside classes and an increase in self-healing, inner peace (including substance abuse recovery), and compassion.

### The Practices of Free Inside

The practices I chose for Free Inside are Yoga (*asana* and *pranayama*), chi gung (or qi gong), and meditation. It is my hope that other practices, native to program facilitators and participants, will be added as Free Inside evolves. For example, in Hawaii, *ho'oponopono* (making family-wide balance and restitution) was added. In Maine, where a number of Native American inmates participate, a traditional Cherokee visualization is used. The techniques used in Free Inside have in common these qualities:

1. Each comes from a cultural or spiritual tradition that is at least two thousand years old and is still practiced by many worldwide.
2. Each addresses body, mind, and spirit simultaneously, and teaches appreciation for what is already ours (body, mind, and spirit) and freely given.
3. Each is easily taught by the facilitator and quickly becomes

the students' own to use whenever and wherever he or she chooses throughout life.

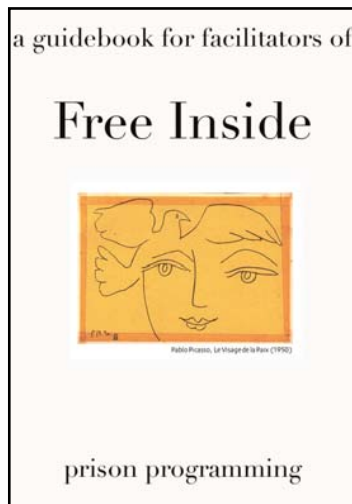
4. Each is free of cost and equipment requirements. No special environment is needed to practice; the seat of a wheelchair or floor in a prison cell will do just fine.
5. Each may be practiced equally effectively by men and women, teenagers and the elderly, the athletic and the frail.
6. Each celebrates a culture from a different part of the globe, encouraging tolerance and appreciation for other ethnicities.
7. Each, though spiritually inclusive, is non-denominational, and will not interfere with anyone's religious path or freedom from such a path.

Filling out the guidebook are segments on orientation, program introduction and goals, precedent, background, time frame and equipment, rewards and challenges, sustainability, global wisdom and verse (with which to pepper class teachings), recommended readings, past client and staff testimonials, sample posters and graduation certificates, program photographs, various published articles on program philosophy, week-by-week workings, research findings, and two audio discs of sample classes.

The guidebook is 150 pages long, and bound in a three-ring binder for accessibility and ease of copying. A prototype for a xeroxed guide for practitioners, to be given to inmate students when they complete a course or are released from prison, is included. It is hoped that with this guidebook in hand, Yoga teachers and new or even non-practitioners alike will have enough simple guidance to teach such classes in prison. It is also hoped that the comprehensive and empirical presentation will encourage prison administration to support including such a program in their facility.

Artist Picasso's portrayal of inner peace, a line drawing of a man with a dove on his head, symbolizes the program and decorates the guidebook cover. This inner peace is everyone's birthright. There is no more rewarding work than helping some of the most despairing and violent members of our communities reach this peace.

The guidebook can be ordered for \$100 (S&H included). 806 Coastal Road, Brooksville, ME, 04617.



### A Guidebook for Teachers

My moves around the globe prompted the recent creation of a 'flexible blueprint' for the classes. This *Guidebook for Facilitators of Free Inside Prison Programming* provides a simple and very comprehensive outline of twelve weeks (twenty-four classes) of programming, in which simple, graceful drawings accompany descriptions of each Yoga pos-

## Transforming Anger in Prisons

duncombe@downeast.net. YTIP asked Betsy Duncombe about the recent controversy over Yoga in prisons, sparked by news reports that Yoga classes in a Norway prison provoked anger and other strong emotions in the prison inmates. The prison directors discontinued classes, because they felt they did not have the resources to help the prisoners deal with these emotions.

*Betsy responded:*

Everything we do in the Free Inside prison class, including Yoga, breathing, chi gung, and meditation, pacifies anger and violence for these reasons:

1) Our early and continual awareness of our breath shows us how connected we are to everyone else in the room and on this earth. It becomes harder to hold onto ideas of separation, and thus distrust of others, when we understand how the air in our own bodies holds the energy of many other bodies it has traveled through.

2) At the core of all of our practice is non-aggression, starting with how we view and treat our own bodies and emotions. For example, we never 'muscle into' a Yoga posture, but rather let gravity and time ease us into our stretches. Also, the thoughts we learn to witness in meditation are not despised, but rather accepted and simply noticed. When such non-violence is woven into experience with ourselves, it becomes a habitual base from which we interact with other people.

3) We take time in class after a particular exercise to notice how we feel as a result of it. With this knowledge of feel-

ing energized or calmed by a particular technique, we then know when to use or not use it, to balance the events and moods of our day. For example, *kapalabhati*, or 'breath of fire' from the *pranayama* tradition, serves to excite some people, and soothe or center others. Knowing what effect it has on one's own nervous system allows its use, say, to lift out of grogginess, or to ground oneself in a stressful situation.

4) Finally, several specific techniques I find particularly potent in dissolving anger are these: One, tonglen meditation from Tibetan tradition, in which pain in one's own body, one's own emotions, in someone loved, and even in someone hated is breathed in, and then peace, drawn from tangible, personal memory of this state, is breathed out. This not only works experientially, but also reminds us that what we breath out effects everyone around us. We become more conscious of emanating peace. Two, embryonic breath from the Taoist tradition, in which one's breath, though it remains full enough to fill the belly on each inhale, quiets us so profoundly that an imagined feather floated just beyond our nostrils would not move. This offers the peace of our mother's womb, and is a reassurance that we can recreate such safety and belonging for ourselves, regardless of our life circumstances. Three, organ jewel meditation from Chinese tradition, in which our major inner organs are visualized as filling with light of various colors on inhaled breath. On exhaled breath, this light is muddied, as the organ cleanses. Emotional cleansing accompanies the physical; as

green light refreshes our liver, for example, it is not only fats and alcohol that leave this organ on our outbreath, but an imbalanced liver's emotion of anger that leaves as well. Four, all of the heart opening postures of the Yoga tradition, in which our chest is widened, back often arched, and our heart stretched and acknowledged. These frequently lead to release of emotion, even hurt, and this is ideal within the supportive environment of class. Finally, all of the twisting postures of Yoga, in which our inner organs are squeezed. Doing this, we can visualize and feel our liver, again holder of anger in an imbalanced state, receiving movement and pliability. We can know that long-held anger is being freed up to exit our body.



Elizabeth (Betsy) Duncombe is a happily married mom of two growing yoginis. She teaches in several Maine prisons, and nears completion of her master's degree in social work at the University of Maine, Orono. She has practiced both Iyengar and Ashtanga style Yoga and has taught public Yoga classes since 1990. She received teacher training from Donald Moyers' Yoga Room in Berkeley, California. Among her most influential teachers, she credits Manouso Manos, Judith Lasater, Karin Stephan, Patricia Brown, Tony Briggs, Rodney Yee, and Richard Miller.

*This poem was written by a Hawaiian inmate, a man in his forties. He writes of his experience with the Tibetan tonglen meditation practiced in class.*

### Breath of Life by B.K.V.

I inhale ... the passing of my son, at a very young age.  
 I exhale ... the misty rain of Kauiki.  
 I inhale ... the divorce of my wife.  
 I exhale ... from afar, the sounds of the rolling waves over the small and tiny river rocks on the shores of Hana Kai.  
 I inhale ... theft by a loved one.  
 I exhale ... the calm and deep blue ocean of Kaukiu.  
 I inhale ... betrayal from a loved one.  
 I exhale ... the lush and wild countryside of Koali.  
 I inhale ... my abusive drinking and using.  
 I exhale ... the majestic mountain ridges of Kaupo to Keanae.  
 I inhale ... the corruptive and aggressive attitudes toward my family.  
 I exhale ... the silver moonlight cliffs of oheo to Kini wai.  
 I inhale ... the self destruction of my quality of life (exceptional to unacceptable).  
 I exhale ... the secluded red sand cove that engulfs Kai lulu.  
 I inhale ... the hatred of where my life is leading.  
 I exhale ... the hundreds of waterfalls of Haleakala.  
 I inhale ... the selfishness of carrying my bag of burdens for so long.  
 I exhale ... flying like a bird in the sun light, crystal clear ocean depths that light up the floor of Wailua bay.  
 I inhale ... the cruel and painful scars I leave on my family.  
 I exhale ... the unique sunrise that embraces Hana bay.  
 I inhale ... the battle of going home, but I am unable to.  
 I exhale ... grateful and joyful life growing up in Hana.  
 I breathe in, I breathe out ...  
 I thank you Lord.



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