

## Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Teacher Training

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### Trauma Training

On-going continuing education as an LPC and LP.  
In depth study in Somatic Therapies, Polyvagal Theory,  
Internal Family Systems, Spirituality and Trauma, Social  
Justice, Public Health, and healing in the relational field.  
LifeForce ® Yoga Practitioner  
Fire Fly Yoga International Trauma Informed Yoga



[www.redtwigyoga.com](http://www.redtwigyoga.com)  
[www.lucyprner.com](http://www.lucyprner.com)  
[www.abundantcommunity.org](http://www.abundantcommunity.org)

## Acknowledgement and Dedication

- ♦ We are on the stolen and colonized land of the Očhéthi Šakówinj (The People of the Seven Council Fires), and the ancestral land of the Wahpekute. The treaties with the native people of this area, as in most areas, were not upheld.
- ♦ I honor the sacred roots of Yoga and Ayurveda that originated in India, and the many sacrifices that were made to keep these practices alive. I am deeply grateful for my teachers in the Himalayan Tradition, and the Krishnamacharya lineage, who have lead me to this moment to share these teachings with you.

## Sahana Vavatu

Om sahana vavatu	ॐ सह नाववतु	Om, may the Divine protect both teacher and student
Saha nau bhunaktu	सह नौ भुनक्तु	Nourish us together
Saha viiryam karavaavahai	सह वीर्यं कवावहै	May we work together with great energy
Tejasvi Navaditamastu	तेजस्यि नावधीतमस्तु	May our studies be enlightening
Maa vidvissaavahai	मा विद्विषावहै	May there be no hate among us
Om shanti, shanti, shanti	ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः	Om peace, peace, peace

## Creating our Container for Brave Space

Learning about trauma and the topics we are covering may be triggering, and can overwhelm our ability to cope. As a result, we may “exit” by; getting distracted, not paying attention, doing other things, checking-out, etc.

Suggestions:

- ★ Have everything you need to feel comfortable in your space. Tea, blanket, etc.
- ★ Be present, with camera on as much as possible. AND take care of yourself, If you are activated and need to regulate, take a break.
- ★ Help create equity in our space. Be aware of the space that you take up. Some of us have been socialized to take up space and others have been socialized to be small.

## Orientation and Regulation Exercises

- ♦ Feel feet on floor
- ♦ Turn head and neck and look to side, behind on one side and then the other.
- ♦ Swallow, move jaw
- ♦ Hum
- ♦ Name one thing you can hear, see, touch, smell, taste

## Introductions

- ♦ Name
- ♦ How you prefer to be identified (She/Her, They/Them)
- ♦ What made you want to take this training?
- ♦ What do you hope to get out of it?

*Example: "Hi I am Lucy, I use the pronouns She/Her. I developed this training out of a growing awareness and sadness that the healing power of yoga was being lost in our fast-paced, appearance-focused society. I am just one teacher with this information. I share my lived experience as a fellow student and seeker, I hope I inspire you to grow and learn, and share the deep teachings of yoga."*

## Objectives

- ♦ Have a basic understanding of trauma and it's many faces.
- ♦ Learn how yoga helps those that have experienced or continue to experience trauma.
- ♦ Learn trauma sensitive language, how to avoid and manage 'triggers', and ways to adjust your class to be more inclusive.
- ♦ Learn how yoga, at its roots, is inclusive and a social justice practice.
- ♦ To increase awareness of how we create harm through lack of awareness, socialization, and oppressive systems.
- ♦ To increase somatic awareness and learn how to regulate the nervous system in challenging situations.

## What is Trauma?

"Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that are experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that have lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being."

In the United States, 61 percent of men and 51 percent of women report exposure to at least one lifetime traumatic event, and 90 percent of clients in public behavioral health care settings have experienced trauma."  
—Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration 2014

"Traumatic symptoms are not caused by the event itself. They arise when residual energy from the experience is not discharged from the body. This energy remains trapped in the nervous system where it can wreak havoc on our bodies and minds."  
—Peter Levine, PhD, Founder of Somatic Experiencing.

"Trauma is specifically an event that overwhelms the central nervous system, altering the way we process and recall memories. Trauma is not the story of something that happened back then, it's the current imprint of that pain, horror, and fear living inside people."

—Bessel van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*



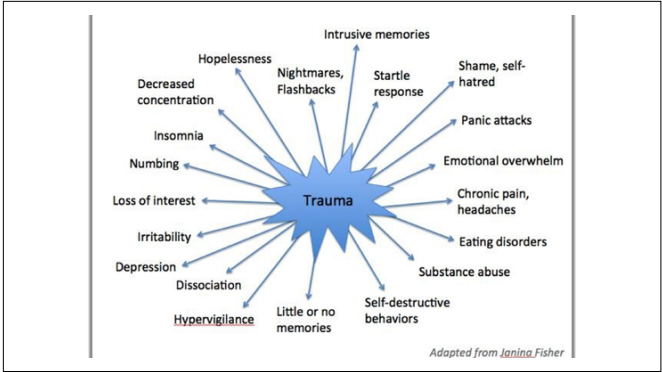
Photo credit: Maria Sanchez Navarro

### TYPES OF TRAUMA

**Acute**—single incident.

**Chronic**—repeated and prolonged

**Complex**—multiple traumatic events



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The Many Faces of Trauma

- ♦ **Vicarious Trauma (VT)** the emotional and cognitive impact on a third party. AKA “Compassion Fatigue” “Burnout.” ~Yoga teachers can experience VT when they are sympathetic to someone’s struggles and/or traumatic experiences and begin to feel overwhelmed.
- ♦ **Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)** has symptoms similar to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), without having necessarily been exposed to direct trauma themselves.
- ♦ **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** Is a psychiatric or mental health disorder. PTSD is the result of direct exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violation.

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The Many Faces of Trauma

- ♦ **HIPP Theory of Trauma -Ressma Menakam**
  - Historical Trauma
  - Intergenerational Trauma
  - Persistent Institutional Trauma
  - Personal Trauma

*“Trauma that relates to genocide, enslavement, land theft, and oppressive systems designed by the dominant culture/race. When trauma isn’t recognized or healed, it gets stuck in our nervous system and keeps getting passed down, from one generation to the next. This includes the oppressed and the oppressor....white-body supremacy lives in all of us, it is our culture, and the very air we breathe.”*
- ♦ **Colonial Trauma- Susanna Barkataki**

*“A systemic trauma where the colonial or post colonial system seeks to divide and separate, control the resources (cultural, material, natural wealth) and exploit the resources of a target group, causing on-going complex trauma.”*

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## Trauma Sensitive/Trauma Informed Yoga

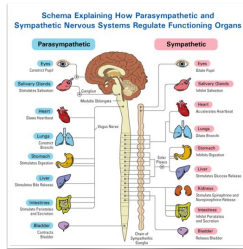
- ♦ Creates a thoughtful, sensitive space where students can learn self-regulation skills through connection with the breath and increased body awareness. It promotes self awareness, empowerment, and self agency. (“guru within”)
- ♦ *“Stillness is not a regular part of the average person’s life. When we step onto the yoga mat and move and breath consciously, we can get in touch with emotions or sensations that are uncomfortable and that we’ve managed to avoid. For people with complex trauma or PTSD, this discomfort can be overwhelming and even re-traumatizing.” -Hala Khouri, Trauma Informed Yoga Is People Informed Yoga, 2018*
- ♦ Hot/ fast moving vinyasa classes vs. slow moving mindful classes?



## The Autonomic Nervous System

The **Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)** is responsible for the things that our body does **automatically**, without thought. There are two systems within in the ANS.

1. **Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS):** THE ON SWITCH the active/ alert part of our nervous system responsible for “fight or flight” or “mobilization with fear”.
2. **Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS):** The OFF SWITCH is responsible for the “rest and digest” functions of the body and allows for relaxation. The PNS branches off into two pathways via the **Vagus Nerve**.



## The Vagus Nerve

The ANS is regulated by the tenth cranial nerve called the **VAGUS NERVE**, which branches into two pathways, and is part of the PNS.

1. **Dorsal Vagal FREEZE!** In long term stress, severe depression, or trauma, this branch will cause the mind and body to immobilize, shut down, go numb, dissociate, etc.
2. **Ventral Vagal** is the Social Engagement System and allows us to connect with others, be playful, and feel love “mobilization without fear”.



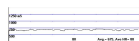
*Originating in the brain stem, The Vagus Nerve 'wanders' down the face and neck through a multitude of organs and systems in the body. It is connected to mood, immune response, digestion, and heart rate.*

## Measuring & Understanding “Vagal Tone”

- High vagal tone: high variability in heart rate



- Low vagal tone: low variability in heart rate

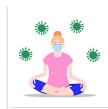


- ♦ Vagal tone is measured by looking at Heart Rate Variability (HRV). Healthy vagal tone involves a subtle increase in heart rate on the inhalation and a subtle decrease of heart rate when you exhale.
- ♦ It is an optimal balance of parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system actions.
- ♦ When the vagus nerve is strong and healthy (“high vagal tone”), the body and mind are able to recover from stress more rapidly, the mood is more stable, there is less anxiety, and there are increased social connections.
- ♦ People with higher HRV can move fluidly from excitement to relaxation and can recover more easily from stress.
- ♦ High vagal tone and high HRV are linked to a reduction in inflammation, chronic illness, anxiety, depression, and a nervous system that is more resilient to the stress that life brings.

## Increasing Vagal Tone & HRV

**Current research is showing that we can improve vagal tone by:**

- ♦ Breathing slow, rhythmic diaphragmatic breaths. Especially focusing on lengthening the exhale is helpful. (1:2 breathing)
- ♦ Using the voice: Talk to others, sing, hum, chant. (Ujjayi Pranayama engages the same muscles).
- ♦ Increasing positive and pleasant social connections.
- ♦ Practicing **mindful** yoga, meditation, and Yoga Nidra



“The simplest vagal stimulation that you can recruit is being able to exhale slowly. Stimulating the vagus nerve with slow exhales slows down the heart rate and gives your body cues of safety. In the brain stem there is kind of a switch...like a hot water / cold water option on the same knob. When you exhale, the vagus nerve influences to your heart’s pacemaker, and it gets optimized. When you inhale, your heart rate goes up. And when you exhale, your heart rate goes down. If you spend more of your time exhaling, you calm your body down. If you shift ratios so that most of the time you’re inhaling, you’re hyperventilating...When you see anxious people, they’re inhaling on virtually every sentence or every word. They’re huffing and puffing.”

– Dr. Stephen Porges, Developer of The Polyvagal Theory

## The Threat Response Cycle

The rapid, unconscious, automatic sequence of how we respond to threat

1. **Startle**
2. **Defensive Orienting**
3. **Action**
  - A. **Fight/Flight** (Mobilization with Fear)
  - B. **Freeze** (Immobilization)
4. **Completion of Defensive Action**
5. **Return to Baseline** (mobilization without fear)



Under chronic stress or unresolved trauma, the ‘**completion of defensive action**’ does not occur and the body and mind do not return to a state of rest or relaxation. When we are unable to complete this response and discharge it from the body, the nervous system’s default is to freeze and a new ‘baseline’ is created. The ANS cannot flow naturally through the stress response cycle.

This new baseline in the ANS causes the individual to:

- Over perceive threat and be in constant ‘survival mode’
- Becomes increasingly reactive and/or frozen
- Struggle to be in present moment awareness
- Lose connection with the with the physical and emotional body
- Develop patterns of inflammation and illness and other symptoms related to chronic stress.
- Develop Tamasic and/or Rajasic states

## Healing Through Mind-Body Awareness, Presence, Embodiment

*Remember the quote from the beginning from Peter Levine, PhD, Founder of Somatic Experiencing?*

**“Traumatic symptoms are not caused by the event itself.**

**They arise when residual energy from the experience is not discharged from the body.**

**This energy remains trapped in the nervous system where it can wreak havoc on our bodies and minds.”**

*To heal from trauma, we must help the body discharge the ‘stuck’ energy and help repair the nervous system so it can be more fluid, flexible and resilient.*

**“Yoga and conscious breathing can lead to measurable health benefits  
and a reduction in trauma-related symptoms”**

**~Bessel Van Der Kolk**

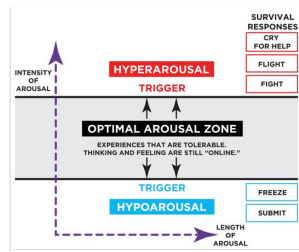
## How Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Can Help

A trauma-sensitive or informed yoga experience will help the body safely discharge traumatic stress in a safe/contained space by:

- ♦ Inviting participants into present moment awareness
- ♦ Slowly increasing tolerance of bodily sensations (titration / pendulation) by expanding the 'window of tolerance'.
- ♦ Encouraging curiosity of sensations; feeling into intensity / contraction and into the relaxation.
- ♦ Fostering self agency- reminding students that they have choices, encourages them to make changes to improve their experience.
- ♦ Gently encouraging and ALWAYS offering the choice to opt out of anything.
- ♦ Uses language that is body based, sensation based and non-judgmental encouraging self-observation and inquiry to empower the student to feel safe in their own body.

## Window of Tolerance

- ♦ Can help us to understand when we need to back off, slow down, and be curious.
- ♦ Once we are out of the window of tolerance, the 'higher brain' goes off-line (hijacked) and it is more difficult to think.
- ♦ Yoga teaches us how to return to the window of tolerance safely, by calling out body sensations and teaching self inquiry, and titration / pendulation.
- ♦ In the window of tolerance, we being to repair the nervous system and discharge stuck energy.



## Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Experience

- ♦ This class will demonstrate how you can adjust a basic drop-in asana class to be more trauma sensitive.
- ♦ This recognizes that more than 50% of our population has had a traumatic experience and it is likely that there is a significant portion of your students that have experienced trauma.
- ♦ Please note: If you plan to teach Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Classes for specific populations (Sexual Abuse Survivors, Veterans, etc.) and advertise it as that, GET MORE SPECIFIC TRAINING :-)



CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT WITH

- ♦ Introducing yourself
- ♦ Noting exits and bathrooms
- ♦ Option to opt of anything or and take breaks
- ♦ Possible disturbances that may occur during class
- ♦ Outline of timing and what to expect
- ♦ Cues for grounding

HELP INCREASE MIND-BODY AWARENESS, PRESENCE, AND EMBODIMENT

- ♦ Body and sensation based cues
- ♦ Invitational and inquiry language
- ♦ Moving slowly and mindfully and building heat.
- ♦ Moving in and out of the pose and then holding a more difficult pose with count down (Titration/ pendulation).
- ♦ Reminding them they can opt out at any time.

**\*\* All of these efforts help discharge stuck energy and increase the window of tolerance\*\***

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Common Triggers In a Yoga class

Some common pitfalls that may trigger reactions include:

- ♦ Turning out lights for savasana. If you choose to do this announce that you are doing it.
- ♦ Poses that require bending over or in front of others.
- ♦ Sexually provocative poses, e.g. happy baby, cat/cow
- ♦ Lack of structure or too much quiet time in a restorative pose might prompt dissociation
- ♦ Physical assists can startle or trigger flashbacks of unwanted touch
- ♦ Instructors clothing that reveals cleavage, crack, bulge, too much skin. Messages on shirts.
- ♦ See Handout for more details

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Practice Teach

- ♦ Split into small groups of two.
- ♦ Teach a short familiar 15 minute sequence (practice a part from your final class) with invitational language and cues.
- ♦ From the hand out, pick 3, 1 of each phrases, cues or questions you will incorporate in your sequence.
- ♦ Notice if you use any of the language that can cause confusion or dissociation.
- ♦ Spend 5 minutes giving each other feedback.
- ♦ Please manage your time. There will be 45 minutes for this exercise.

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## The Role of A Teacher

Research in Trauma Sensitive/Informed Yoga (Emerson & Hopper, 2011) find that the most effective teachers are those that:

- \* Creates a welcoming and nurturing environment and are the first to arrive and prepare the room and welcome each student.
- \* Are engaged, relaxed, competent, friendly and have a sense of humor
- \* Encourages and incorporate feedback from students
- \* Limits their movement around the class
- \* Does not to praise or single out students during class
- \* Reminds students that they are experts on their own experience and bodies
- \* Knows their limits and are able to set boundaries and clear about their role.
- \* Wear professional and neutral attire (think of jewelry, clothing, logos, statements on your clothing, dressing conservatively, and practicing good hygiene.)

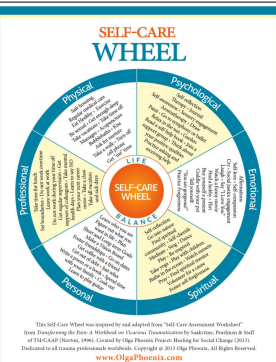
## Self-Care & Scope of Practice

SELF CARE IS NOT A LUXURY, IT IS ESSENTIAL, BECAUSE..

- It takes a lot of energy and effort to hold a welcoming, thoughtful, safe space
- You cannot take on the burdens of others (vicarious trauma), self care helps you to 'fill your cup' and remain empathetic, keeping the health and wellbeing of your students in high regard.
- Remember what you learned about the nervous system and be sure that you are constantly strengthening your resiliency.
- Use the self-care wheel in the manual to identify your own practices.

## SCOPE OF PRACTICE

- Recognize the importance of self care. It is non-negotiable.
- Do your own work. Maintain a yoga and meditation practice, stay connected with your healers, if you are feeling burnt out ask for help.
- Constantly be a student and be willing to learn more.
- Have a mentor that you can ask any teaching question to.
- Know when to refer, and have referral sources in your community.



## Yoga: Purpose, Philosophy, & Healing

- ♦ The root word of yoga is “Yuj”= Unite or Yoke
- ♦ Yoga is from India
- ♦ Yoga is one of the six schools of thought (darshanas) in Hinduism. Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa, and Vedanta.  
*“Also uniting the darshanas is the concept of pluralism, the belief that multiple paths exist to reach liberation, or moksha, or unity with God and escape from the cycle of birth and death. In Hindu thought, the Supreme Being or the Divine resides within all that exists. And any one, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or gender, has the ability to achieve moksha.” <https://www.hinduamerican.org/>*
- ♦ The ultimate goal of yoga is to yoke /unite with the Divine. The practices of yoga were created to remove suffering caused by the mind.

**yogas citta vritti nirodhah** (YS 1.2)

Yoga is the stilling of the fluctuations of the mind

## Three Main Kinds of Suffering

- 1.**Adi-Davika**= The unknown (karma)
- 2.**Adi-Bahutika**= An imbalance of the elements (macrocosmic)
- 3.**Adyatmika**= Ignorance /lack of knowledge (microcosmic). Aka **Avidya**.

## Kleshas: The Five Main Causes of Suffering

**Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras (2:3)**

1. **Avidya**- ignorance, not seeing our true nature. It is the action of falsely identifying with the external world, our minds, and preserving the self-image and self-identity created by samskaras (mental and emotional patterns gained through life experiences). It is a false sense of having control over anything but ourselves.
2. **Asmita**- Ego. Identifying with the roles we play vs. who we truly are.
3. **Raga**- Likes. Attachment to pleasant experiences.
4. **Dvesha**- Dislikes. Aversion to unpleasant experiences. \*Raga and dvesha always exist together. When attached to a pleasant experience, we are avoiding an unpleasant experience. Unpleasant experiences are inevitable.
5. **Abhinivesha**- Fear. Clinging to life. The fear of death, loss, or change. All of which are inevitable.

## The Gunas

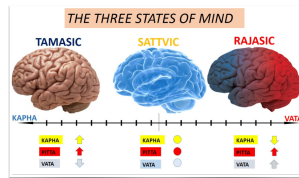
- ♦ The gunas (Sanskrit for rope, strand or qualities), are energetic forces that weave together to form the universe and everything in it, from the macrocosm to the microcosm.
- ♦ Gunas are a part of Samkhya philosophy, (the foundation of Yoga and Ayurveda).
- ♦ Samkhya tells us that there are three basic qualities that inform the nature of everything. These qualities are the gunas.
- ♦ There are three gunas, each with its own unique attributes:
  1. **Tamas** (heaviness, dullness, darkness, stillness),
  2. **Rajas** (activity, movement), and
  3. **Sattva** (consciousness, clarity, illumination, brilliance).

## The Gunas ,The Mind, & The ANS

**Rajas**  
**SNS Dominance**  
Anxious, nervous, tense, agitated, angry, difficulty paying attention, darting eyes, emotional, over-reactive, overactive, focus on performance, fidgety, difficulty being still.

**Tamas**  
**PSN Dorsal Vagal Dominance**  
Low energy, sleepy, uncoordinated ("floppy"), spacey, negative, depressed, apathetic, self destructive behaviors, addictions.

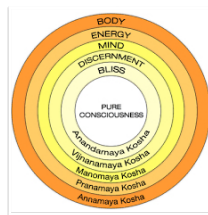
**Sattva**  
**Balanced SNS & PNS**  
**High Vagal Tone & HRV**  
Healthy, enthusiastic, calm, curious, adaptable, patient, self directed, balanced.



## Pancha Maya Kosha

Pancha= 5      Maya= Illusion/Consists of      Kosha= Covering/Sheath

- ♦ The Koshas originate in the Taittiriya Upanishads.
- ♦ The Koshas are explained as five layers, or “sheaths,” that cover the true Self or soul (Atman). To reach our highest potential, and the deepest knowledge, we much become aware of, and thin the veil between the sheaths.
- ♦ The Koshas are the foundation of yoga therapy. It assumes a “bottom-up” approach starting with creating safety, healing the body, and increasing resilience.



## Annamaya Kosha

Anna= food  
The Physical sheath or “food body”

- ♦ Where trauma-sensitive yoga begins.
- ♦ We understand this kosha through connecting to the body and its physical experiences.
- ♦ It is called the “food body” because it relates to what we take into our bodies.

### Trauma and the Annamaya Kosha

- Food Insecurity
- Inadequate, unsafe housing
- Environmental hazards
- Health disparities and inequity in health care
- Violence, abuse, accidents
- Other?

*Thinning this veil will be difficult without first addressing physical safety (free of the threat of harm), and being nourished. But it is not impossible! Trauma-sensitive yoga will help people build resilience in the Annamaya Kosha and discharge the excess energy that is trapped at this layer. (Threat Response Cycle.)*



## Pranamaya Kosha

Prana= Energy, or that which animates. Life Force.  
The energy sheath/body

- ♦ These are the systems that hold the body together and govern the biological processes. (Chakras, nadis, vayus, pranas)
- ♦ Acupuncture and homeopathy work with this sheath.

### Trauma and the Pranamaya Kosha

- Air quality
- Environmental toxins
- Access to alternative health care.
- Other ways the Pranamaya Kosha is affected?

*Some of the ways we can nourish the Pranamaya Kosha is through breathing practices, being outdoors in fresh air, exposure to the sun (the ultimate source of prana). The most powerful breathing practices for healing are, diaphragmatic and alternate nostril breathing.*



## Manomaya Kosha

Mano= Mind  
The mental/emotional sheath/body

- ♦ Where our thoughts, emotions and desires live.
- ♦ Where we process input taken in from the five senses and respond reflexively- the automatic, day to day functioning of the mind.
- ♦ The Bhagavad Gita (3:42-43) teaches us that the goal is to be able to mindfully, with awareness, respond to the senses, to not be driven by senses. Without mindful awareness, our perceptions and reactions will be defensive and in response to ego preservation.

### Trauma and the Manomaya Kosha

- Verbal and emotional abuse, “gaslighting”
- Traumatic brain injuries
- If the Manomaya Kosha is fed with violent images, dramatic events, and/or intense/unrelenting expectations/schedules, it can be overwhelmed or crave more (remember the baseline changing in the stress response cycle?).
- Other?

*Nourishing practices for the Manomaya Kosha include: creating calm environments, engaging in supportive relationships and communities, talk therapy, mindfulness, meditation, mantra.*



## Vijnanamaya Kosha

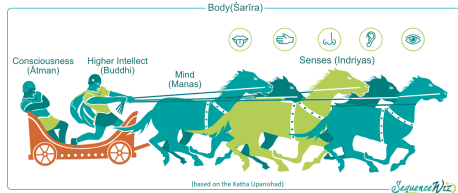
Vijnana=Knowing, intellect, higher mind  
Wisdom body, intellect, intuition, discernment, refined knowledge and experience

- ♦ This is the sheath responsible for our ability to put emotions and experiences aside, discern, and make clear, and thoughtful decisions based on wisdom.
- ♦ Here lies the will to become what you were meant to be (Dharma).
- ♦ Examples of a cloudy Vijnanamaya Kosha... little to no will power, lack of control, reactivity, difficulty making decisions, etc.

### Trauma and the Vijnanamaya Kosha

- Cults and brain washing
- Abuses of power

*Practices that strengthen the Vijnanamaya Kosha: Yamas and Niyamas, Jnana Yoga (path of intellect/deep contemplation), long term meditation practice, learning new things and remaining curious.*



"In this material world the human body (the chariot) is pulled around by the five senses (the horses), reacting to what we see, hear, taste, smell and touch. The mind (reins) is impulsive by nature, and is easily distracted by the likes, dislikes and emotional responses to sense objects (different roads, paths). It gets pulled in conflicting directions unless the charioteer (higher intellect) takes the rein...**Who is driving your chariot?**" (www.sequencewiz.org)

## Anandamaya Kosha

Ananda= Bliss  
Bliss sheath. Universal consciousness, connection to source, union

- ♦ The inner being that lies with in each person that is resting peace, joy, love.
- ♦ The most under-developed kosha. Sages and saints and mystics have practices that allow them to connect with this daily. We will get glimpses.
- ♦ It is the final veil that stands between ordinary awareness and the Atman (true Self / soul)

### Trauma and the Anandamaya Kosha

- Religious or Spiritual Abuse

*Practices that strengthen the connection to Anandamaya Kosha: Seva (service), Bhakti (devotion), prayer, anything that brings you in union with the Divine.*



## The Atman

Jiva Atman= Individual soul  
Para Atman= universal or supreme soul  
A spark of the Divine lives in you

KOSHA EXPERIENCE to integrate



Photo credit: saibharati.com

## HOMEWORK

- ♦ We will collectively teach a full 75-90 minute class tomorrow.
- ♦ Each person will have an assigned \_\_\_\_ minute segment to teach. (Selected by the order you registered). You need to make your poses accessible and trauma informed.
- ♦ You have 60 minutes of credit to design and practice your part tonight.

## Day Two

- ♦ Welcome
- ♦ Acknowledgement & Dedication
- ♦ Sahana Vavatu
- ♦ Opening Meditation
- ♦ Agenda
- ♦ Creating the container for compassionate brave space
- ♦ Invitation for our discussions:
  - *Be messy today! There is no 'right' way to do this work. Ask questions, share thoughts, and stay curious. Take care of yourself and be compassionate.*
  - *Remember that we are all students, we are still learning. We don't know, what we don't know!*
  - *Shame and embarrassment can come up as we learn about how we may have hurt others, it's important to stay curious so we can learn why some of our behaviors are harmful, how to make amends, and how to decrease harm.*

### MORNING

From Separation to Union  
Yoga and Social Justice  
Discussion Groups  
Yoga Nidra

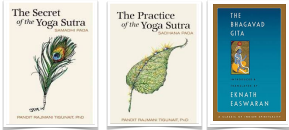
### LUNCH 12:30-1:30

### AFTERNOON

Group Class: Practice Teaching  
Group Discussion  
What can we do?  
Ahimsa Action Plan

From Separation to Union

- The most common texts we learn about in YTT are Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita.
- **The Yoga Sutras**
  - Mastery of the mind, liberation from it, surrendering the ego, and unifying with the higher self and “The Lord”
  - It teaches us the Eight Limbs of Yoga, which includes the Yamas and Niyamas, the ethical code of yoga.
- **The Bhagavad Gita**
  - A story included in The Mahabharata (a sacred Hindu text).
  - The Gita is a dialogue between the warrior-prince, Arjuna, and the god Krishna, who is Arjuna’s charioteer.
  - Instructive about spirituality, and relationships to self, others, and God. It tells us how to practice yoga in real life, difficult, circumstances.
  - The Gita teaches about “union” and the reduction of suffering for all.



Both (and many more sacred texts) are contemplative and instructional texts that intend to transform the human spirit, increase our awareness of how we move through the world, how we interact with others, reduction of suffering, and union with something greater than ourselves.

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PATANJALI’S | 8 LIMBS OF YOGA

- 1. **YAMAS** social contracts - how you behave within society
  - Ahimsa non-violence
  - Satya truth
  - Asteya non-stealing
  - Brahmacharya of Brahma
  - Aparigraha non-hoarding
- 2. **NIYAMAS** personal contracts - duties directed towards the self
  - Saucha cleanliness
  - Santosha contentment
  - Tapas heat
  - Svadyaya self-study
  - Ishvara Pranidhana surrender
- 3. **ASANA** poses
- 4. **PRANAYAMA** breath
- 5. **PRATYAHARA** withdrawal of the senses
- 6. **DHARANA** intense concentration
- 7. **DHYANA** state of meditation
- 8. **SAMADHI** state of oneness

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Patanjali’s Yamas and Niyamas: Trauma, Inclusivity, and Social Justice

The Yamas and Niyamas are a foundation of how to practice yoga on and off the mat, and teach us how to interact with ourselves and others.

Yamas

- Ahimsa-** Do no harm, own your mistakes, make amends.  
Intention vs Impact: You may have good intentions, but how does the action of your intention impact others? If your action causes harm, even if you have good intentions, take responsibility for the harm you caused.
- Satya-** Honesty about what you know and don’t know, seek the truth (curiosity).
- Asteya-** Non-stealing (give credit). Generosity-sharing space and not taking up too much space. You have enough.
- Bramacharya-** Energy management, respecting boundaries.
- Aparigraha-** Acceptance of what is, letting go of control or completion, being messy.

Niyamas

- Saucha-** Cleanliness. Be clear and thoughtful.
- Santosha-** Peace. Acceptance that things will go unanswered, and / fororgiveness may not be granted.
- Tapas-** Heat /triction. Be willing to be uncomfortable to create change. STAY PRESENT
- Svadyaya-** Self-study. Always be a student. Seek knowledge and understanding.
- Ishvara Pranidhana-** Surrender to Source. Unity.

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## Definitions

- ♦ Following is a review of what the 6-hours of independent study introduced you to.
- ♦ Note: It is not lost on me that I am an able bodied, cisgendered woman of dominant culture and privilege, teaching about some topics that I do not have lived experience with. I am sharing with you what I have learned from the voices of others. I encourage you to seek out and learn from non-dominant culture individuals.
- ♦ I share definitions from leaders in the field, to up lift their voices, and encourage you to buy their books, attend their workshops, and support their efforts.
- ♦ This is intended to be a primer. I hope it inspires you to learn more, reflect on your cultural conditioning, and learn about the many ways we unintentionally cause harm.

## Marginalization. Power. Privilege

- ♦ A society that labels certain people as outside the norm — weird, scary, hateful, or useless — **marginalizes** those people, edging them out. Synonyms: disenfranchise, stigmatize, disempower, impoverish, alienate, oppress. [www.vocabulary.com](https://www.vocabulary.com)

- ♦ **"Privilege is the societal benefits bestowed upon people socially, politically and economically. Privilege can be based on race, class, age, ability level, mental health status, gender identity, sex, etc."**

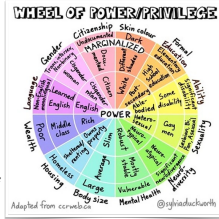
-Michelle Cassandra Johnson

- ♦ **"It is the nature of privilege to not see that we have it. This is how systems of power and oppression perpetuate themselves. Privilege is the opposite side of oppression...."**

For example, an able-bodied thin person walking into a yoga studio may not consider the steps she has to climb to reach the studio are a barrier to others. This is a way her privilege is invisible to her. This same person may notice that in class, everyone looks more or less like her- thin, white, able bodied and cisgender. These are privileges that enable her to feel at home, welcome and at ease in the yoga space.

However, if a queer, trans, disabled, bigger-bodied person of color tries to walk into that same space, they may immediately feel unwelcome by virtue of their lack of privilege, or target identities."

-Susanna Barkataki



## White Supremacy

- ♦ **"White Supremacy is an ideology and belief system that is based on a hierarchy of constructed racial categorizations where white is at the top, black is at the bottom, and everyone else is between white and black. Dominant culture conditions us to believe that white supremacy should only be applied to hateful individuals or hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. It is important to understand that white supremacy is a belief system that perpetuates the idea that white is superior."** -Michelle Cassandra Johnson
- ♦ **"White Supremacy culture in yoga looks like a focus on the following:**
  - Perfectionism
  - Singularity and Individualism
  - Lack of diversity
  - Yoga norms controlled by a single narrative and single representation
  - Exclusion of, policing and shaming of anything that differs from the norm, i.e. Brown, fat, or less-able bodies
  - Focus on physical attainment and worship of the physical body."

-Susanna Barkataki

## Racism and Oppression

### OPPRESSION

*"Is the subjugation of one group of people to elevate another group of people. Often it involves violence but isn't limited to physical violence. It can include emotional, mental, spiritual and psychic violence as well."*

-Michelle Cassandra Johnson

### RACISM

Oxford Languages defines racism as: "Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized. The belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, especially so as to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another."

*"Racism= race prejudice + social and institutional power"*

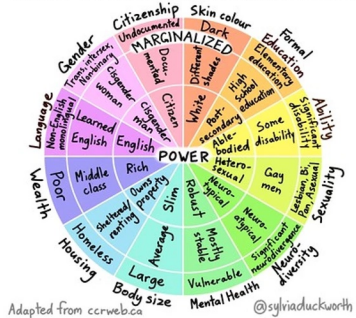
*Racism is a system of advantage based on race*

*Racism is a system of oppression based on race*

*Racism is a system designed to build and maintain white supremacy."*

-Michelle Cassandra Johnson

## WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



## Cultural Appropriation

- The Cambridge Dictionary defines cultural appropriation as "the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing that you understand or respect this culture." Oxford Languages add "the unacknowledged or inappropriate adoption of the customs, practices, ideas, etc. of one people or society by members of another and typically more dominant people or society."

- "There are two criteria that must be satisfied for there to be cultural appropriation when borrowing or using another's culture:

1. Cultural appropriation Involves power and dominance
2. It involves doing emotional and psychological harm

Cultural appropriation is when someone uses someone else's culture, including practices, symbols, rituals, fashion or other elements from a target or "minority" culture, without considering the source, origins or people of that culture.

They may use another culture for various reasons, such as:

- To make a profit;
- To "make a new trend";
- To look cool or be fashionable;
- To be a cultural tourist or explore the "exotic";
- To mold another's culture into a more Eurocentric one (make it more Western or American as it is more palatable);
- A false perception of appreciation or alliance;
- Or for some other self-serving purpose without respecting or caring for the original culture context or it's people"

-Susanna Barkataki,

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## Colonization

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- ♦ The action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area. The action of appropriating a place, domain or cultural practices for one's own use. -Cambridge Dictionary
- ♦ “To become colonized is to become a stranger in your own land. This is the feeling many Indian people have in our most Westernized yoga spaces today. This colonization of yoga happens when the full, complex breadth of yoga’s intention for the practice of liberation is reduced to less than it’s many limbs” -Susanna Barkataki,

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## Capitalism

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- ♦ *“Capitalism is an economic system based on free markets and limited government intervention. Proponents argue that capitalism is the most efficient economic system, enabling improved living standards. However, despite its ubiquity, many economists criticize aspects of capitalism and point out its many flaws and problems. In short, capitalism can cause – inequality, market failure, damage to the environment, short-termism, excess materialism and boom and bust economic cycles.”*  
-Tejvan Pettinger
- ♦ *“...capitalism which values productivity and profit over quality of life has infused our bodies, minds and hearts.”*  
- Hala Khouri

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## Capitalism

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*“Capitalism is in direct contrast to the principles of yoga. Capitalism is an economic and political system that is interested in profit, in gain. Yogic practices aim to free oneself from the things capitalism relies upon to thrive; desire and attachment. Capitalism aims to produce an experience in the material world. Yoga aims to release the consciousness from the material world. Capitalism does not care about yoga. Yoga cares not for capitalism. They are irreconcilable.... Making money as a teacher is not a yogic act. Giving away my teaching for free is not a yogic act. I can be just as invested in my generosity as I can in my greed. Both are actions. What is yogic is how I manage my mind when I act. Krishna tells Arjuna “You have the rights to action, but not its fruit” (B.G.2.47). How easy is it to act without wanting a reward? This is No. Small. Task. This is a Big Idea. A big concept to wrangle with and work on. In order to do so, I must accept that I willingly make imperfect choices. In doing so I become aware of my desires, my attachments to the fruits of my actions.”*

-Jen Whinnen

## Spiritual Bypassing

- ♦ A term first defined in 1983 by transpersonal psychologist and buddhist teacher, John Wellwood, in his book [Toward a Psychology of Awakening](#). He explained spiritual bypassing as a "tendency to use spiritual ideas and practices to sidestep or avoid facing unresolved emotional issues, psychological wounds, and unfinished developmental tasks."
- ♦ "Spiritual bypassing is a very persistent shadow of spirituality, manifesting in many ways, often without being acknowledged as such. Aspects of spiritual bypassing include exaggerated detachment, emotional numbing and repression, overemphasis on the positive, anger-phobia, blind or overly tolerant compassion, weak or too porous boundaries, lopsided development (cognitive intelligence often being far ahead of emotional and moral intelligence), debilitating judgment about one's negativity or shadow elements, devaluation of the personal relative to the spiritual, and delusions of having arrived at a higher level of being."  
—Robert Augustus Masters, PhD
- ♦ This is perpetuated by the wellness industry and "modern" yoga. There are expectations that to be evolved means we have to "rise above" our emotions, always be positive, and believe that there is a silver lining to every experience. This teaches us to be disembodied, detached, and to not deal with our insecurity. In addition, it creates separation.
- ♦ Spiritual bypassing is a defense mechanism which allows you to suspend reality and turn away from and avoid the truth. It causes harm to others because it does not recognize and acknowledge their experience.

## PAUSE. Breath. Embody

### ♦ Pancha Mayakosha Meditation

- ♦ Svadhyaya Journaling /break (15 minutes)
  - What information is surprising or new to you?
  - What are some ways that you realize you may have unintentionally caused harm?
  - In what ways have you unknowingly appropriated yoga? (i.e., actions, merchandise, teaching, etc.).
  - How have you engaged in spiritual bypassing? How do you see it present in the yoga community?
  - What do you realize you need to learn more about?

## Break-Out Groups

### **BREAK-OUT INTO 4 GROUPS**

- Share your insights from your journaling in your small group (20 Minutes).
  - Remember: brave compassionate space and to practice the Yamas and Niyamas.
  - Take care of yourself. If triggered, do some orientation and grounding.
  - Be present for one another in the process.
- Come back and have one person from the group share your discoveries.

Then...  
YOGA NIDRA AND LUNCH!

# GROUP YOGA CLASS

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# WHAT CAN WE DO?!

## FROM APPROPRIATION TO APPRECIATION

- ♦ Increase your knowledge of the indigenous practice and culture of yoga. This manual contains many references and teachers to follow. Share this with your students and reference your sources.
- ♦ Study the sacred texts. Know where yoga came from and it's rich history.
- ♦ Take classes and workshops with Indian and South Asian teachers to learn from their lived experiences and center their voices.
- ♦ Live, practice, and teach the Yamas and Niyamas.
- ♦ Practice and teach **ALL** eight limbs of Yoga.
- ♦ Teach that the goal of yoga is not about "working-out" or body culture. You can make a vigorous asana class more authentic if you follow the eight limbs of yoga. Remember that the purpose of asana is to strengthen and prepare the body for meditation.
- ♦ Learn as much as you can about cultural appropriation and stop doing it. Find a way to talk with your students and studio owners about it. Remember, we don't know what we don't know. Once we know...take responsibility.
- ♦ If you use music in your classes, know that yoga was traditionally practiced in silence. Strive to play more music performed by Indian and South Asian musicians, and less by white, western practitioners.
- ♦ Other ideas?

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# WHAT CAN WE DO?!

## CREATE INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND TRAUMA INFORMED SPACES

- ♦ Ask yourself and your studio, who is benefitting your classes and who is left behind / out? Continuously engage in the discussion.
- ♦ Return to the Power and Privilege Wheel. How can you create more diversity in your classes and studio? What would make your space / classes more welcoming to a wider variety of people?
  - ♦ **Diversity/Inclusion**= respecting, welcoming, including and celebrating differences. (Add to the wheel, age, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and any other identifiers different from the norm.)
- ♦ Look at class descriptions. For example, "ALL LEVELS" often is not inclusive, is misleading to beginners, and can cause unintended harm. Explain exactly what a student can expect if they drop into a class. Some examples include but are not limited to:
  - "This class is best suited for those who..."
    - ...have been practicing over a year and can easily move from standing to the floor, and enjoy a faster-paced class.
    - ...are new to yoga and enjoy a slower paced class. Students will have props available and clear instruction on how to safely move from standing to the floor.
    - ...have limited mobility or injuries. Chairs are provided to assist students during transitions from standing, sitting, and lying on the floor."

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## WHAT CAN WE DO?!

### CREATE INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND TRAUMA-INFORMED SPACES

- ♦ Accessibility includes financial accessibility. Create need-based scholarships, payment plans, tiered pricing (registration for this course is an example), free classes.
- ♦ Use trauma-informed language and offer non-hierarchical variations.
- ♦ Advertising. Look at the pictures that you have on your websites and flyers. Most stock photos are of young, thin, white, fit, able-bodied women and perpetuate body culture and supremacy. Look for photos that are more inclusive of a variety of people, take photos of your own classes.
- ♦ Examine your privilege and power, use it to uplift or support under-resourced groups or people. Encourage your studio to hire people of diverse backgrounds.
- ♦ More ideas?

## WHAT CAN WE DO?!

### TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HARM AND MAKE REPARATIONS

New research from psychological scientists, Lewicki, Polin, Lount Jr., found that the the most effective apologies include six distinct elements:

1. Expression of regret
2. Explanation of what went wrong (careful that it doesn't turn into justification)
3. Acknowledgment of responsibility (remember intention vs. impact)
4. Declaration of regret
5. Offer of repair
6. Request for forgiveness

Reparations= not culturally appropriating, honoring the roots of yoga, making yoga accessible to all.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?!

### Yamas

**Ahimsa**- Do no harm, own your mistakes, make amends.

Intention vs Impact: You may have good intentions, but how does the action of your intention impact others? If your action causes harm, even if you have good intentions, take responsibility for the harm you caused.

**Satya**- Honesty about what you know and don't know, seek the truth (curiosity)

**Asteya**- Non-stealing (give credit). Generosity-sharing space and not taking up too much space. You have enough.

**Bramacharya**- Energy management, respecting boundaries

**Aparigraha**- Acceptance of what is, letting go of control or completion, being messy.

### Niyamas

**Saucha**- Cleanliness. Be clear and thoughtful.

**Santosha**- Acceptance, peace, things will go unanswered, forgiveness may not be granted.

**Tapas**- Heat / friction. Be willing to be uncomfortable to create change. STAY PRESENT

**Svadyaya**- Self-study. Always be a student. Seek knowledge and understanding.

**Ishvara Pranidhana**- Surrender to Source. Unity.

WHAT CAN WE DO?!

AHIMSA PLAN

- 3 action statements of how you will:
- move from appropriation to appreciation, and
  - make your teaching more inclusive.

Example:  
*I will find a different way to end my yoga classes.*  
*I will read the Bhagavad-Gita*  
*I will use more trauma-informed language in my classes, and change my class description so it invites more diverse populations.*

10 minutes writing exercise to share with the group

Breathe

Final Q&A

Abundant Yoga Community

Closing Meditation

Dedication and Encouragement for continued study

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**Teachers of Yoga, Ayurveda, and Social Justice in Yoga, who have most influenced Lucy.**

Swami Alan Ajaya <http://beingawareness.org/>

Indu Aroa <https://www.yogsadhna.com/>

Susana Barkataki <https://www.susannabarkataki.com/>

Tanya Boigenzhan <https://www.devanadiyoga.com/>

TKV Desikachar <https://khyf.net/>

Dr. David Frawley <https://www.vedanet.com/>

Michelle C. Johnson <https://www.michellejohnson.com/>

Hala Kouri <https://halakhouri.com/>

Gary Kraftsow <https://viniyoga.com/>

Dr. Vasant Lad <https://www.ayurveda.com/>

Russill Paul <https://www.russillpaul.us/>

Kallie Schut <https://www.rebelyogatribe.co.uk/>

Rolf Sovik <https://yogainternational.com/>

Tracee Stanley <https://traceeyoga.com/>

Rod Stryker <https://www.parayoga.com/>

Kathryn Templeton <https://kathryntempleton.com/>

Pandit Rajmani Tigunait <https://yogainternational.com/>

Amy Weintraub <https://yogafordepression.com/>

## ParaYoga Biodynamic & Energetic Effects of Asana

Category	Nervous	Physical	Endocrine	Energetics	Guna	Chakra	Prana Vayu	Dosha
<b>Forward Bends</b>	PNS	Digestive, Reproductive	Adrenals (sedating)	Langhana	Sattwa, Tamasic	1,2,3	Apana, Samana	Vata (-) Pitta (-) Kapha (+)

### ALL LEVELS FORWARD BENDS PRACTICE (TRAUMA SENSITIVE)

#### DHARMA TALK (ORIENTATION)

*Welcome to class, my name is Lucy. If you haven't already grab a block and a blanket for your practice.*

*I want to take a few moments to orient us to the space and what to expect...*

- There are two **exits** one in the front of the room to my right that most of you came in and then there is one toward the back on the left.
- There are 2 **bathrooms** one at the rear of the room with two stalls on the right and a single bathroom that locks back by the kitchen.
- There may be people that come to use the bathroom while we are practicing so you may hear footsteps toward the side of the room. There has also been some construction outside, so you may hear that as well.
- This is a 75 minute class. We'll do some grounding and breathing in the beginning, and then a series of yoga poses for about 35 minutes, then 10 minutes of relaxation, some more breathing and a brief meditation. We'll be focusing on poses that help calm the mind.
- It is absolutely normal that emotions may rise during a yoga practice, if they do, just focus in on your breath and feel free to take child pose or any other pose that you wish.
- This is your time, a time to reconnect with your body and your breath. There is no need to push yourself, I will be giving many options for each pose, to help prevent injury and to help you find comfort in YOUR body. All poses are invitations, not obligations.
- At anytime, if you feel like you need to leave, know that is okay and I will follow up with an email or phone call to be sure you are okay.

#### CENTERING, INTENTION, INVOCATION (GROUNDING)

*"Take a moment to look around the room, notice the colors around you... textures... materials... fabric... pick one thing that you see that you can return to, to help orient you to the present moment.... When you are ready, lie down on your back with your knees bent.... If it's comfortable for you, you could close your eyes, or they can remain open..*

*Tune into your breath..." slowly instruct diaphragmatic breathing eventually extending the exhale.*

*If you'd like, set an intention for your class. If nothing comes to mind, an option could be, "I am present and curious"*

#### WARM UP

- Knee drops with the breath
- Knees to chest
- Chakravakasana (pause in child's to remind they can return here is needed)

## **SUN SALUTATIONS**

- Half Sun Salutation
- Sun Sal. (no hands behind back)

## **STANDING POSES**

- Warrior II
- Dynamic Pyramid L & R
- Revolved Triangle (Count down)
- Dynamic Chair
- Warrior III (Count down)
- Mountain (sense and feel)

## **ARM BALANCES (IF THERE ARE ANY)** None

## **INVERSIONS**

- Wide Legged Standing Forward Fold with side lunge

## **BACK BENDS**

Cobra-Child's flow with increasing hold in Cobra  
Dynamic Bridge extending exhale

## **TWISTS**

Seated Twist

## **FORWARD BENDS**

Seated Forward Bend  
Butterfly (NOT "bound angle")

## **COOL DOWN/RECLINING/RESTORATIVE**

Knee drops- hold and breath where it feels comfortable. Notice if anything has change since we did this at the beginning of practice.

## **SAVASANA**

GUIDED Body Scan (Yoga Nidra is another great option).

## **PRANAYAMA**

Shaping the breath 1:1 (Sama Vriti)

## **MEDITATION**

Rise and fall of the breath at the navel (Nishta Dharna)

Closing: Thank you for coming, my name is Lucy. I'll be around for about 10 minutes after class if you have any questions or feedback. (Any announcements for the studio and when you are teaching next)

## **INVITATIONAL PHRASES**

When you feel ready

If you like

If it interests you

Taking your time

If it feels safe for your body today

There is no rush to...

At your own pace

If it feels comfortable for you

If you prefer

I invite you to

If it is appropriate for your body today

In your own time

All variations are invitations not obligations.

## **CUES TO PROMOTE SELF INQUIRY**

Notice

Become aware of

Identify

Allow

Listen

Invite

Release (physical body)

Check in with

Tap into the experience of

Approach with interest

Explore

Observe

Feel

Experiment with

Investigate

Bring awareness to

Pay attention to

Tune into

Be curious about

Notice what you notice

## **QUESTIONS TO PROMOTE SELF INQUIRY**

Where do I notice sensation?

Does this side feel different than the other?

Are there any shifts or adjustments you can make to feel more supported in this pose?

Are you interested in exploring a different variation?

What sensations are present in this moment?

What qualities do you notice in your breath?

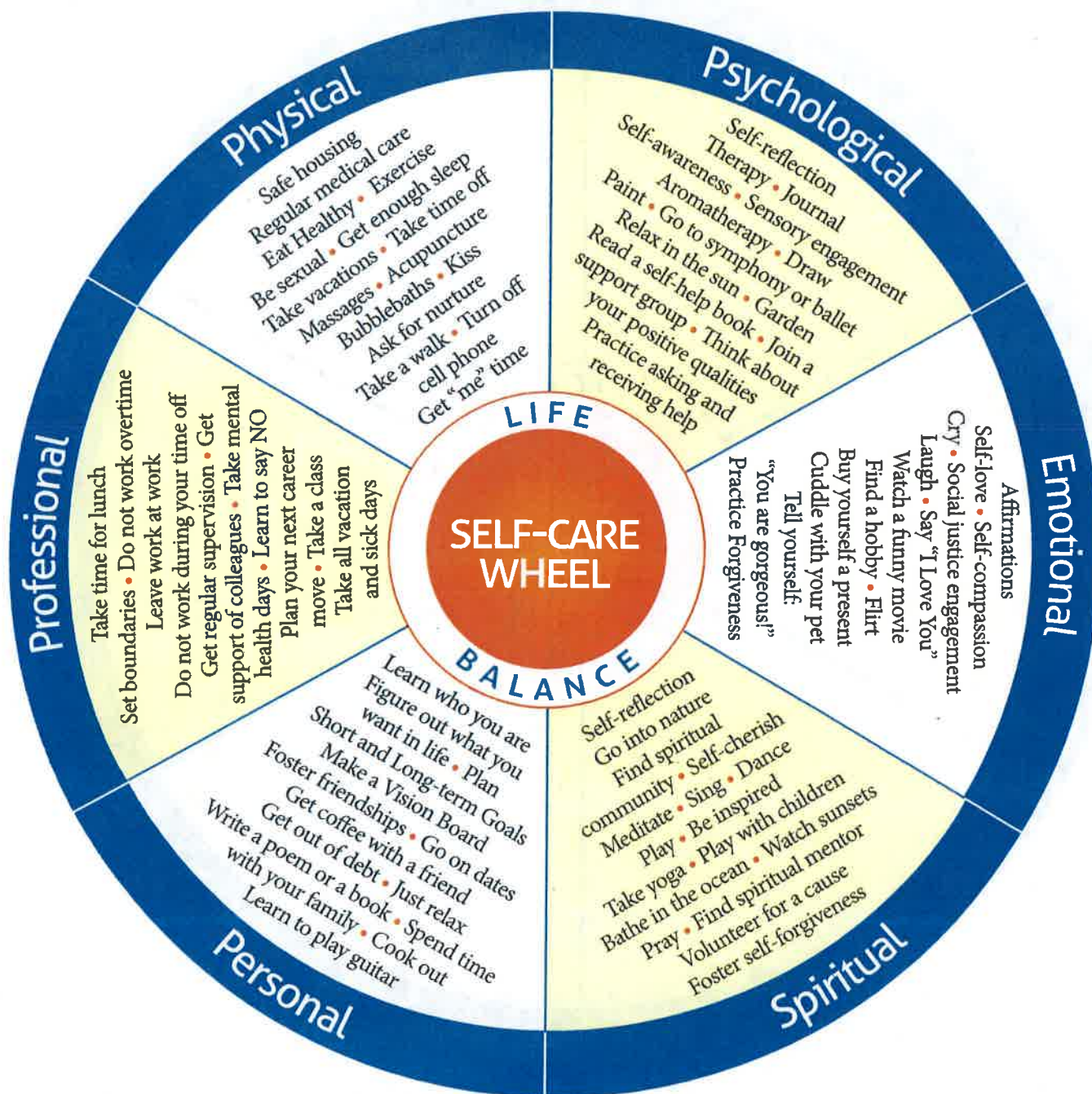
## **AVOID TRIGGERING CUES THAT CAN CONFUSE AND LEAD TO DISSOCIATION**

- “Inhale/Exhale” **Try.. “Follow the pace of your own breath”**
- Metaphors, analogies and multiple cues= confusion. “Juicy/yummy/spicy/delicious”
- Dogmatic cues/language: “Hands in prayer”, “bow”, “surrender”, “goddess pose”, referencing deities or scripture.
- Commanding or coercive cues: “please”, “I want you to..”, “push a little harder”, “go deeper”, “go to your edge” etc.
- Negative Directives: “Should”, “Don’t”, “If you can’t...then..” **Try...**
  - **“To encourage safe alignment...(guide your knee toward your pinky toe)”**
  - **“If it feels appropriate for your body... (bring your finger tips to the floor, or place your hands on the blocks.)”**
  - **“Where do I notice sensation?”**
- Certain body based cues: “bottom”, “butt”, “nipple”, “bra line”, “crotch”, “anus”, “barbie feet”, “flesh”, “fists”, etc.
- Sexualized cues: “kiss/hug/tickle”, “Play”, “Play with”, “Spread your \_\_\_\_\_”, “sexy”
- Violent cues: “Knife edge”, “Shoot your foot/leg back”, “carve out your belly”, “make fists”
- Gender Bias: “ladies”, “gentlemen”. **Try... “People”, “Folks”**
- Value Judgements: “good/bad”, “right/wrong”, “easy/difficult”. **Try...**  
**“Notice the sensations that arise in your body...try not to judge them. Simply observe what arises... if you experience pain or discomfort, allow yourself to move out of the pose.”**

### **Count Down in heating or difficult postures (only)**

*“You may chose to exit this posture at any time. If you’re interested, I invite you to remain for 5...4...3..2..1..*

# SELF-CARE WHEEL



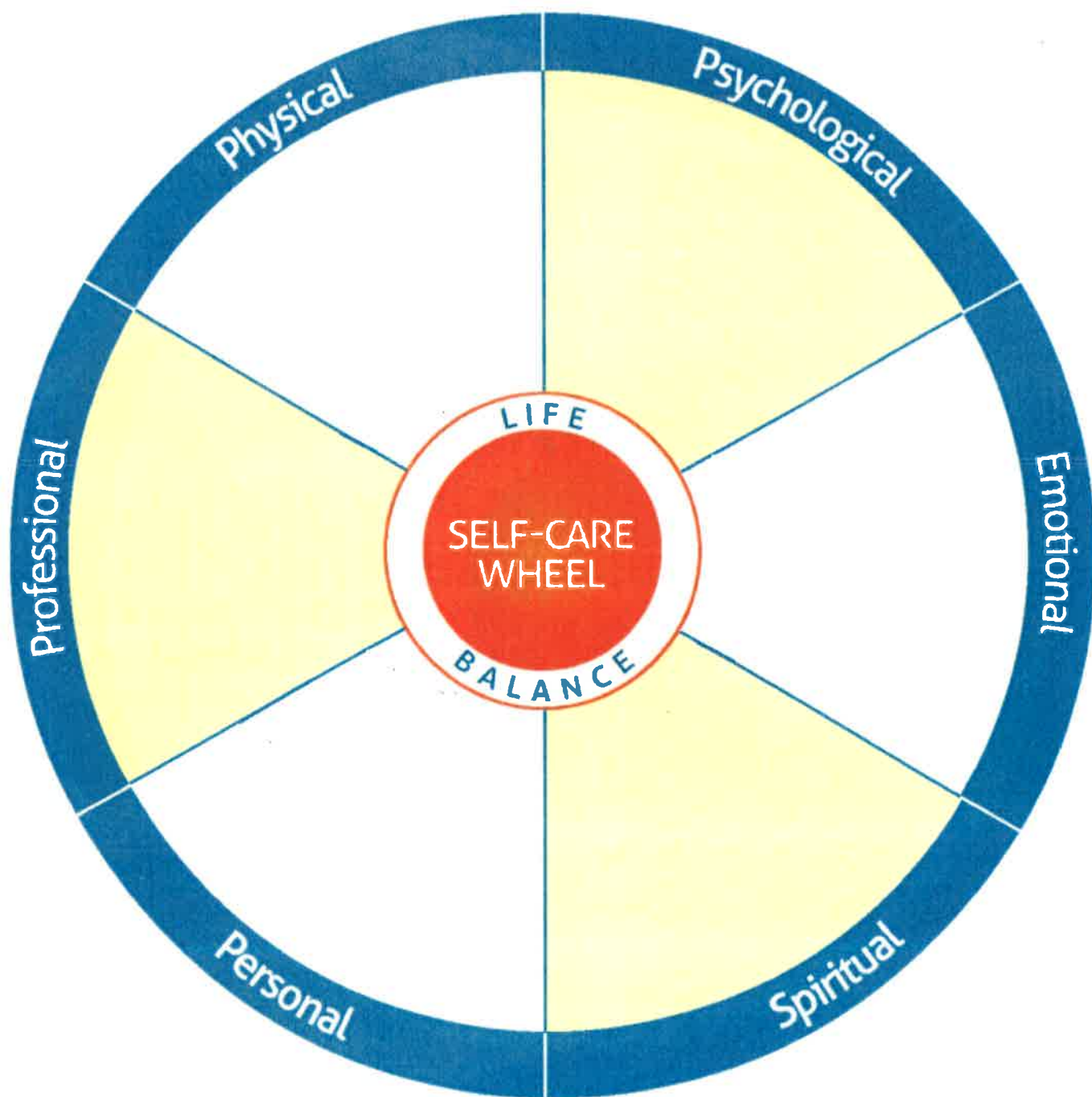
This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013).

Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide.

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# SELF-CARE WHEEL



## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Self-study, (**svadhyaya**) is the process of examining your behaviors, habits, and patterns so that you can cultivate self-awareness. Self-inquiry, (**vichara**) delves into the nature of the self and helps you become curious vs. reactive. Vichara leads to wisdom and discernment which allows you to remember and embody what you learn.

The **Pancha Maya Koshas**, are the five 'sheaths' that cover the real Self. It is the model most used in yoga therapy and a powerful tool of self-reflection.

Take a moment after you encounter each learning material/experience. Take a few slow and even breaths, tune inward with curiosity, and journal with the following prompts. There are no right or wrong answers. Noticing 'nothing' is actually something! If this is the first time you have done self-reflection in this way, please be patient. This practice is like building a muscle. It takes time and persistence. The more you practice this the more refined your awareness becomes. It might be helpful to know that you do not have to hand these in.

### **Annamaya Kosha**

Physical sheath. The physical body.

- **What sensations do you notice in the physical body? (Pain/comfort, tension/ease, flow/freeze, warm/cold, connection/disconnection, tingling, trembling, etc.)**

### **Pranamaya Kosha**

Energy sheath. Life Force.

Includes everything that animates the body (e.g., breath, chakras, nadis, meridians, etc.)

- **What do you notice about your breath? (Smooth, choppy, holding, rigid, flowing freely)**
- **Can you sense 'energy' in the body? Express it in any way words, colors, images...**

### **Manomaya Kosha**

Psychological or the mind sheath. Includes thoughts, emotions, desires.

- **Notice your thoughts. Write down any thoughts or emotions that are coming up for you right now in this moment. Try not to think about or analyze them, just write them down.**

### **Vijnanamaya Kosha**

Wisdom sheath. Includes intuition and discernment. Refined knowledge and experience.

- **Read your previous responses and step back. Take a moment and and breath steadily for a few moments. Write any new insight, awareness, or intuitive knowledge.**

### **Anandamaya Kosha**

Bliss sheath. The veil between universal consciousness, connection to source, Union.

- **Sit quietly for a moment and tune-in to the forces greater than you, operating behind the human experience. Allow a moment for connection, appreciation, and peace.**