



NEWSLETTER OF THE YOGA ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA | EST. 1976

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CONNECTING MIND & BODY



SPRING 2023 VOLUME 23 ISSUE 2





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Richard Miller, PhD. is a world-renowned spiritual teacher, author, yogic scholar, researcher and clinical psychologist who has blended the non-dual teachings of Yoga, Tantra, Advaita, Taoism, and Buddhism with Western psychology and neuroscience.

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Donations fund YAA Yoga Outreach Programs: schools, prisons, the underprivileged, and physically, emotionally or socially challenged Albertans who do not have easy access to yoga opportunities.

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IT'S A WIN-WIN! THANK YOU!

"I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy."
— Tagore

The Yoga Association of Alberta is a non-profit organization offering yoga activities to the public for the purpose of providing self-development opportunities to Albertans through its own activities and in co-operation with groups practising all recognized yoga disciplines. Support is provided to members and local groups through:

- Providing information about yoga activities in Alberta.
- Publication of a regular newsletter, Yoga Bridge.
- Promoting and maintaining high standards of yoga instruction through a teacher training and certification program.
- Organizing workshops, retreats and other activities independently and in co-operation with individuals and yoga communities throughout the province.
- Serving marginalized populations including prisons, street youth, women's shelters, seniors and rural communities through an Outreach Karma Yoga Program.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Future of Yoga in Alberta

By David Maulsby, President

Greetings fellow explorers of yoga and meditation! I hope you've enjoyed this past year of YAA activities, including the wonderful Senior Teachers Showcase classes we offer twice a month for free over Zoom!

COVID gifted us with a new epoch of challenging change, and YAA has been with us all the way -- a trusted friend offering a good-will refuge of practice, community and wisdom teaching, served with a smile, yoga style. Indeed, YAA has been there most of our lives, even before most of us knew anything about yoga, joining teachers with students, teachers-in-training with mentors, and practitioners with the depth of practice.

The YAA is a lifelong community of practice, and for some, it has been a lifelong commitment to community—I'm thinking of you, Anita Sielecki!

But the sudden death of our President, David McAmmond, in September 2021 -- that was a hard reminder: lifelong is a short time.

Since then, YAA experienced softer transitions. Our Executive Director of decades, Debbie Spence, retired (but lucky for us, continues as Finance Director). Six Board Members also retired: Karen Kirkwood, Ann Waschuk, Val Kunimoto, Nancy Hong, Paula Carnegie-Fehr and Rachel Foster. Hail and farewell—your wise counsel still speaks in my mind. And the guidance of long-time Yoga Bridge editor Marcia Langenberg informs this publication, years after she retired.

So we've been saddened by departures, yet filled with

gratitude, the sad-happy emotion that reminds me how everything contingent exists in relation to its opposite. And we're grateful to have an expert new Executive Director, seasoned within our TTP community, Donalee Campbell. An energetic office assistant (and author of *The Original Five Tibetans*), Krista Power. A well-connected editor with a fresh take, Dave Downing. And two new YAA Board members: Peter Skirving and Steven Bell.

We look forward to welcoming new nominees to the Board at the upcoming AGM (Saturday May 27 via Zoom, followed by a special meditation workshop with lifetime YAA Honorary Senior Teacher, Richard Miller, by the way).

We need two volunteers to bring our Board membership up to its requisite strength of eight, and I'm excited to announce we already have two inspired nominees: Jodi Gunn of Calgary (familiar to many Alberta yoga and iRest practitioners as Jodi Ouellette); and Anne Douglas of Banff (renowned

teacher of yoga and meditation, and a delightful free spirit if I may say so).

Back in 2021, our Board comprised 11 souls, thanks to a strong contingent of six Members-at-Large (MAL) from across the province. We're on the path to recovering that strength, so I'm putting out this invitation to readers of *Yoga Bridge* ... and that means you, Dear Reader! Please imagine yourself volunteering for the YAA, perhaps as a MAL, or by helping put on YAA events in your city, town, village, hamlet, hut, cave — wherever you practice yoga in Alberta.



I foresee more transitions over the next few years (soft ones I hope) and my predictions are never wrong. What I don't yet foresee is the transition of YAA to a new generation of volunteers and leaders, and so I'll end with one final pitch ... to the young'uns, yoga whippersnappers under 50 years of age. The future of yoga in Alberta is here, in your already-skilled hands. Teacher Training (to the highest standards), Mentoring, Workshops, Props, Yoga Bridge, Friendship, Outreach: this is YAA's legacy -- yours to nurture, advance, and pass on in your turn.

David's yoga journey began in 2005 with a physio's recommendation to try "yoga for backs", which led to workshops with David McAmmond and Anita Sielecki, which led to serving on the Board of YAA. David's volunteering journey began in 1982, serving on arts and community boards. David's meditation journey began at age 4 and, intertwining with yoga, led to iRest Yoga Nidra training. David's computer science / AI journey began in middle school and led to living in Palo Alto, Boston and New Zealand. David took refuge on Vancouver Island during COVID time, which led to hiking with dogs. Where will things go from here?



Senior Teacher Showcase Series


GET TO KNOW ALBERTA'S TEACHERS

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Upcoming Schedule:


- **March 7 & 21** (Tuesdays) **Mugs McConnell** - Mexico
- **April 3 & 17** (Mondays) **Rosemary Nogue** - Calgary
- **May 2 & 16** (Tuesdays) **Lynnda Sharp** - Edmonton
- **June 5 & 19** (Mondays) **Kari Dul** (Intermediate) - Vernon



Save the date to join us in July 2023:

Releasing the Deeper Layers of Stress

A Meditation & Mindful Movement Retreat with Kavindu (Alejandro Velasco)



Wednesday July 12, 2pm to Sunday July 16, 1pm (2023)
Providence Renewal Centre, 3005-119 Street, Edmonton and via Zoom

Most of the stress that we experience today is generated by our own thoughts and beliefs. In addition to the suffering it generates, chronic stress prevents us from accessing our inner wisdom and compassion.

Ancient teachings propose that most of the uneasiness and stress we suffer can be released gently and wisely through practice.

In this retreat we will examine the main layers of thoughts and beliefs that generate stress, and facilitate their release with a combination of right understanding, meditation, and restorative yoga practices.

Anita Sielecki will lead Mindful Movement practices to facilitate somatic integration.

Fee: \$785 (in-person; all meals & accommodations included), \$395 (online) Some scholarships available.
Information: Anita (780) 432-7152, sielecki@hotmail.com
Please register at <https://yoga.ca/product-category/workshops-classes/>

YAA MEMBERS!

You are invited to the YAA's 47th AGM and a special workshop with Richard Miller**, PhD

May 27, 2023 - Livestream Via Zoom

- AGM: **12:00-2pm:** 47th YAA Annual General Meeting, Member-at-Large Nominees: Peter Skirving (Calgary) Anne Douglas (Banff) Jodi Gun (Ouellette) (Calgary)
- Workshop: **2:15 - 3:45 pm:** with Richard Miller: **Tapping Into Unbreakable Wellbeing.** *Join Richard for an exploration of five inquiries that have been handed down through ancient wisdom teachings to help us directly experience our innate, unbreakable and ever-present Wholeness and Well-Being. These simple inquiries enable us to realize the fullness of our human potential where we feel empowered and in harmony with ourselves and the world around us during every step of our journey through life.*
- Fee for Workshop: Free for current members who attend the AGM.
- Pre-Register: www.yoga.ca/yaa-store
(Zoom link will be noted on your registration receipt)
- Info: YAA (780) 427 8776



Richard Miller, PhD is the Founder of the iRest Institute, Co-Founder of the International Association of Yoga Therapists, and Founding Member and past President of the Institute for Spirituality and Psychology. He is a clinical psychologist, author, researcher, yogic scholar, and spiritual teacher who has devoted his life to integrating western psychology and neuroscience with the ancient nondual wisdom teachings of Yoga, Tantra, Advaita, Taoism, and Buddhism. He is the author of *Yoga Nidra, The iRest Meditative Practice for Deep Relaxation and Healing, iRest Meditation: Restorative Practices for Health, Healing and Well Being, The iRest Program for Healing PTSD, and Yoga Nidra: The Meditative Heart of Yoga*. Grounded in 35+ research studies, the US Army Surgeon General and the Defense Centers of Excellence have recognized iRest as a Complimentary Program for healing chronic pain and PTSD.

Yoga and Irritable Bowel Syndrome

by Adrijana D'Silva, PhD

I have been living with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) since I was a child. IBS is a highly prevalent disorder affecting between 12 to 18 percent of Canadians. Symptoms include abdominal pain related to defecation or in association with a change in stool frequency or form. To date, no comprehensive disease model has emerged to guide the development of novel and effective IBS therapies. Over 70 percent of IBS patients have reported that IBS symptoms are debilitating enough to interfere with their work, family, and personal lives.

I was first introduced to yoga in 2013 as a means to help me manage my IBS. I found the early research claims were true – yoga can help improve IBS symptoms. Since then, I've been practicing yoga regularly to help with my IBS and overall well-being. My personal experiences with yoga and IBS later influenced my decision to study how yoga helps people with IBS manage their symptoms for my PhD work in my 30s.

Given the wide-ranging influence of IBS and my own and fellow colleagues' interest in helping patients cope with this ailment, the University of Calgary Cumming School of Medicine conducted three research studies on the topic. Over the next three years, I led the following studies exploring and evaluating:

- patient attitudes toward complementary and alternative medicine to deal with IBS, particularly yoga;
- the attitudes of gastroenterologists (specialists in bowel health) towards yoga as a complementary alternative medical therapy;
- and the outcomes of a two-month clinical study

The published paper on the first two studies can be accessed here: <https://academic.oup.com/jcag/advance-article/doi/10.1093/jcag/gwac028/6693944>. I will discuss the highlights of our research in the remainder of this article.

We asked patients with IBS about their beliefs about yoga and intention to practice yoga. Their intention to engage in yoga was driven primarily by their belief in their ability to practice yoga. Participants said they experienced improved relaxation, flexibility, and strength through their yoga practice. The most common barriers to practice were a lack of time, lack of knowledge, inability to attend in person classes due to transportation issues, insufficient discipline and cost. Participants said they would engage in daily yoga if they were in a scheduled instructor-led weekly group class delivered online via video or live at a reasonable cost.

We asked gastroenterologists who treat patients with IBS about their attitudes toward yoga—for example, did they have enough knowledge about yoga to recommend yoga practices to their patients? Did knowledge of yoga or a lack of experience with it assist or detract from their likelihood to recommend yoga as a complementary approach? Gastroenterologists generally believed that yoga is safe and beneficial for patients with IBS, but most do not recommend yoga due to their own lack of confidence in recommending yoga and scientific evidence. There is sufficient evidence to support the use of yoga as a therapy in managing IBS, however, yoga is not included in clinical practice guidelines for IBS. Gastroenterologists who agreed yoga is beneficial for IBS were more likely to recommend yoga to their patients with IBS. Building awareness and providing education about yoga as therapy

among gastroenterologists is needed to shift their attitudes and beliefs towards yoga to meet patients' needs and offer adequate information.

Following these two studies, my colleagues and I subsequently conducted a clinical trial called the MY-IBS Study (Meditation and Yoga for IBS) in 2021. The published paper on the clinical trial can be accessed here: https://journals.lww.com/ajg/Fulltext/9900/Meditation_and_Yoga_for_Irritable_Bowel_Syndrome_.557.aspx

Our goal was to examine the efficacy and feasibility of this program on IBS symptom severity compared to an advice-only control group. Secondary objectives were to determine whether a virtual yoga program improves the quality of life, mental health outcomes, perceived stress, fatigue, COVID-19-related stress, and self-compassion. The research utilized a Upa Yoga (basic yoga) program that consisted of: a) directional movements of the arm in three directions and neck rotations; b) Yoga Namaskar; c) alternate nostril breathing; d) mantra meditation consisting of AUM chanting (OM); and e) breath watching.

Twenty-seven patients completed the eight-week on-line yoga program with an average attendance of 79 percent. A yoga teacher presented a meditation and asana practice once per week in real time for up to 60 minutes. Participants undertook these practices daily at home with the assistance of videos. No prior yoga experience was required to participate in the study. The study found that a simple hatha yoga program including postures, breathing and meditation is an effective and safe alternative for people with IBS. Thirty-seven percent of the participants reported a 50-point or higher improvement on the IBS-Symptom Severity Scale which is deemed clinically beneficial. Some patients reported improvements as early as four weeks into the eight-week program. Participants who practiced more (an average of 77 minutes more per week) were almost five times more likely to see this improvement.

The study indicated that yoga has other beneficial effects including perceived higher quality of life, perceived reduction in fatigue, and overall stress. None of the participants reported any adverse experiences. Forty-one percent of participants rated the program as excellent, 30% as great, and 29% as good. Fifty-two percent strongly

agreed they would recommend the program to other IBS patients.

In-person classes can be beneficial because the instructor can provide valuable feedback to the students that might not be possible in a virtual format where students might not turn their cameras on or cannot be seen well enough by the teacher. However, virtual yoga classes could increase access to effective management therapies for patients with IBS who may not feel comfortable attending in-person classes or are too far away from the class location. Combining the convenience and flexibility of virtual programs and the social benefits of in-person interactions into hybrid programming may improve yoga program efficacy, patient commitment to their yoga practice, and overall patient health improvement.

Adrijana D'Silva is associated with the Department of Community Health Sciences, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary and Primary Health Care, Alberta Health Services. She can be reached at adrijana.dsilva@ucalgary.ca

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Cycles and Rhythms - The Movement of Yoga

by Paula Carnegie Fehr

Once upon a time my much younger self took a tentative step into a room of silver haired women laying out coloured mats on the floor. The teacher greeted me with a smile and invited me into the space. I laid down a towel and sat on the floor – not uncomfortable, but not yet aware. My world was about to be rocked. My ego was about to take a kicking. My mind was about to be blown open in ways I could never have imagined. What I believed to be the beginning of a simple fitness routine gave me no hint of the lifelong transformative journey I was embarking on!

The first weeks of learning yoga were exciting. My body was young and supple. It moved well – or so I thought. I realized quickly that strength, patience and self-awareness were qualities I needed to work on when I observed women twice my age move freely into poses that I could easily perform as a child and was no longer able to do. I was forced to admit that years of slouching and physical inactivity had taken their toll. I almost felt shame, but I did return to class - a great decision.

My body loved yoga. It was not calisthenics or aerobics or dancersize (all worthy forms of exercise but not activities that brought me joy). Somehow the yoga practice spoke to a deeper part of myself. The anxiety I lived with seemed to dissipate with each class. That effect lasted for days afterward, gradually increasing in length as the years went on. I still had trouble holding strong in *Virabhadrasana* postures, but my body became capable of achieving many, more difficult yoga poses. I even entertained the thought of someday teaching yoga.

Grace Little was to become my senior teacher. I attended my first class with her, anticipating a conversation about joining the Teacher Training Program. Before I could ask, at the end of class she approached me to say I was to teach. I was very surprised when she was so insistent that I start right away. I felt like I was being thrown into the deep end of the pool. As scared as I was, she inspired me to dive in, and between her and Maya Margo Balog, a deeper retraining of my body and mind began.

Those first years of teaching weren't my best. I look back on them now and wonder how my students managed to stay safe, because I was enthusiastic about teaching poses that I was well aware I knew little about. Each time I attended a workshop with Maya Margo she would smile sweetly at us and then lead us through difficult postures, encouraging awareness at each step. Her wonderful manner and awareness of her student's limitations and abilities were qualities I wanted as a teacher, and I picked up techniques and tips every time I attended her classes. Even now, I feel like she had so much more she could have shared with us.



Along the way, I decided I needed more knowledge. I started massage training which made me realize a knowledge of anatomy and physiology was of immense importance to the practice of yoga. As I learned how the body works, my professor (originally a scientist at Berkeley, California) took an interest in how I was linking the anatomical studies to yoga practice. We had some great discussions; my understanding of yoga postures, how the body flowed with them and their beneficial effects developed quickly. Yet again, awareness transformed my yoga practice. I became stronger and more flexible, allowing me to practice poses and actions I had not been able to do - like *Sirsasana* and touching my toes in a forward bend. I developed more confidence as a teacher.

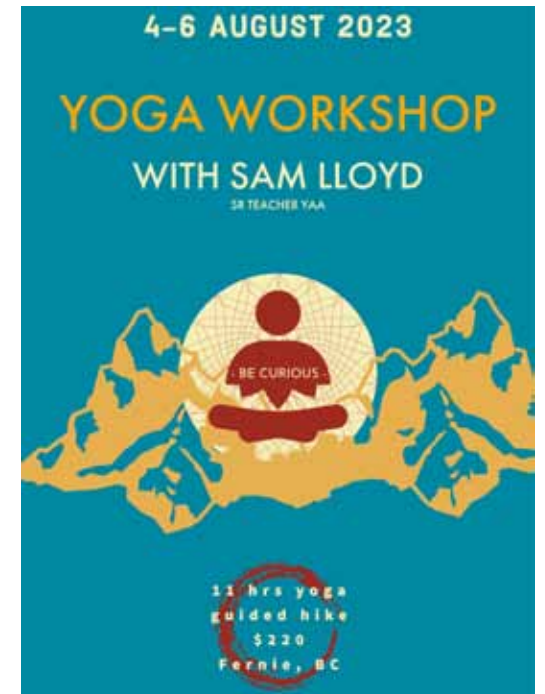
The gift of being part of the YAA is the pool of highly experienced teachers we have access to. I was fortunate to be able to attend many of their workshops during and after my teacher training. Each brought a level of depth to my understanding that built upon the earlier teachings. I began to understand the cyclical nature of learning. I began to revisit poses that I believed I had mastered only to gain a whole new perspective. And this perspective spoke to the changes in my emotional body and ego. I found that I had conquered much of my fear. I was able to go in front of a new class of students and even though I still felt like I had much to learn, I also felt capable of sharing from a place of awareness. I no longer thought about how to show them the pose as *my* body was capable of doing it, but I was able to *see* how *their* bodies were practicing the pose. I began to *see* that it was no longer about me at all. I was there as a teacher for *them*.

Today, the cycle begins again. After sharing yoga with students since 1997, I am being reintroduced to yoga from yet another level with teachers who are giving me new perspectives. Again, I feel like a newbie. I think of all the ideas I shared with my students and wonder if what I shared was of help to them. And then I think of where I was when I first entered the room so many years ago to start this journey. We learn a little. We integrate. We move to the next level. I barely remember struggling to hold my legs still in *Virabhadrasana* when I started and now I feel confident to choose *Virabhadrasana* amongst many postures which effortlessly suit my body and mind. My ego still talks, but it is

more from a place of quiescence. My yoga practice continues to unfold. It has become much less physical and much more metaphysical. I feel as I move into the later stages of my life that yoga has ironed out most of the wrinkles that have held me prisoner to my own mind and shown me more about who I am, what I am here for, and how to live life as a conscious being. Yoga still moves me. It moves me into stillness. And now that my body, my ego, my mind have been resurrected into a new, unified form, I am ever grateful to the MANY teachers who have shared so gracefully from their knowledge.

So much for a fitness class, eh?

Paula Carnegie Fehr (YAA 1000, YA-CEP, RYT500, C-IAYT) began practicing yoga in 1995 and has been leading classes and workshops in the Red Deer area since 1997. She specializes in modified forms of yoga for special needs, seniors, and pain care management. Paula created the 15+ hour Know Your Yoga Body anatomy online training and often shares Yoga Anatomy and Ayurvedic teachings with students in various training programs. She can be reached at www.hiddenmessages.ca



Judgments Refocussed Purification, Self-Knowledge

A Specific Example of an Object for a Three-Fold Attention Practice

by Marcia Langenberg

This is a time of geopolitical unrest in which the tendency to find fault with others is prevalent or even epidemic. For instance, rather than developing intelligent arguments to defend their ideas, politicians have a predisposition to attack the character of their opponents. In the press, we often hear or read their disparaging statements such as, “She’s deceitful” or “He is ruinously reckless with his ideas.” The term ‘wokeism,’ *the attitudes and behaviours of people who are sensitive to social and political injustice*, is now being used to belittle and reproach these people for their seeming ignorance of the relevant issues at hand. However, it is not only politicians who judge others. We also can find fault with others. Yoga offers us a process, called *samyama*, the three-fold attention yoga practice, to not only reduce our propensity to critique others, but also to learn something about ourselves.

Judgments about others are thoughts created in the *manomaya* layer of our being, which is one of the *panchamayas*, the five human dimensions.* This layer is composed of the lower mind, our sensory perceptions, thoughts, and memories. When judgments become our focus, they distract us from our experience. Conversely, we can use them to turn our attention to our experience and to learn something about ourselves.

Judgments can be understood as projections — projecting something about us onto others. They can act as a mirror into which we can look at and study ourselves. When we focus on our sensory perceptions, thoughts, and memories we can establish a connection with our inner source of wisdom. This process occurs in the *vijñānamaya* layer of our being. This layer is composed of our

awareness, conditioning, personality, and higher mind, which is our inner, intuitive capacity to understand and to discriminate.

Self-examination first involves creating the right conditions for the mind to enter states of concentration, contemplation, and absorption by practicing *āsana* (postures), *prānāyāma* (regulated breathing) and *pratyahāra* (withdrawal of the senses).

When our mind is ready to focus, we can penetrate our mental, psychological, and spiritual layers by using the three-fold attention process, *samyama*. The discipline of uniting three states of the mind, reveals a comprehensive understanding of an object. An example of this process is as follows:

1. Concentration (*dhāraṇā* - focus) – Only You and an Object are present. Concentrate your attention on your experience by changing a judgment to an ‘I’ statement. For example, if you make the judgment that someone is weak, change it to “I am weak.” Or, to avoid identifying with weakness as being who you are, you can say, “Weakness is present.” If when saying this statement you recognize, with a sense of “Aha!” without disturbance,



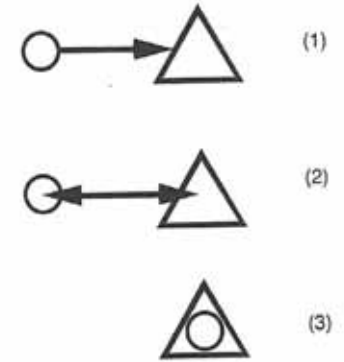
that you feel weak in some way, your mind can concentrate on it. If your mind is disturbed and distracted by the statement, it may be best to go back to practicing *āsana* to stabilize your mind and / or it may be necessary for you to seek professional help. However, if you can establish this state of concentration on this object of weakness, contemplation can follow.

2. Contemplation (*dhyānā* - meditation) – You, Object and Thinking Process are present. Contemplate your experience by maintaining a steady, deliberate focus on your object, such as weakness. In this state, your mind and the object communicate with each other without interruption.

One way to maintain your attention on an object is by dialoguing with your sensory perceptions, thoughts and memories relevant to the object. Gradually, as you steadily hold, without interruption, a one-pointed focus on your object of choice, being aware of your experience of the object without you thinking about it can occur.

3. Absorption (*samādhi* - merge) – The Intimate Meeting of You, Object and Thinking Process. At some point during contemplation, a spontaneous shift from contemplation to absorption into your experience may occur. There is no longer a distinction between you and your object. Your identification with your name, work, accomplishments, etc. withdraws. Your thoughts fade out of consciousness. Only an awareness of the feeling of the object remains. If you can stay with this awareness long enough, comprehension of the object is revealed. In the case of weakness, the root cause of the latter may become evident. It is another “Aha!” moment, but this time it is profound and unforgettable. You know that it is your Truth coming from a source deep within.

Using this three-fold attention process, we detach ourselves from others we have judged. Being purified of, freed from our judgmental attachments, we become conscious only of ourselves / our experience, nothing else. In this unencumbered state, we can become aware of our sensations, thoughts, memories, and feelings relevant to an object such as weakness, we can pay attention to them, and we can become absorbed in the feeling



Progression from *dhāraṇā* (1), via *dhyānā* (2) to *samādhi* (3). TKV Desikachar. *The Heart of Yoga, Developing a Personal Practice*, p. 110.

of the object. In the latter state, intuitions about the object are revealed. We can use this understanding to make changes in ourselves, such as diminishing negative conditioning of weakness by developing beneficial conditioning of strength.

We may have opinions about others, but they don’t change them or us. Rather, by meditating on our experience, we can change ourselves according to the intuitive insights revealed. This getting off the external, critical hamster wheel and stepping into our interior, source of wisdom, can heal relationships with ourselves and with others. This process is the soothing balm of Yoga.

Through practice: *...we take conscious steps towards dispersing the clouds of darkness that obscure our minds, kindling the light of intuitive insight within.* (K S Sudhakar, 2022).

Endnotes:

- *The Five Dimensions of the Human Being:
1. *annamaya*: sheath composed of food, physical body
 2. *prāṇamāya*: sheath composed of life force, energy / vital body
 3. *manomaya*: sheath composed of lower mind, mental capacity, education
 4. *vijñānamaya*: sheath composed of awareness, conditioning, personality, higher mind (*buddhi*)
 5. *ānandamaya*: sheath composed of bliss, transcendental Self

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Marcia Langenberg is a YAA Permanent Certified Senior Teacher who teaches in Edmonton. She initially studied with Teddy Hyndman and Beth McCann (her YAA TTP senior teachers) and Sandra Sammartino. For the past twenty years she has been studying with Rosemary Jeanes Antze from Toronto, an international senior teacher and trainer recognized by the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai, India.

YAA Members Photo Submission Invitation

We got some very positive feedback about the last cover of *Yoga Bridge* which spotlighted one of our own YAA Certified teachers, Lisa Workman (photo by Kenzie Checknita).

This issue, Helen Morgan, YAA Certified Teacher, graces the cover with a beautiful full wheel pose!

We are STILL looking for more beautiful pictures of YOU. So if you fancy being on the cover, or even included in some articles or advertisements, please do send us your photos!

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Teaching Skills Workshops. Ad p. 21.

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Exploring Yoga in Community Ad p. 14.

Apr 14-16; Sept 22-24; Dec 1-3. A gathering of friends organized by Anita Sielecki**. A peaceful and supportive retreat with asana, pranayama and restorative yoga. Connect with YOUR Alberta Yoga Community.

Trauma from First Responder. Ad p. 25.

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YAA Core Curriculum Classes. Ad pp. 20-21.

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Grief Workshop. Ad p. 23.

May 25 w/ Sandy Ayre. Moving through grief requires being gentle with yourself. Let Sandy share her wisdom and love as she guides us through the grieving process.

AGM w/ Richard Miller**. Ad p. 7.

May 27. YAA Elections & Workshop: "Tapping Into Unbreakable Well-being." No charge for workshop if you attend AGM. Join your YAA Alberta COMMUNITY. We hope to see you there.

Mindfulness & Meditation Ad p. 6.

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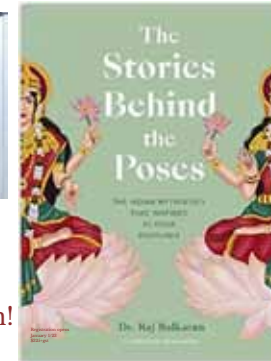
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IN MEMORIAM

Anastasia Helen Eshpeter July 28, 1927 - January 7, 2023

by Erin Michie

Anastasia Helen Eshpeter passed away peacefully at the age of 95 at the Drayton Valley Hospital and Care Centre on January 7, 2023. The following tribute "Alberta's Yoga Baba" was published in the Autumn 2014 Yoga Bridge newsletter.

We are fortunate to have many elders in our Alberta yoga community that explored the practices and teachings long before yoga was popular. Helen Eshpeter is one of these leaders with a long-standing history in our province, and she is a beacon on the path.

Helen was born in 1927. Her parents were Ukrainian immigrants who worked hard establishing a new life in Canada on a farm in Evansburg, west of Edmonton, where Helen developed her strong affinity to the land. She became a schoolteacher as a young woman, and at the age of 25 married her beloved and supportive husband Bud. They had three sons. Bud worked in the oil industry and they moved around the province, living in Swan Hills, Slave Lake, Whitecourt and Drayton Valley.

Helen first became interested in yoga when living in Swan Hills after she read the book *Yoga* by Jess Stearn. This was back in 1967 when there were only a handful of teachers teaching yoga in Alberta and primarily in urban centres. On her own, without any direction, Helen successfully practiced postures from the book, which helped her heal and strengthen her back.

Anyone who has talked to Helen knows she is a treasure trove of knowledge, especially about alternative health. Her lifelong use of home remedies, herbs, native plants and holistic health practices is simply amazing. From Helen's first positive experience with practicing yoga, she incorporated yoga as another healing modality, utilizing poses for their benefits. She quickly

discovered that "lion" pose could help relieve young children's sore throats and ear problems. She also credits yoga with abetting her shoulder and arm problems as well as boosting her life force.

After moving to Whitecourt in the 1970s, Helen's next exposure to yoga was through Karen Zebroff's 6am TV program. Then she was introduced to Richard Kittleman's routine through an 8 week Recreation Board course. In 1983, Helen moved to Drayton Valley where there were no yoga classes for her to attend. Yet it was after moving to Drayton Valley that Helen began her formal training in yoga by travelling back and forth to Edmonton to attend classes and workshops.

In the 1980s Helen studied with Alberta yoga pioneers Gerda Krebs, Friedel Khattab and Maya-Margo Balog and was certified as a yoga teacher by Friedel Khattab in 1987. She attended numerous yoga gatherings, workshops and retreats in Canada and the United States. She also trained with Sandra Sammartino from White Rock, BC. Helen recalls Sandra telling her: "teach from your heart," and Helen says: "then I relaxed."

Though originally an adjunct to her many health practices, yoga grew into something far greater for Helen. Maya-Margo Balog recommended her for permanent Yoga Association of Alberta Teacher Certification, stating: "Helen is a great example for all of us with her thirst for knowledge and tireless search for Truth."

Helen was the first yoga teacher in Drayton Valley and went on to train and mentor teachers. She developed a loving and grateful following and a widespread community. Yoga teacher and friend, Carol Fedun, regularly attended Maya-Margo Balog's juice fasts at River Lodge with Helen and



recalls how Helen became affectionately known there as "Mom."

One of her students and dear friends in Drayton Valley, Bonnie Demers, reminisces about her first yoga experience at a weekend workshop with Helen in 1999: "One of the first things Helen said as we settled was 'no judgment.' I remember I felt it physically as she said it. This created a questioning within and recognition that I had been taught that judgement was normal. Helen was gentle with her students, so I felt comfortable and she always reminded me to be kind to myself. This was new for me as I had a strong inner critic and was quite familiar with the 80s slogan of 'no pain, no gain.' The way Helen taught without judgment created awareness, many changes and a wonderful expansion for me."

Bonnie was one of the local students that Helen assisted in becoming a yoga teacher and one of those that Helen fondly refers to as "her girls." Bonnie says: "Helen taught us to teach from our hearts about what inspired us and felt right. She was a pivotal person in my life. I have shared with her many times how grateful I am for her friendship and mentoring. Helen loves to say that she is so glad that she taught me yoga so she can come to my classes! She has been coming to my weekly classes for over 10 years and has inspired many of MY students. Many remark that they want to be like Helen, doing yoga when in their 80s."

Another Drayton Valley student who became a teacher and dear friend of Helen's is Lucille Berezniuk. Lucille confirms that Helen's mantra is "teach from the heart," and says she learned from Helen that from there, all else flows. Lucille asserts: "Helen embodies this philosophy. The yoga that Helen introduced me to is one that engages the subtle energetics of the body: the body of prana - energy healing on all levels - physical, emotional and spiritual. Yoga is taken off the mat into day-to-day living, and the 'tools in the tool box' are used to strengthen every aspect on

the path to leading a full and creative life. Helen shares an unconditional, non-judgmental approach to being in the world that allows a softening and letting go in the body."

Beth McCann, another friend and YAA teacher, describes her as "a shy yet determined yogini" and "an inspiration to all of us." Beth says she learned from Helen the value of being with other yogis/ yoginis to fill her vessel. She remembers Helen attending many of the workshops that Beth offered in Vermilion, Alberta: "Helen gently instilled in me the value of drinking water. I was the lucky recipient of a full bottle of water on my mat morning and afternoon for many of the five-day retreats." Beth also recalls learning from Helen the benefits of things like ear candling and cayenne pepper (baked into her homemade crackers) for digestion, and the joy of Helen's pear milk on morning porridge. For decades Helen has quietly contributed these delicious and discreet offerings to dozens of retreats.

Helen is also known for her more intangible gifts. Joan Fargey was over 60 when she learned yoga and grew to know Helen at Beth's retreats at Vermilion. Joan describes Helen: "She is such a fine example, such a yogini. She is so sweet to everybody. When Helen sits she oozes energy and peace. There is an aura when you look at her, and I carry that image of her with me."

Another friend and colleague of Helen's, Janis Blakey, pronounces: "Helen is the wisest woman I've ever met. Her quiet ways soothe all of those around her. In a yoga class, sometimes her gentle touch is all you need to bring you back into your body or the space you need."

At her golden age Helen continues to bring her quiet and soothing ways to yoga retreats and gatherings and stays connected by phone to the many people she has taken under her wing. A grandmother of four and a great-grandmother of six, she is also the Alberta yoga community's "Yoga Baba." We are truly blessed to have her in our midst.



Helen with fellow retreat participant



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- Jun 3 Restorative Poses; Definitions of Yoga w/ Donalee Campbell**
- Sep 16 Supine/Core Poses; Yoga Sutras Pada 1 w/ Donalee Campbell**
- Nov 4 Hip Openers; Yoga Sutra Pada 2 w/ Teddy Hyndman**
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Be Gentle with Yourself - A Challenge with Grief and Difficult Times

by Sandy Ayre

Have you ever heard or said, “be gentle with yourself?” I know I have.

I’ve had both personal and professional interactions with this statement. Personally, I have coached myself to be gentler with myself, and I have received it as advice from others. I see it in inspirational, affirmational, and self-help content online and in books.

Professionally, I work in palliative and end of life care as an occupational therapist, and I run a grief and bereavement group that uses the teachings of yoga as a supportive modality. I’ve had to parse down the statement “be gentle with yourself,” in many challenging and emotional situations to make it applicable, practical, and actionable for the person I’m supporting.

Grief is our internal and natural response to loss. It’s everything we think and feel that is connected to a life transition, loss, or death. It includes our emotions, our physical response to stress (fatigue, aches and pains, upset digestion, heart palpitations, sweaty palms), our thoughts (peaceful and challenging), as well as our spiritual beliefs and questions. Healing grief requires us to move towards the pain, feel our feelings, and express our losses.

Unfortunately, in our modern society, when people need care, concern, and support, they are often met with an aggressive, non-gentle response: “Toughen up,” “get on with life,” and a push to “get back to normal,” or get back to work, or get back on the horse, so to speak. These messages push us to ignore our bodies and emotions (“crying isn’t going to bring him back”), and rally against our instincts (“you can’t grieve forever”). Our modern culture tries to push us away from our instinct to grieve, preferring a quick, efficient, and pain-free resolution and return to normal. In fact, I would

argue that our modern culture is emotion phobic and grief illiterate.

Further, there are so many “shoulds” in our society - you *should* drink eight glasses of water a day, you *should* do yoga, you *should* be productive, you *should* exercise, you *should* rest, you should, you should, you should. There is so much pressure to perform a certain way, and with a lot of judgement around how that turns out.

Now layer on acute grief or a very challenging situation or experience. Sometimes life is so destabilizing that you don’t have the brain power or emotional space to consider a state like gentleness. You’re in survival mode, and it can feel anything but gentle.

All this to say: If you find the concept of “being gentle with yourself” challenging, those might be some of the reasons why.

Living with grief is hard. It’s physically, mentally and socially challenging. You’ll have difficult thoughts (“if only” thoughts, and “would have, should have, could have” thoughts), difficult and volatile emotions, and learning to live in a post-loss world can be like learning to walk again. You’ll fall down a lot.

It takes a ton of self-grace, self-compassion, self-space and self-patience to navigate life after loss. Being gentle with yourself puts this grace, compassion, space and patience into action. It helps you to make choices and decisions that are aligned with your “grief needs.”

In one of my recent yoga groups, we explored how “being gentle with yourself” happens in the real world. Here are some of the take-aways:

- *Not judging difficult thoughts and feelings. Allow them to come and go.*
- *Giving yourself ample space and time to do what it is you need/want to do*
- *Speaking kindly to yourself*

- *Giving yourself permission to do what brings you joy*
- *Allowing your sense of joy to change over time*
- *Being flexible and adaptable*
- *Acknowledging small accomplishments*
- *Praising yourself*
- *Be patient with yourself: A mantra such as “right now it’s like this,” can be a helpful reminder, that right now things are a certain way, and at a future point in time things will shift and change*
- *Letting go of timelines related to healing and grief*
- *Recognizing your individuality and uniqueness*
- *Simplifying life*
- *Recognizing physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual limits*
- *Saying no*
- *Doing more of what you love*
- *Stop putting others first (grief is a self-focused experience for good reason)*
- *Being forgiving towards yourself*

How does all this relate to yoga? Well, a holistic practice of yoga (i.e. one that is not just focused on the physical body and asana, but on all the eight limbs) increases self awareness and promotes loving action. With more self awareness it’s more possible to make self-supportive choices and function from a place of grounded-response rather than reactive-reaction. This leads to more gentleness and compassion.

When we practice yoga, we are putting all of this into practice. We slow down and begin noticing our internal reactions and responses, and with that knowledge proceed through our practice. Hopefully we do this with self compassion and grace, and indeed yoga is a way to practice. This can look like:

- *Coming out of a pose that is too challenging or causing discomfort*
 - *Noticing the content and activity of the mind, and adjusting focus as needed*
 - *Responding with your body, example: relaxing the shoulders, deepening the breath*
 - *Using props to support poses and/or doing the variations your body needs*
 - *Connecting with and allowing your internal experience (for example allowing emotions to flow)*
- In the real world, being gentle with yourself can look like this:
- *Choosing to go to bed early, or choosing to stay up late*
 - *Choosing to watch Netflix or choosing not to*
 - *Choosing to watch the news, or choosing not to*

- *Resting or exercising*
- *Scrolling through Instagram to look at cute dog videos, or deleting social media from your phone*
- *Having a glass of water or having a glass of wine*
- *Hunkering down to finish a project on time, or putting it off another few days*
- *Saying no to a dinner invitation, saying yes to a dinner invitation*
- *Going on a trip even though it brings up fresh grief, not going on a trip because it brings up fresh grief.*

As you can see, “being gentle with yourself” can be anything! **It all depends on context and if the action arises from a place of non-judgmental awareness and deep care for yourself and your present (and ever changing) needs.**

There’s no “right” way to do this, there’s only the way YOU need to do it right now. *If that can be a gentle and loving way, it makes it more nurturing, tolerable, and sustainable.*

Sandy Ayre is an Occupational Therapist, 750-hour YAA certified yoga instructor and lives in Edmonton. She currently teaches yoga as a supportive modality for grief online. www.yogaofgriefsupport.com

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Teaching What I Need to Learn - Yoga for Trauma from a First Responder's Perspective

by Scott Jones

I wanted to become a police officer as long as I can remember. It was the family business as they say, my father and uncle were cops and I took the same path followed shortly after by my brother and cousin. To this day I continue to serve, having spent over 30 years in the profession in a variety of areas such as patrol, recruit training, homicide, and child protection and supporting positions like Crisis Negotiator and Critical Incident Commander. It has been a meaningful, heartbreaking, exhausting, invigorating, impactful, and beautiful journey. I wouldn't change a thing... but I am happy to be reaching the end of my career.

Throughout my years of service, I have been exposed to sudden deaths, collisions, family disputes, assaults, and all forms of humans victimizing each other in the most appalling ways. Add to this shift work and numerous on-call roles where I would be required to drop everything to head to work, sometimes for countless hours at a time spent in highly stressful environments with very little sleep and poor eating habits. The responsibilities of first responders often take them being away from their families on irregular schedules that don't respect milestone events and holidays. When I was a homicide detective, I distinctly remember the time my wife had to explain to her mom why I was missing a specific family gathering; she told her mom that the family of the victim needed me more at that time than my own family did. This adds a layer of guilt as the competing priorities lead to the spouse or partner taking on all the tasks of running a home and family for extended periods of time.

What no one told me about being a police officer was that the steady and consistent vicarious trauma would have a deleterious impact on my

nervous system. When I started in policing, no one talked about what trauma was, its effects on the people we encountered and on the health of first responders. Unknowingly, the cumulative effect of my job and all it entailed led to me becoming increasingly dysregulated as the years wore on. My dysregulation presented itself as moodiness, agitation and difficulty sleeping. I had unwittingly 'burned out'.

You may be wondering – “What does any of this have to do with yoga?” Well, for the first part of my career, nothing. I began practicing yoga over 10 years ago when my supportive wife cajoled me into attending a class with her for the very utilitarian reason of ridding myself of a nagging back issue. The pain was likely related to years of wearing a police duty belt, sitting in a police car, and lifting heavy weights. I didn't know it at the time, but yoga was nudging me to begin a more holistic exploration of wellness rather than solely focusing on physical fitness. It was one of the many times in my life where the universe placed me exactly where I was supposed to be. This foray into yoga led to my discovery (and appreciation) of deliberate cold exposure, alternative breathing techniques and meditation to regulate my nervous system and expand my window of tolerance to stress. As I began this wellness expedition, I watched my wife on her own journey through chronic pain and the healing effects of her yoga practice. She became a yoga teacher which appeared to bring another level of nervous system regulation for her and, being the amazing human she is, she shared techniques such as functional movement, breathwork and self-compassion with her students to help them along their own restorative path. I too decided to

“I didn't know it at the time, but yoga was nudging me to begin a more holistic exploration of wellness rather than solely focusing on physical fitness. It was one of the many times in my life where the universe placed me exactly where I was supposed to be.”

become a yoga teacher. It was, and continues to be, a transformational process.

I am so grateful my yoga teacher training (YTT) began at *Yoga for Today* with eleven wonderful women. The weekends spent in teacher training were both energizing and exhausting and when the pandemic hit, the class learned and grew together, experiencing and teaching class in person and online. I dove headlong into trauma informed practices and breath work with a goal to help others learn these techniques. I have since taken numerous courses and read as much as I can get my hands on about the effects of trauma, how breathing and movement can metabolize these effects, and how to create safety in a yoga space. Upon graduation, I immediately sought opportunities to teach, knowing wholeheartedly that I wanted to work with populations who had experienced significant trauma in their lives. I believed then and feel strongly now that teaching what I need to learn will positively impact me and my students alike.

A studio near our home gave me an opportunity to teach yoga and my wife and I started a company called *Twisted Oak Yoga and Wellness*. (It is named Twisted Oak because my wife and I are high school sweethearts, and I used the analogy that we are like two oak trees that grew together side by side with the crowns of the trees intermingling - hence the name). We offer online classes, a growing video library and have hosted numerous in person retreats where we explore movement, breathwork, and deliberate cold and heat exposure to introduce various modalities to our students so that they too can learn techniques to regulate their own nervous systems.

I find the most impactful teaching encounters are in spaces where individuals who have experienced significant trauma reside. For example, I have a deep reverence for Indigenous culture (which has helped me on my healing journey),

and I held a weekly yoga class at an Indigenous healing lodge where the male residents were serving time federally. I found this space to be tremendously meaningful and it led to me participating alongside the men at several sweat lodge ceremonies. I currently teach a yoga class at a residential addiction treatment facility for men where I continue to marvel at the courage and vulnerability of the students as they work on creating a better life for themselves. Lastly, I set up a weekly yoga class at a police facility for police officers and social agency partners. In addition to teaching yoga, I have been given the chance to speak at various conferences and courses on how policing has impacted my mental health. Police officers commit suicide at a rate significantly higher

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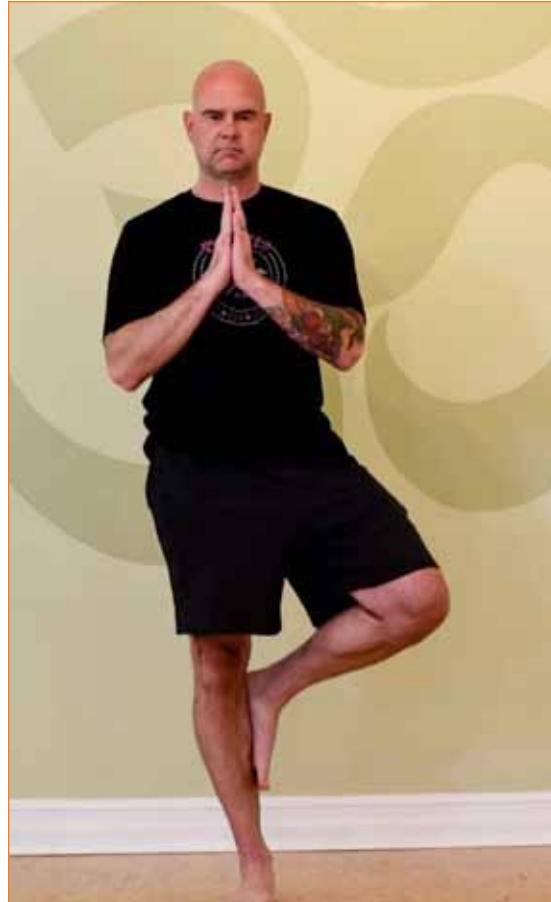
YAA Certified Teacher and police officer Scott Jones draws on his experience to discuss practical thoughts on how to effectively teach trauma affected populations such as police, incarcerated indigenous men and men in residential addiction treatment facilities.

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than the general population and I feel compelled to share my experience and the steps I have taken to metabolize my trauma in the hopes that others in the first responder community (in the broadest sense) will explore their own healing. Yoga has been a key spoke in a hub of activities that has undoubtedly increased my resilience and wellness.

What has yoga taught me? I have discovered that I can regulate my nervous system through movement, being present in my body, and breath work but this must be done in a self-compassionate way. As I have grown as a yoga teacher, I have been able to bring in the skills I learned in policing to help co-regulate students who attend my classes, even (or perhaps especially) those who are significantly dysregulated, and this teaching has further enhanced my personal wellbeing. The gift of my trauma is that it allows me into spaces where folks have traumatic histories, and these same people trust me to guide them on their wellness path. I am constantly shown that we as human beings are far more alike than different, and trauma affects us all. Our most vulnerable citizens have inspiring resilience and while there is no resilience 'finish line' for any of us, their strength in the face of tremendously difficult life circumstances is inspirational and should be acknowledged and celebrated. While I am far more able to tolerate the day-to-day stressors that occur, I still experience dysregulation in my nervous system. My yoga practice reaffirms that that is ok, and I can weather the inevitable storms. I use my own journey to assist others in finding their own restorative way, and I have seen time and time again that displaying vulnerability in these spaces is not a weakness but a sign of strength and courage. Healing can only occur through connection – connection that can and does occur through the magic of yoga.

Scott Jones is Co-Owner of 'Twisted Oak Yoga and Wellness', Co-Host of the podcast 'Just Us on Justice and Other Things' and a Superintendent with the Edmonton Police Service. Website: Twistedoakyogaandwellness.offeringtree.com Instagram: @scottjones1859 Linkedln: Scott Jones



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ARTICLE

YOGA AND DREAMS

by Erin Michie

I have been working with dreams longer than I've been practicing yoga. My attention to dreams has waxed and waned, but my interest has always remained. I started dream work, as I call the attention I turn toward dreams, back in my twenties. I began with a Jungian approach, reading books, attending lectures, workshops and dream circles. Although there are lineages that work with dreams in specific ways, I might be described as more of a "free-range" student.

In 2020, during the first months of the pandemic, people all over the world reported increased dream recall. The concurrent rise in online resources reinvigorated my enthusiasm, and I enjoyed access to new teachers and perspectives. At that time a skilled friend and I began sharing dreams and I continue to receive great benefit from our collaboration.

This revitalization of my dream work has brought a deeper appreciation of the skills, teachings and practices that I have garnered from my yoga studies over the years, and I find it compelling to look at dreams through a yogic lens.

I have wandered away from an interpretative approach, one that is more analytical, or cognitive, that tends to decode symbols and look at psychological projections. Now I prefer more experiential ways of engaging with dreams and take a more somatic approach.

Movement pioneer Thomas Hanna defined the word *soma* as body awareness from within. This is also called interoception, or the ability to sense internal signals from your body. Practicing hatha yoga offers the advantage of a somatic capability not possessed by everyone in our western culture. Yoga practitioners cultivate the skills of interoception as well as proprioception, which is the ability to feel your body in space, or the awareness of the position of your body.

Many yoga practitioners learn to track the *koshas*, the layers or sheaths covering our True Nature (a term I like for what is also called Pure Awareness or Consciousness). A yoga practice can help us learn to feel the subtle (or not-so-subtle!) effect of thoughts on our physical bodies, breath and emotions, and the interplay between them. Yoga practitioners may also be more aware of neuroception, how our nervous system reacts as it encounters stimuli that it deems either safe or dangerous, and be more adept at self-regulating after we have these subconscious reactions. All are useful skills when working with dreams.

Dreams might be described as movements of the *Vijnanamaya kosha* (the sheath of intellect or cognition) and are like any other changing phenomena that we can learn to witness. They might be labelled as distractions, or (bizarre) stories. Yet I have found that if I approach dreams with presence and curiosity, they reveal surprising resources and a mysterious, creative intelligence at work. Wholeness, freedom and equanimity sometimes emerge, and I have had profound experiences and glimpses as True Nature breaks through the *koshas*.

The ancient teachings found in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* contain a few references to dreams, including:

Sutra 1.38: *Svapna-Nidra-Jnana Alambanam-Va*

Translations and commentaries from the Sanskrit text vary widely with each teacher/translator. One of the simplest and most open versions I have found is from Sandra Sammartino: "Also meditate on knowledge that comes during sleep." Richard Miller describes 1.38 in the grouping of sutras 1.34-1.39 that list methods of attaining emotional stability and overcoming distractions on the path to enlightenment (*kaivalya*).

Dream work is an effective way to raise awareness of our biases, blind spots, shadows or *samskaras*. *Samskaras* are our inclinations and patterns, conditioning and traumas, and can be found in dreams, just as they are expressed in our daily lives and bodies. Called “bias control” in dream work, these can also be approached in yoga by investigating *dvesha* (avoidance or aversion) or any of the other five *kleshas* (listed in Sutra 2.3 and translated as the hindrances or causes of suffering).

Dreams are useful in and of themselves and there is scientific research that offers theories. In my experience, dreams reveal a rich and diverse inner community. Often our dream figures express or dramatize our shadow - everything we don't want to identify with, or that we judge as “not us.” At times, this shadow is a “golden” shadow – full of positive and life-affirming qualities.

Some nightmares cloak *samskaras* and shadows in terrifying guises and situations. Meeting and developing a relationship with these figures and energies takes patience, skill and support. We can't just do inner work in isolation. At times we need an experienced and trusted helper – a friend, relative, teacher, mentor or therapist. Nightmares that stem from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) need skilled assistance. Some traumas remain protected and hidden and need a wise, loving community, a *sangha*, if they are to be met and held with enough support.

Fear and stress narrow our perspectives, block our energy and our ability to receive assistance, and recognize resources. Dreams contain inherent guidance and can help us reduce stress and uncover better routes through challenges.

But dream work doesn't always involve exploring our dark places. It can also bring fresh ideas and insights. Perhaps of most consequence, dreams can open us to a better flow of *prana* (vital life force), supporting our health, joy and ability to be of service. I have often felt *prana* moving, or a softening or expansion, during and after dream work.

As I age and continue practicing yoga, I develop a better ability to feel the currents of *prana* that flow through the *nadis* (the channels in the *pranamaya* kosha or energy body). Although more subtle than sensations in the *anamaya kosha* (physical body), sensations of *prana* can signal a

release of held tension and blocks and reawaken our inner awareness or interoception.

One of the more experiential methods of dream work is to re-enter a dream while awake. More than a century ago, Carl Jung developed a widely-used technique called “active imagination” in order to bridge the gap between the conscious and unconscious mind. This involves picking an image from a dream and letting your mind wander in a relaxed, meditative state, as Sutra 1.38 suggests. Active imagination can be expanded upon, and “dream re-entry,” or dreaming a dream forward, can result in illuminating exploration.

An ancient practice that has been employed by people in different cultures over the ages and has regained popularity in modern times, is to formulate a question or request before sleep. This is called “dream incubation” and is essentially an act of intention that calls for an open mind, persistence (as the request may need clarifying and repeating over a few nights) and receptivity. I used this practice to ask for a dream that could ground and illustrate some of the ideas in this article. Following is a section from a dream I received:

I'm with two people, one is a beloved teacher and the other a close, long-time friend. We're in a warm climate, on a shore near a river with water that's opaque and bright green, a shade that is slightly olive. I see my friend swimming in it. My teacher is in the background, not visible, but I feel her presence. I want to join my friend swimming in the river but am hesitant and slightly fearful. I gather my courage and dive in and immediately realize that I have dived in near a large, substantial tree with bare branches that was completely submerged and hidden. I feel lucky that I didn't dive into the tree and hurt myself.

When I awoke and wrote this dream down, my mind immediately started analyzing. That is just what our minds do. I took note of associations and memories. I remembered that the river was a similar colour to a river I spent time near as a child. I occasionally swam in it in summers but was always a bit afraid of the snapping turtles that it held. I also recalled canoeing on rivers, where trees in the water could be dangerous. I took note of these thoughts and put them aside.



“Night Swim, Salish Sea”
Hand coloured print by Karen McDiarmid

Then I began looking for help or resources in the dream. I noted my teacher's presence in the background, and that of my long-time friend already in the river. I took some time to feel the supportive effect of their presence. I recalled the joy of watching my friend swimming in several waking life experiences. She loves to swim and I have seen her happily swim in many natural places – rivers, lakes, streams and the ocean. I also noted the warm climate in the dream and felt the effect of the warm temperature in my body, which was relaxing. In waking life, I like swimming too, but as I age, am more sensitive to cold air and water. Then I sat with the shade of green of my dream river, and felt it had a grounding effect. At this point I sensed into the river as a whole, and felt it brimming with life and movement, and felt a slightly enlivening effect in my body.

I gathered all these resources and re-entered the river in my imagination. With these resources to support me, I also recalled the fear, contraction and shock I felt after seeing the large, hidden tree and realizing I had narrowly missed diving into one of the sharp ends of its bare branches. But once I was in the river again, I saw myself taking hold of one

of the branches. This action arose spontaneously. It felt good to grasp a branch of the big, heavy, submerged tree. Doing so, I could slow down, pause and rest for awhile. I could be in the river and move in my own time, instead of being carried downstream too fast.

The potentially dangerous tree transformed into another inner resource. Further insights have followed, and I began carrying this image with me. I have re-visited the feeling of holding onto the branch while in the river. I find it steady and regulating to call upon the felt sense of me holding onto the tree branch when I feel I am going too fast, or at times feel swept along by other people's agendas or energies. When I add in some yoga practices, I can more often “hold my own.”

Erin Michie is a senior teacher and board member of the YAA and is certified through Sandra Sammartino and in Richard Miller's iRest®. She integrates many modalities, and offers private sessions, custom classes and workshops. erin.michie@gmail.com

YAA MEMBERSHIP PERKS

Perks for YAA members have seen some recent changes. Recordings for free class offerings (Senior Teacher classes & Professional Development Webinars), free teacher directory and events listings will only be available to Full or Lifetime members. Associate members will still have access to the free classes as they are live-streamed. Full membership with the YAA is a great value at only \$30/year or \$350/lifetime. Here are a few of the benefits you receive with your membership at each level:

Associate Membership (\$10/year - 1st year free for all Alberta residents):

- Electronic subscription to the *Yoga Bridge* newsletter, a valuable enrichment tool for all yoga practitioners.
- Free workshop attendance and voting privileges at our Annual General Meeting.
- High quality yoga props, mats and accessories available at excellent prices. Locally sourced where possible.
- Free live streamed online classes showcasing YAA Senior Teachers twice a month.
- Free live streamed professional development webinars for yoga teachers.
- Borrowing privileges from our extensive library of yoga books.
- Opportunity to purchase advertising space in the *Yoga Bridge* newsletter.
- Opportunity to participate in YAA workshops priced below \$80.

Full Membership (\$30/year or \$350/Lifetime) receives all of the benefits of the Associate Membership PLUS:

- Printed versions of the *Yoga Bridge* newsletter mailed to your home or business. (Ask us for complimentary copies to distribute to your community).
- Free directory listings for yoga teachers on the Find A Teacher page of our website.
- Free event listings on our website and in the *Yoga Bridge* newsletter, circulated to over 1500 yoga practitioners province-wide.
- Access recordings for free Senior Teacher Showcase Series & Professional Development Webinars.

- Free community gatherings with professional development workshops.
- Opportunity to participate in YAA workshops priced at or above \$80 including internationally renowned teachers.
- Opportunities to deepen your practice through our Immersion Program, apply for Teacher Training and Advanced Training Levels. All training levels are pay-as-you-go from qualified teachers anywhere in the world. Mentorship with YAA Senior Teachers close to home.
- Practicing teachers can apply for individualized assessment through our Equivalency Certification Program with credit for previous qualified training.
- Discounted insurance rates for teachers.
- YAA Certified Teachers get access to community job postings, outreach and committee placements, and senior teachers can act as mentors for the TTP and upgrading levels.

As a member of the YAA, you are supporting the YAA's mission to promote a high quality of life, connect communities, increase activity, mobility, and engagement, and improve the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being for all Albertans, regardless of circumstances, through equitable access to education and participation in the diverse styles and traditional teachings of yoga. An inclusive umbrella organization, the YAA offers yoga to the public, raises the standard for high quality teacher training and upgrading, and has an active outreach program that brings yoga to underserved and marginalized communities.

Please consider upgrading your membership and/or making a donation to the YAA to help us serve our communities better and continue adding great perks like these to your membership. All donations over \$20 are eligible for an income tax receipt. Upgrade now and your yearly membership is good until the end of 2023. You can purchase several years at once or purchase a lifetime membership and avoid the hassle of renewals for life! Call the office at 780-427-8776 or see the website at yoga.ca to pay online.

Thank you for continuing to be a part of our community!



YAA EVENT CALENDAR

- E** Edmonton & Area **RD** Red Deer & Area
- C** Calgary & Area
- O** Online
- H** Hybrid (Online and In-Person)
- ** Denotes YAA Intermediate or Senior Teacher Status
- Events in colour are organized by YAA

All events subject to change due to COVID-19

Full YAA Members:

No charge to advertise your events here and also on the YAA website.

YAA Advanced Training Levels require that upgrading hours be taught by YAA Intermediate or Senior Teachers** (or equivalent).

YAA Workshop & Classes Fees & Cancellation Policy

Registration Registration with full payment to the YAA office is required for all YAA workshops, TTP classes, retreats, etc.

Transfers Transfer of your registration payment to another participant is not permitted.

Cancellations There are no refunds for cancellations received within two weeks prior to any YAA event. Cancellation fees will apply when cancellations are received more than two weeks prior to the YAA event, in which case you MAY qualify for an 80% refund if your space can be filled by another registrant. Cancellation due to illness (with a doctor's note,) or due to unforeseen emergencies, MAY qualify for a refund depending on the overall event budget, which can only be evaluated after conclusion of the event.

START ANYTIME

Start Anytime E H YAA

100-Hour Immersion Program, 200-Hour Teacher Training, 500-, 750-, 1,000-Hour Advanced Training Levels. Mentor with YAA Senior Teachers. Pay-as-you-go. See www.yoga.ca/training for information.

Start Anytime O YAA

Five 3-hr Video modules of Anatomy and Physiology for students or teachers w/ Paula Carnegie Fehr**. \$150 (\$200 for Certificate of Completion if an optional assignment is submitted to fulfil the 15-hr YAA-TTP anatomy requirement). Info.: Paula: hiddenmessages.ca@gmail.com. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>.

Start Anytime O

Meditation Course w/ Kat Boehm**. The Curious Heart: Online Meditation and Mindfulness Course pauseandconnect.teachable.com

Start Anytime O

Life Anatomy: It's FUNctional w/ Sherry Ogg. For yoga teachers and students. Online, correspondence and live. micromoves.com/therapists.asp. info@micromoves.com. 780-414-0273. Ad p. 9.

Start Anytime O

GrowingSpaceForHealthandWealth.com. Ad pg. 16.

Throughout 2023 Kootenay Bay, BC Karma Yoga (selfless service) programs at Yasodhara Ashram (monthly intake dates). Transform work into service while living in spiritual community. No fee - contributions toward your stay are welcome. Visit yasodhara.org or call 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 19.

MARCH 2023

March 8-April 26 E

Trauma Informed Yoga w/ Jeremy Bell. 6-7pm #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca

March 10-12 E H YAA

TTP Spring Teaching Skills Workshop with Karen Hamdon**. Friday 7-9pm, Saturday & Sunday 9am-4:30pm. \$225. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edm. OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/> Ad p. 21.

March 11 RD

Anatomy for Your Yoga Body w/Paula Carnegie Fehr**. Learn how yoga affects your body anatomy and how your body affects your yoga. 9-3pm. \$50 (\$25 for prior registrants of Know Your Yoga Body online course). www.hiddenmessages.ca Paula 403-352-3398. In person only.

March 11 & 12 O

Session I: Yoga in the Bhagavad Gita w/ Sudhir Tiwari, Senior teacher of Kaivalyadhama. Zoom. 10am -12 pm. \$80 for both sessions (See Mar.18). Visit: www.yogawithneeru.com; Register: yogawithneeru@gmail.com

March 11 E

Anatomy 101 Workshop w/ Lisa Workman. 9-12pm. \$63. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

March 12 E

Healing Journey: Meet Your Spirit/Anne Belohorec. 11-12:30pm. \$30 (Yft members \$25). 780-416-4211; info@yogafortoday.ca or www.yogafortoday.ca

March 13-24 E

SOYA 300hr Professional Upgrade to RYT500, Module B, \$4195+gst for two modules. Mod A & B required for certification. Pay in full save \$300. Becky 403-710-4294. Ad p. 17.

March 15-19 E

200 Hr Teacher Training Program Commences. 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

March 18 & 19 O

Session II: Parallels between the Bhagavad Gita & Patanjali yoga sutras w/ Sudhir Tiwari, senior teacher of Kaivalyadhama. Zoom, 10-12noon. Cost \$80 for both sessions. www.yogawithneeru.com or email yogawithneeru@gmail.com to register.

March 18 - June 3 E H

Yoga instructors' training course w/ Linda Dumont** & Freya Giroux. 9-5 p.m. 12 Saturdays. \$1700. In person at 9533 -106 A Avenue or online. Linda 780-975-3903 or dumontlc@hotmail.com.

March 19-25 O

Week Long Meditation w/ Rebecca Hung. 6:30am-7:00am. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

March 19 E H

Realignment Yoga for Golfers w/ Candace Wickins. 10am-11:30pm. \$35. #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

March 19 E

Family Yoga w/ Hayley Markel. 1:30pm-2:15pm. \$20. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

March 19 C

Equinox Ceremony Clarity Breathwork & Live Didgeridoo w/ Daemond Mano, Trevor Uruski + Guests, Unlock the wisdom of the breath, 6 - 9pm, \$65, <https://www.yogamcc.com/workshops> 403-251-9642.

March 21 O YAA

Senior Teachers Showcase Series. Tuesdays with Mugs McConnell. 8-9pm on Zoom. Get to know Alberta's Teachers! Twice/month FREE for all YAA members with a variety of YAA Senior Teachers. Zoom link will be noted on the registration receipt and recordings available in between classes. Register <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 6.**

March 24 - 26 C H

Acutonics Level 1 Training with Erin Taylor, Foundational Sound Healing, 3 full days, \$650, <https://www.yogamcc.com/acutonics>, 403-251-YOGA(9642)

March 24-25 O YAA

Trauma Informed Training: Further Explorations with Dr. Paula Fayerman. Friday 7-9pm, Saturday 10am-1pm Livestreamed via Zoom only – recordings not available. FREE for all YAA Certified Teachers & TTP Students. (Openings for Full YAA Members may be added later if space is available. Contact Donalee at yaa@yoga.ca to be put on the waiting list.) Register <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>.**

March 25 E H

Yoga for Brain Health and Longevity w/Satwinder Sran. 2:00pm-4:00pm. \$44. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

March 25 C H

Pelvic Floor Health Yoga with Yoga Therapist Sherry Norman, This workshop is designed as an introduction to pelvic floor health from a yoga perspective, 1pm - 3:30pm, \$50, <https://www.yogamcc.com/workshops> 403-251-9642

March 25 RD

Anatomy for Your Yoga Body w/Paula Carnegie Fehr**. Learn how yoga affects your body anatomy and how your body affects your yoga. 9-3pm. \$50(\$25 for prior registrants of Know Your Yoga Body online course). www.hiddenmessages.ca Paula 403-352-3398. In person only.

March 27 - May 29 C H

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) with Dr. Mark Brown. These practices are based on some of the best techniques developed from the Wisdom Traditions & also in the field of Neuropsychology, Positive Psychology, Mindfulness, Cognitive Therapy, and Self Compassion, 8 weeks 7pm to 9pm, \$499, <https://www.yogamcc.com/mbsr> 403-251-9642.

APRIL 2023

April 2-June 11 E H

Kundalini Yoga, Meditation and Chanting w/ Satwinder Sran. 3:00pm-4:30pm. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

April 2 E

3-hr Hatha Training w/Gerda Krebs. 12:30-3:30pm. \$50 (Yft members \$45). 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

April 3 & 17 O YAA

Senior Teachers Showcase Series. Mondays with Rosemary Nogue. 8-9pm on Zoom. Get to know Alberta's Teachers! Twice/month FREE for all YAA members with a variety of YAA Senior Teachers. Zoom link will be noted on the registration receipt and recordings available in between classes. Register <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 6.**

April 5 - May 10 E

Women's Yoga for Pelvic Floor Health Workshop w/ Val Spak. \$78. 6-7 pm Laurier Heights Community Hall wisewarriorsyoga@gmail.com or 780-945-9507.

April 6 - May 11 C

Critical Alignment Backbends & Inversions with Marnie Harfield. Using specialized props, slow movement and breath, the practice helps to increase mobility and strength, ultimately allowing the body to move in the way it is intended, intuitively and tension free. 6 weeks 2pm - 3:15pm, \$140, <https://www.yogamcc.com/yoga-registered-classes> 403-251-9642.

April 8 E

Fundamentals/Foundations of Breath work w/Neeru. 10:00am-12:00pm. \$44. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

April 14-16 E H YAA

Exploring Yoga in Community: A retreat Experience; Asana, Pranayama, Meditation & Restorative Practices. \$280 (sliding scale). Fri 6:30pm-Sun 1pm. Providence Renewal Centre &/or live online; contact Anita 780-432-7152 for info. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 14

April 15 E

Gentle Yoga Using a Chair with Linda Dumont** and Freya Giroux. 1-4pm. 9533 106A Avenue, Edmonton. \$60. Linda 780 975 3903 or dumontlc@hotmail.com

April 16 E

Family Yoga w/ Hayley Markel. 1:30pm-2:15pm. \$20. #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

April 16/23-Jan 28/24 O

SOYA 200hr Foundational Yoga Teacher Training Online, live via Zoom, 3 Sundays each month, \$3200+gst. Save \$300 when you pay in full! Contact Becky. 403-710-4294. Ad p. 19.

April 17 O YAA

Senior Teachers Showcase Series. Mondays with Rosemary Nogue. 8-9pm on Zoom. Get to know Alberta's Teachers! Twice/month FREE for all YAA members with a variety of YAA Senior Teachers. Zoom link will be noted on the registration receipt and recordings available in between classes. Register <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 6.**

April 21 C

Family & Systemic Constellations Facilitator Training with Rosina Wellmann. Unresolved issues from the past may cause the heart to shut down. If left unattended this disruption in the flow of love carries across generations, ripples into the shadows of the family landscape and can emerge as illness, emotional difficulties and broken relationships, 7 wkends over 14 months, \$3,500, <https://www.yogamcc.com/constellations> 403-251-9642.

April 21-23 E

Gentle & Restorative 15 hr Teacher Training w/ Glenda Sartore. Fri- Sat 1-6pm. Sun 9am-4pm. \$400 (earlybird \$360). Yoga for Today 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

April 22 E H YAA

Core Curriculum Class - TTP & Upgrading: Standing Basics; Origins of Yoga with Neil Haggard. 9:30am-3:30pm. \$80. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edmonton OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 21.**

April 22 E

Gardening Ready Yoga w/ Lisa Workman. 9:00am-11:00am. \$44. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

Register for all YAA Classes and Workshops at yoga.ca/yaa-store

April 22 E

Prenatal Yoga with Linda Dumont** and Freya Giroux. 1-4pm. 9533 106A Avenue, Edmonton. \$60. Linda, 780 975 3903 or dumontlc@hotmail.com

April 23-May 14 E

Therapeutic Yoga for Sleep w/ Dr. Thamarai Moorthy. 11:00am-12:15pm. \$150. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

April 27 O YAA

Professional Development Series Webinar – Yoga for Trauma: Perspectives from a First Responder with Scott Jones, YAA Certified Teacher & police officer. 8-9:30pm on Zoom. Experiences & practical suggestions on how to effectively teach trauma affected populations. FREE Livestream for YAA Members. Recordings available with Full/Lifetime Membership only. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 25.

April 28-May 7 C H

Tibetan Bon Buddhism Meditation Teacher Training with Lama Geshe YongDong, Unique opportunity to learn to teach meditation from a Lama Geshe. 2 weekends, \$888, <https://www.yogamcc.com/tibetan> 403-251-9642

April 29 C

Yoga Workshop for the Neck w/ Mantrini Mikuska. 1-3pm. \$30.00. 403-809-1402. harmonystudio@protonmail.com

April 29 E

Journey Through the Chakras w/ Sebastien & Jeremy. 6pm-8:30pm. Yoga Within. #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

April 30-May 11 H Florida

SOYA 300hr Professional Upgrade to RYT500 Online/ Florida. Module A immersion in New Smyrna Beach, FL, \$4195+gst for two modules. Mod A and B req for cert. Save \$300 - pay in full! Becky 403-710-4294.

MAY 2023

May 2 & 16 O YAA

Senior Teachers Showcase Series. Tuesdays w/ Lynnda Sharp. 8-9pm on Zoom. Get to know Alberta's Teachers! Twice/month FREE for all YAA members with a variety of YAA Senior Teachers. Zoom link is noted on the registration receipt. Recordings available in bet-ween classes. Reg. <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 6.**

May 4-11 Kootenay Bay, BC

Moving into Stillness: Deep Relaxation and Healing. A guided retreat at Yasodhara Ashram. Fees vary based on accommodation. yasodhara.org 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 19.

May 5 E H

Monthly Meditation w/ Rebecca Hung. 7pm-8pm. \$18. #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

May 5-7 E

Opening our Hearts: Cultivating Goodwill, Compassion, Appreciative Joy & Equanimity with Kristina Baré. Registration is a sliding scale by dana & opens on March 1, 2023 at edmontoninsightmeditation.ca. Email edmontoninsight@gmail.com for more information.

May 6 E H YAA

Core Curriculum Class - TTP & Upgrading: Seated Poses; History Yoga in the West with Neil Haggard. 9:30am-3:30pm. \$80. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edmonton OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 21.**

May 6 E

Prenatal Retreat w/Chantal Eder & Colleen Stadlwieser. A day of prenatal yoga, meditation, birth art, & a birth blessing. 9:30-2:30pm \$125. www.chantalederyoga.com Chantal 780-999-3203

May 7 E

Chakra Meditation- mudras, mantras, scents, colours, exercises. With Linda Dumont** and Freya Giroux. 1 - 4 p.m. 9533 106A Avenue, Edmonton. \$60. Linda, 780 975 3903 or dumontlc@hotmail.com.

May 7 E

3 hr Hatha Training w/Gerda Krebs. 12:30-3:30pm. \$50 (Yft members \$45). Yoga for Today 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

May 8-July 2 E

New 8 wk session begins. \$128 (\$115.20 senior). Yoga for Today 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

May 12 C H

Restorative Teacher Training w/ Yoga Therapists Anne Cox & Tracy Roberge. A restorative yoga practice is a wonderful way to bring balance back to your system and allow you to fully rest and restore yourself completely, 2 weekends Fri Eve + Sat/Sun Days, \$888, <https://www.yogamcc.com/restorative> 403-251-9642

May 16 O YAA

Senior Teacher Showcase Series w/ Lynnda Sharp. Free to YAA Members. Details: May 2; Ad p. 6.**

May 25 O YAA

Professional Development Series Webinar – Yoga and Grief: Developing Grief Fluency as a Yoga Teacher with Sandy Ayre, YAA Intermediate Teacher. 8-9:30pm on Zoom. Make your yoga class a grief-safe experience and increase support for those who are grieving. FREE Livestream for YAA Members. Recordings available with Full/Lifetime Membership only. YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 17.

May 27 O YAA

YAA's 47th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Noon: Election of Members at Large, Year-End Reports. 2:15pm: Workshop with Richard Miller. "Tapping into Unbreakable Well-Being". No charge for members but please pre-register <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/> to receive Zoom link. Ad p. 7.**

May 27 E

Prenatal Yoga and Birth Blessing w/ Chantal Eder & Full Circle Birth Collective. Gentle prenatal yoga followed by a special birth blessing for parents to be. 6-8pm \$50 www.chantalederyoga.com Chantal 780-999-3203.

May 27 C

Yoga Workshop for the Shoulders with Mantrini Mikuska at Harmony Yoga Pilates Studio, Sat 1-3 pm. \$30.00. 809-1402; harmonystudio@protonmail.com

May 28 E H

Healing Journey to meet Ancestor & Awakened Heart w/ Anne Belohorec. 11-12:30pm. \$30 (Yft memb \$25). 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

May 29-June 2 Lake Louise

Immersive Trauma Integration and Yoga Wellness Training and Retreat w/ Lisa Scadolari & Lisa Gill. 1-289-213-8355.

May 31 & June 28 E

Pregnancy Circle at Clair-i-tea w/Chantal Eder and Asha Thomas. Meditation for birth prep, birth art, community crafting, and gentle movement. 6:30 - 8:30pm \$20 www.chantalederyoga.com Chantal 780-999-3203.

JUNE 2023

June 1 YAA

Deadline for submission of articles (editor@yoga.ca) for Autumn issue of Yoga Bridge.

June 1-6 Kootenay Bay, BC

Sacred Space: Yoga and Nature. A guided retreat at Yasodhara Ashram. Fees vary based on accommodation. Visit yasodhara.org or call 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 19.

June 2 E H

Monthly Meditation w/ Rebecca Hung. 7pm-8pm. \$18. #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

June 3 E H YAA

Core Curriculum Class - TTP & Upgrading: Restorative Poses; Definitions of Yoga with Donalee Campbell. 9:30am-3:30pm. \$80. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edmonton OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 21.**

June 4 E

3 hr Hatha Training w/Gerda Krebs. 12:30-3:30pm. \$50 (Yft members \$45). 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

June 4 E

Healing Journey: Dream Catcher & Forgiveness Ceremony w/Anne Belohorec. 11-12:30pm. \$30 (Yftmemb \$25.) 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

June 5 & 19 O YAA

Senior Teachers Showcase Series. Mondays w/ Kari Dul (Intermediate). 8-9pm on Zoom. Get to know Alberta's Teachers! Twice/month FREE for all YAA members with a variety of YAA Senior Teachers. Zoom link is noted on the registration receipt. Recordings available in bet-ween classes. Reg. <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 6.

June 7 - December 3 H Mexico

SOYA 300hr Professional Upgrade to RYT500 Hybrid Online/Mexico, Module A online & B in person, both modules req for cert, \$4195+gst. Becky 403-710-4294.

June 11-17 O

Week Long Meditation w/ Rebecca Hung. 6:30am-7am. #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

June 11-23 Kootenay Bay, BC

Yoga Journey: Yasodhara Ashram's signature guided retreat. Fees vary based on accommodation. On-site at B.C. Ashram. Visit yasodhara.org 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 19.

Register for all YAA Classes and Workshops at yoga.ca/yaa-store

June 19 O YAA

Senior Teachers Showcase Series. Mondays w/ Kari Dul. 8-9pm on Zoom. Get to know Alberta's Teachers! Twice/month FREE for all YAA members with a variety of YAA Senior Teachers. Zoom link is noted on the registration receipt. Recordings available in between classes. Reg. <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 6.

June 23 E H

Summer Solstice Celebration - Yoga, Meditation and Chanting w/ Satwinder Sran. 6:30pm-8:30pm. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. www.yogawithin.ca.

JULY 2023

July

West Coast Retreats with Ty Chandler & Sharoni Fixler. Join us in beautiful Sooke, BC for deep practice and wonderful community, with the guidance of expert teachers. Two weeks offered. Calgary Iyengar Yoga. 403.457.4070; deanna@calgaryiyengaryoga.com; www.calgaryiyengaryoga.com/wcric

July 1 YAA

Deadline for Initial Certification and Recertification applications for September approval. cert@yoga.ca.

July 3-19 E

SOYA 200hr Foundational Yoga Teacher Training immersion, \$3200+gst. Save \$300 when you pay in full! Contact Becky 403-710-4294. Ad pg. 17.

July 3 – August 27 E

New 8 wk session begins. \$128 (\$115.20 senior). 780-416-4211. info@yogafortoday.ca; www.yogafortoday.ca

July 6-11 Kootenay Bay, BC

Living from Love: Tuning Into Your Heart's Messages. A guided retreat at Yasodhara Ashram. Fees vary based on accommodation. yasodhara.org 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 17.

July 12-16 E H YAA

A Mindfulness Meditation & Gentle Yoga Retreat w/ Kavindu (Mexico) & Anita Sielecki** Wed. 3pm-Sun 1pm. Providence Renewal Centre and live online; For updates or info contact Anita 780-432-7152; sielecki@hotmail.com. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 6.

July 23-28 Kootenay Bay, BC

Finding Centre: Navigating Transition with Courage and Clarity. A guided retreat at Yasodhara Ashram. Fees vary based on accommodation. Visit yasodhara.org or call 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 17.

AUGUST 2023

August 1 YAA

Deadline for submission of Events & Advertisements to *Yoga Bridge Newsletter* (debbie@yoga.ca.)

August 4-6 Fernie, BC

All-levels Weekend Yoga Workshop with Sam Lloyd \$220 includes 11 hrs of yoga and a guided hike. For details Sam: samlloyd.yoga@gmail.com Ad p. 11.

August 20-27 Kootenay Bay, BC

Who Am I Now? Finding Purpose in a Changed World. A guided retreat at Yasodhara Ashram. Fees vary based on accommodation. yasodhara.org 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 17.

SEPTEMBER 2023

September-April/24

Yoga Training w/ Melanie Checknita. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. Visit website for more information. www.yogawithin.ca.

September 14-21 Kootenay Bay, BC

Moving into Stillness: Deep Relaxation and Healing. A guided retreat at Yasodhara Ashram. Fees vary based on accommodation. yasodhara.org 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 17.

September 16 E H YAA

Core Curriculum Class - TTP & Upgrading: Supine/Core; Yoga Sutras Pada 1 with Donalee Campbell**. 9:30am-3:30pm. \$80. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edmonton OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 21.

September 18-29 E

SOYA 300hr Professional Upgrade to RYT500, Mod A. Mod A and B req for certification. \$4195+gst for two modules. Pay in full & save \$300. Becky 403-710-4294.

September 22-24 E YAA

Exploring Yoga in Community: A retreat Experience; Asana, Pranayama, Meditation & Restorative Practices. \$280 (sliding scale). Fri 6:30pm-Sun 1pm. Providence Renewal Centre &/or live online; Anita 780-432-7152 for info. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 14.

September 22-December 1 O Kootenay Bay, BC

Yasodhara Ashram's Peace of Mind for Professionals course. Find greater harmony and ease in your career. Register for a free taster class at yasodhara.org or call 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 17.

September 24-October 1

Yoga Vacation to Ireland w/ Melanie Checknita. Yoga Within #302, 8135-102 St. 780-450-9642. Visit website for more information. www.yogawithin.ca.

OCTOBER 2023

Oct 12-14 O YAA

The Depth Teachings of Meditation, an 18 hr Live Streaming Retreat w/ Richard Miller** (USA) and Kirsten Guest (BC). Including BodySensing & Yoga Nidra practices. Updates & pre-registration at <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Information: Anita (780) 432-7152. Ad p. 2.

October 14-March 4/24 Lacombe

SOYA 200hr Foundational Yoga Teacher Training, meeting over 8 alternating weekends. \$3,200+gst. Save \$300 when you pay in full! Becky 403-710-4294. Ad p. 19.

October 15 YAA

Deadline for submission of Articles (editor@yoga.ca) Events and Advertisements (debbie@yoga.ca) for December issue *Yoga Bridge Newsletter*.

October 15-27 Kootenay Bay, BC

Yoga Journey: Yasodhara Ashram's signature guided retreat. Fees vary based on accommodation. On-site at B.C. Ashram. yasodhara.org 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 17.

October 20-22 E H YAA

TTP Fall Teaching Skills Workshop with Mary LeBlanc**. Friday 7-9pm, Saturday/Sunday 9am-4:30pm. \$225. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edm. OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Reg. YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad pg. 21.

October 31-Feb 1/24 H Costa Rica

SOYA 200hr Foundational Yoga Teacher Training Hybrid Online/Costa Rica, live via Zoom twice weekly, conclude in the jungles of Costa Rica. \$3200+gst. Save \$300 when you pay in full! Contact Becky 403-710-4294.

NOVEMBER - JANUARY 2024

November 1 YAA

Deadline for Initial Certification and Recertification applications for January approval. cert@yoga.ca.

November 4 E H YAA

Core Curriculum Class - TTP & Upgrading: Hip Openers; Yoga Sutras Pada 2 with Teddy Hyndman**. 9:30am-3:30pm. \$80. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edmonton OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 21.

December 1-3 E H YAA

Exploring Yoga in Community: A retreat Experience; Asana, Pranayama, Meditation & Restorative Practices. \$280 (sliding scale). Fri 6:30pm-Sun 1pm. Providence Renewal Centre &/or live online; contact Anita 780-432-7152 for info. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 14.

December 9 E H YAA

Core Curriculum Class - TTP & Upgrading: Forward Bends; 8 Limbs of Yoga with Teddy Hyndman**. 9:30am-3:30pm. \$80. Room #8, 3rd Floor, Percy Page Centre, 11759 Groat Rd, Edmonton OR livestream via Zoom. Hours count towards Teacher Training or Advanced Training Levels. Register YAA 780-427-8776 or <https://yoga.ca/yaa-store/>. Ad p. 21.

January-April, 2024 Kootenay Bay, BC

Yoga Development Course: Yasodhara Ashram's 3-month deep dive into authentic yoga. Fees vary based on accommodation. Visit yasodhara.org or call 1-800-661-8711. Ad p. 17.

January 27 - February 10, 2024.

Yoga Spiritual Journey to India w/ Karen & Lawrence. \$3,300 includes accommodation, meals, classes, excursions, ground transport, admissions, donations, ayurveda, etc. Contact khamdon@shaw.ca or lldombro@shaw.ca.

Register for all YAA Classes and Workshops at yoga.ca/yaa-store

FEATURED YOGA PROP

Mala Beads Hand-Made

- Locally made by YAA member
- Hand-Tied in meditative state
- \$108
- Wood, Seeds and semi-precious stones
- Earrings \$25.



Mala Beads

Mala beads are so much more than simply a beautiful accessory. The word mala is Sanskrit for “garland”. Mala beads date back thousands of years and are traditionally used to focus the mind during meditative practices. A mala necklace consists of 108 beads and a central, larger bead called the guru (teacher) or meru (mountain) bead. The guru/meru bead is said to hold the energy that is generated during our practice and is not counted, touched or crossed over. Typically, the mala is draped over the middle finger of the right hand and each bead is counted using the right thumb until the guru/meru bead is reached, although the technique may vary between traditions or lineages. To begin the next round, simply flip the mala over and go back the way you came. A mala can be used to count mantras, affirmations, intentions or even breaths, and wearing a mala can be a reminder of our practice, affirmations and intentions. Mala beads come in a wide variety of colours, designs and materials, including wood, seeds and semi-precious stones. Our high-quality malas are handmade locally and the beads are individually knotted, making them more resilient and easier to count. Stop by the shop to see our selection.

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PROPS AND MORE



* Made in AB. Prices subject to change without notice.

Prices include GST

BLANKETS

Indian Blankets: white, cotton \$47

* BLOCKS Made in AB (Green chipped blocks no longer available from manufacturer)

* Soft & Lightweight Grey Blocks: 2" x 8" x 12", 20 or more @ \$11.50 \$12

* Black Foam Bricks: 4" x 6" x 9", 20 or more @ \$13.50 \$16

* Wood Blocks: 3" x 4.5" x 9". \$25

* BOLSTERS Washable cover. Hand-made Alberta with care. Assorted fabrics/colours

* Large Oval: 11" diameter x 28" long, members: 15 or more @\$78.00) \$82

* Medium Oval: 9" diameter x 28" long, members: 15 or more @\$68.00) \$72

* Small Round: 6" diameter x 22" long \$50

* BOOK Yoga Therapy for Backs by David McAmmond & Anita Sielecki \$38

CHAKRA BANNERS white background \$32

* EYEBAGS flaxseed, unscented, with washable cover \$15

JOY-A-TOES soothing and healing stretch for your feet and toes (S, L) \$31

MAGNESIUM bath salt or spray; subtle energy \$35

MAGNETIC HEALING JEWELRY necklaces, bracelets, earrings \$15 / \$10 / \$5

* MALA BEAD NECKLACES AND EARRINGS crafted in Alberta..... \$108 / \$25

MEDITATION

* Wood Bench with folding legs. \$39

Back-Jack Chair: adjustable, supports back, washable cover..... \$71

Crescent Shaped Cushions (Zafu): washable cover \$68

MATS & CARRIERS

Tapas©: Travel..... \$23

Jade Mats: Travel, 68", 74" \$59 / \$88 / \$95

NEW Jade Organic Mysore Yoga Rug & Jade Dharba Grass Med'n/Yoga Mat \$94 / \$65

Manduka© Pro 71" or 85": extra wide..... \$137 / \$166

Manduka© Pro-Lite: 71" or 79" \$112 / \$119

Jade Hot Yoga Towels..... \$25

Pure Earth II Eco Mat: recyclable, compostable, cushioned \$44

Half Moon XWide and XLong black \$40

PurAthletic Starter Mats, assorted colours \$18.50

* Handmade Mat & Prop carriers: Multiple colours. \$21

NETI POTS plastic and ceramic \$20 / \$24

NETI SALT (8 or 10 oz) \$5 / \$10

* SANDBAGS (10 lb) assorted fabrics Hand Made AB \$22

* STRAPS single thickness, India-slide buckle, white, black, blue; 20 or more @ -.50

* 7' x 1" (\$8); 7' x 1.5" (\$11); 9' x 1" (\$10); 9' x 1.5" (\$13)" \$8-\$13

TONGUE CLEANERS Copper \$5

WILSON METHOD MYOFACIAL YOGA BALLS (4 sizes included)..... \$85

YOGA / PEDICURE SANDALS (toe-separators) S only. M-XL B/O to spring 2023 \$47

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