

# Prison Yoga Project – YTT 2025 Notes

## Contents

<b>LANGUAGE:</b>	1
<b>INTRODUCTION:</b>	1
<b>MODULE 1 FOUNDATIONS OF YOGA:</b>	2
<b>MODULE 2 UNDERSTANDING BREATH:</b>	9
<b>MODULE 3 ROOTED IN SERVICE:</b>	12
<b>MODULE 4 UNCOVERING TRUTHS (SATYA):</b>	17
<b>MODULE 5 GIVING AND TAKING:</b>	23
<b>MODULE 6 THE SOCIAL DISEASE OF EXCESS:</b>	27
<b>MODULE 7 CLARIFYING OPPORTUNITY:</b>	29
<b>MODULE 8 EXPOSING THE DIRT &amp; WORKING FOR CLARITY:</b>	33
<b>MODULE 9 INTERPRETING CONTENTMENT:</b>	36
<b>MODULE 10 YOGA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE:</b>	40
<b>MODULE 11 EMPOWERMENT &amp; CHANGING THE NARRATIVES:</b>	45
<b>MODULE 12 WORKING FOR A JUST &amp; EQUITABLE FUTURE:</b>	49
<b>MODULE 13 &amp; 14 SERVICE AS A FACILITATOR:</b>	54

## LANGUAGE:

- Invitation
- Notice how this feels
- Is this more comfortable?
- Customize
- Explore
- Safer way to do something = for protection not for correction

## INTRODUCTION:

- Yoga philosophy meets social justice
- Energetic Movement of Trauma-Informed Sequencing:
  - Arrive → Energetic Awareness → Range of Motion → Centering & Somatics → Strength & Mobility → Integration & Relaxation → Connection/Concentration & Focus → Closing Breathwork

# MODULE 1 FOUNDATIONS OF YOGA:

## METHODOLOGY

### Stress Response

- Autonomic nervous system (ANS):
  - Part of the limbic system that compares present situation with past experiences to determine safety
  - No danger = resources go to maintenance of health
  - Danger = “fight or flight”
    - Social aspects when threat is another human, could turn into “fawn” (flattery/affection) or “freeze” (unresponsive/disengaged)

### Trauma

- Mostly we look at negative impacts = anger, fear, shame, guilt, body dissociation, mental disconnections
- But there are also good impacts = motivation, compassion, pride, perseverance, and commitment
- Examples of trauma:
  - Discrimination, no access to resources, inequality, gaslighting, abuse, food insecurity, manipulation, accident, loss, moving, change, illness, neglect, theft, military service, pandemic, bullying, incarceration, witness/observer/enforcer
- The 5 Kleshas
  - Ignorance
  - Fear of change
  - Avoiding the unpleasant
  - Grasping for please
  - I am-ness

### Mindfulness & Embodiment

- “Mindful awareness involves using the mind for a different purpose than thinking thoughts. Rather it focuses the mind on feeling sensations in the body and the movement of the breath. It is a practice of keeping the mind steady by paying close attention to what’s going on moment-to-moment. It involves being present in each moment allowing the mind to observe rather than interpret what is going on”
- Navigating mindfulness practices:
  - Present moment and understanding distractions/obstacles
  - Barriers: harm, lies, manipulation, deceit, lack of resources, opportunities, want, rumination, desensitization

### Recognizing harm & clarifying consent

- Word choice, tone, cadence of voice, mannerisms, and movement can impact how a participant feels

- Offering movement cues to provide a safe verbal guide to assist individuals in moving their bodies into a posture
  - Additional invitational cues may offer suggestions to further explore poses
  - Providing verbal invitations rather than manually attempting to adjust a person into a variation allows them to connect with their own body → offer everyone the verbal cue and demonstrate variations
  - “No intervention that takes power away from the survivor can possibly foster her recovery, no matter how much it appears to be in her immediate best interest”

## **Yoga as Service**

- PYP favors a post-lineage, participant-centered, and trauma-informed approach
- No ‘guru’, no ‘aspiration’, no hierarchical relationship between teacher and student
- Shifting control away from the teacher and empowering the practitioner to discover the truth of yoga as it is revealed to them through their own experience
- Lineage, post-lineage, and commodity yoga
  - Lineage yoga
    - Postural yoga traditions
    - Wisdom yoga traditions
    - Devotional yoga traditions
  - Post-lineage
    - Informal yoga groups
    - Yoga counterculture
  - Commodity yoga
    - Secular yoga schools
    - Yoga as therapy
    - Commercial yoga brands
- Healing-centered/trauma-informed yoga
  - Focuses on the needs of the individual (non-judgmental, releasing biases and assumptions; seeing, hearing, understanding, and providing)
  - Supporting confidence, competency, and inclusivity
  - Accessible practice
    - Access to programs and accessible postures and language
    - Promotes and supports sustainable healing
    - “I am the most important person in my life”
  - Science of healing-centered/trauma-informed yoga
    - Calibration (regulation) of the nervous system/body system support
    - Muscle memory for self-soothing, impulse control, and present moment engagement
    - Combining breath, range of motion movement, endurance training, balance work, and relaxation to identify embodied survival strategies
    - Building empathy, compassion, self-care, and self-advocacy

## **GOAL: offer an immersive somatic experience**

- Interoception (inward seeing)

- Discharging tension
- Developing resilience to stress/trauma
- Tools for self-regulation

## YOGA PHILOSOPHY

### History of Yoga

- Early yoga was transcribed on palm leaf 'paper' but was easily damaged
- Over 5,000+ years ago, maybe even 10,000 years
- Four main periods:
  - Pre-classical
    - Believed origin: Indus-Sarasvati civilization in Northern India
    - First referenced: Rig Veda, Sanskrit texts used by Brahman (Vedic priests) in praise of their Gods
    - Shifted yoga to be more internalized, but was a collection of ideas, beliefs, and techniques that often conflicted with each other
  - Classical
    - First systematic presentation of yoga: Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (believed to be written in 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE)
    - Eight-limbed path toward understanding the afflictions of humanity to work through the trauma of the human experience
    - Yoga Bhashya commentary on Yoga Sutras with 11 meditation postures
    - Darshanas: six philosophical schools emerged:
      - Yoga – Mind Training
      - Sankhya – Being
      - Vedanta – Upanishad-based mysticism
      - Nyaya – Logic
      - Vaishesika – Naturalism
      - Mimamsa – Rituals
  - Post-classical
    - Shift away from teaching of the ancient Vedas to embrace practices to rejuvenate the body and prolong life
    - Tantra Yoga (radical techniques to cleanse body and mind to seek connection to spirit beyond physical existence) paved way for Hatha Yoga (associate modern yoga)
    - Goraksha-Paddhati = 84 useful asanas
    - Hatha Yoga Pradipika = 32 additional postures
  - Modern
    - Yoga masters traveled West → 1893 Parliament of World Religions in Chicago = lectures on yoga from Swami Vivekananda
    - Swami Vivekananda = first Hatha Yoga School
    - Four primary types of yoga: Karma, Bhakti, Jnana, and Hatha
      - Balance of 4 = Raja Yoga "The Royal Path" toward personal enlightenment

# STYLES OF YOGA

## Karma Yoga

- Yoga of selfless action
- Mostly off-mat and is in service to others
- Examples: Volunteering, holding a door, thoughtful connection, collaboration

## Bhakti Yoga

- Ceremonial rituals and embodied devotion to spirit
- Examples: chanting, dancing, community union, and energetic connection through music

## Jnana Yoga

- Exploration, knowledge, and wisdom are ambitions
- Expanding our understanding of that which we are ignorant of
- Examples: studying both sides of a debated issue and exploring other cultures, beliefs, and histories

## Hatha Yoga

- Physical practices of yoga, the static + dynamic movements and transitions between postures (asana) and breath practices (Pranayama)
- Using postures to get into our bodies, not just learning to get our bodies into postures + breathing practices for relaxation, energy, or support focus and concentration
- Here are some of the schools of Hatha Yoga:
  - **Iyengar** – Focus on physical alignment and prop support to achieve accessibility to postures for all bodies.
  - **Ashtanga** – Most commonly associated with “Power” yoga, ashtanga follows specific sets of sequences postures combined with complimentary breathwork
  - **Vinyasa** – Combines a series of postures that flow from one to the next, incorporating sun salutations or repeat postures before transitions.
  - **Viniyoga** – This “applied yoga” offers a physical practice specific to the therapeutic needs of the participant
  - **Hot Yoga** – Formerly known as Bikram, this style follows a set 26 pose sequence and is practiced in a room heated to 106 degrees.
  - **Kundalini** – This often fast-paced practice uses expressive breath technique and repetition (sometimes 108 times), and hand mudras to move energy through the body.
  - **Restorative** – Slower-paced, body and breath-focused practice with more passive postures and deeper periods of rest.
  - **Yin** – With a greater focus on joint health and releasing tension held in the connective tissues, our body’s fascia, than muscle growth, yin offers a collection of postures that are held, often supported by a variety of props, for five minutes or more.

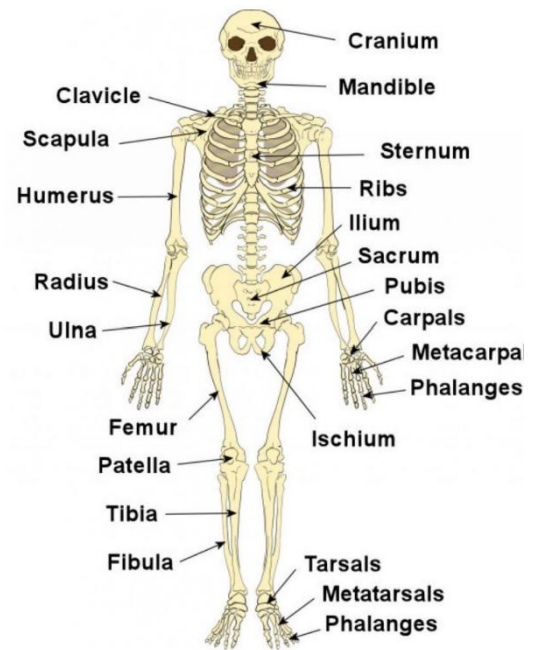
## Raja Yoga

- The “Royal Path” = balance between Karma, Bhakti, Jnana, and Hatha

## EMBODIED ANATOMY

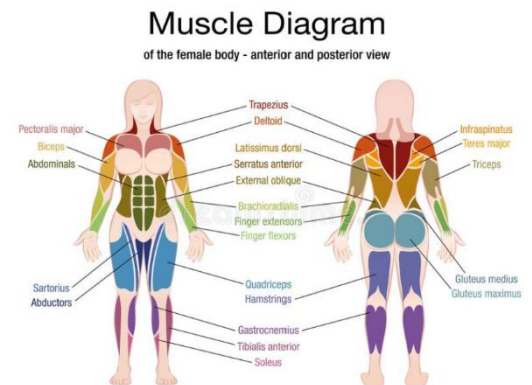
### The Skeletal System

- Five major functions: supports shape and structure of body, enables movement, protects internal organs, stores minerals and fat, and forms blood cells
- Two sections:
  - Axial – skull, spinal column, rib cage
  - Appendicular – appendages (shoulders, arms, hands, hips, legs, feet)
- Human has ~206 bones
  - 23 bones of focus for yoga
- Yoga sequencing suggestions:
  - “I invite you to...”
  - Offering the ‘less challenging/less deep’ version of the posture first before offering deeper versions of the posture
- Video: [Yoga poses – skeleton](#) (2 min)



### The Muscular System

- 3 types of muscle:
  - Skeletal – attached to skeleton (voluntary; can provide skeleton ability to move)
  - Cardiac – the heart (involuntary; form walls of heart and contract to pump the heart)
  - Visceral/Smooth – internal organs (involuntary; digestive or respiratory system)
- Over 600 muscles in the human body
- 5 major properties
  - Excitable or irritable (can receive and respond to stimulation)
  - Contractable (can contract or shorten)
  - Extensible (can be stretched without damage by application of force)
  - Elasticity (can return to shape after stretched)
  - Adaptability (hypertrophy-enlarge or atrophy-waste away)
- 5 types of movements
  - Adduction (toward midline)
  - Abduction (away from body)
  - Flexion (bending joint to decrease angle)
  - Extension (extending joint to increase angle)
  - Rotation (moving around axis)
- Supportive structures

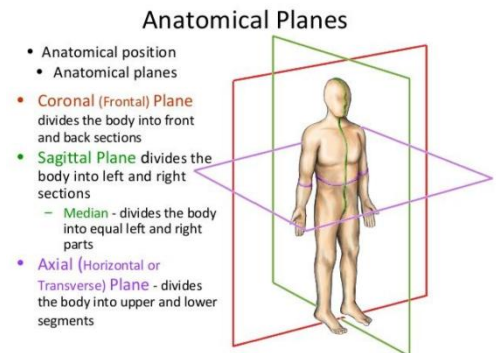


- Tendons – attach muscle to bone
- Fascia – attach muscle to muscle
- Antagonistic muscle pairs:
  - When we bend the elbow (flexion), the biceps contract and the triceps relax
    - Agonist = biceps
    - Antagonist = triceps
  - Quadriceps & hamstrings
  - Hip flexors & gluteus maximus
  - Gastrocnemius (calf) & tibialis anterior (shin)
- Muscular contractions:
  - Isotonic muscle contractions = those that result in movement (e.g., running & jumping)
  - Isometric muscle contractions = are when the muscle contracts but no movement (e.g., holding a balance)
- Concentric & eccentric isotonic contractions
  - Concentric muscle contraction = when the muscle shortens during the contraction (positive/upward phase)
  - Eccentric muscle contraction = when the muscle lengthens during the contraction (negative/downward phase)
- \*Think about the posture in relation to gravity
- Video: [muscular system animation](#) (6 min)

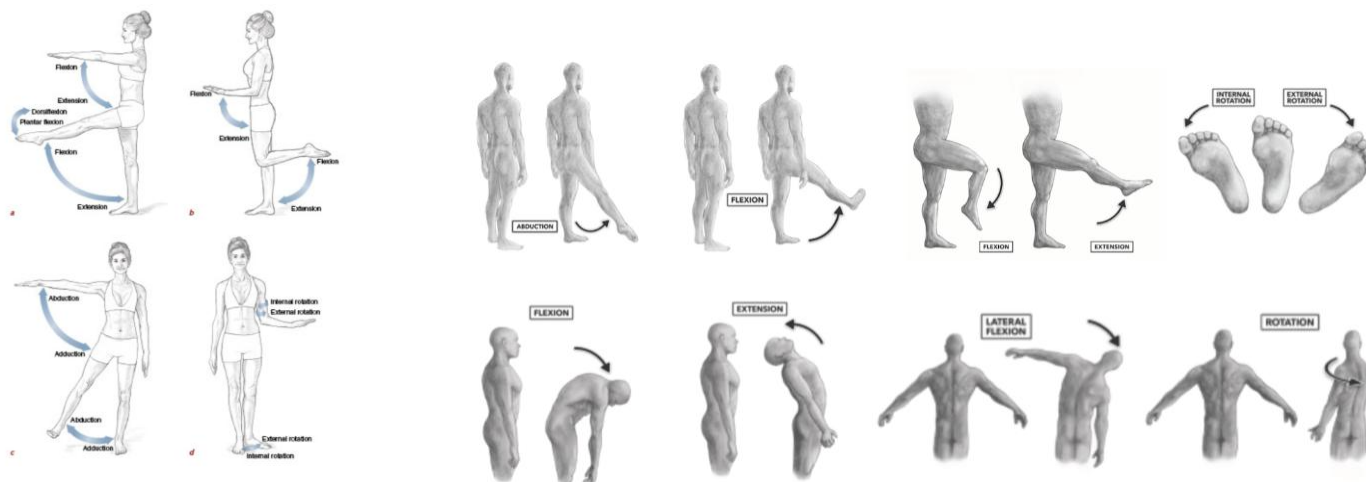
## POSTURES & SEQUENCING

### Understanding Anatomical Directional Planes

- Planes:
  - Coronal (frontal) Plane – divides body into front and back (movement that abducts and adducts from the central midline of the body)
    - Postures: Warrior II, Goddess Pose
  - Sagittal Plane– divides the body in right and left segments (focuses on flexion and extension movement)
    - Postures: Warrior I and Warrior III
  - Transverse Plane – considers top and bottom segments (focuses on twisting movements)
- Orientation and Directional Terms:
  - Superior (cranial) – toward the head or upper part
  - Inferior (caudal) – away from the head or toward the lower part
  - Ventral (anterior) – toward the front of the body; in front of
  - Dorsal (posterior) – toward the back of the body; behind
  - Medial – toward the midline; on the inner side of
  - Lateral – away from the midline; on the outer side of
  - Intermediate – between a more medial and a more lateral structure
  - Proximal – close to the origin of the body part or point of attachment of a limb to body trunk



- Distal – farther from the origin of a body part or the point of attachment of a limb to the body trunk
- Superficial (external) – toward or at the body surface
- Deep (internal) – away from the body surface; more internal
- Video: [planes of motion](#)
- Animation: [axis of movement](#)



## Postures & Muscles

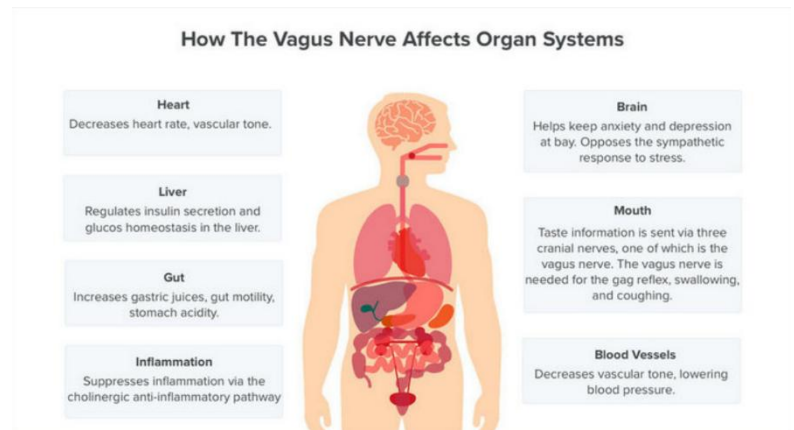
- Psoas: (hip flexor muscles)
  - Lunge = hip flexor stretch
- **Tadasana = mountain pose**
  - Front and back body working in this posture
  - Pressing into the ground with your feet = creating a straight leg
  - Engage glute muscles with a little bit of a squeeze
  - Finding neutral spine, which engages core
  - Little squeeze of shoulder blades toward each other and soften shoulders
- **Uttanasana = intense forward-bending pose**
- **Virabhadrasana II = Warrior II**



## MODULE 2 UNDERSTANDING BREATH:

### BENEFITS OF THE EXHALE

- How deep breathing helps anxiety
  - Breathing and exercising the diaphragm stimulates the vagus nerve to activate the parasympathetic nervous system  
→ calming things down
    - Vagus nerve: longest cranial nerve
- Autonomic nervous system (ANS)
  - Sympathetic (SNS) = fight/flight
    - Dilated pupils, empties bladder/digestive system, salivating is difficult, preps muscles for running, speeds up heartrate, releases cortisol and adrenaline, stimulates glucose release
  - Parasympathetic (PNS) = rest/digest
    - Constricts pupils, contracts bladder/digestive muscles, stimulates salivation, relaxes muscles, slows down heartrate, releases calming endorphins, lowers blood pressure
- Breathing practices:
  - Alternate Nostril Breath – Focus
  - “Ha” and Ujjayi Breath – Energy Release, Calm/Restore
  - Breath of Joy – Energizing
  - Lion’s Breath & Cooling Breath – Regulate Temperature
  - Belly Breath / 3 Part Breath – Calm & Focus
  - 4 Part Breath – Restorative



### GUIDING PRANAYAMA

#### Guiding breathing practices

- Facilitators offer inhale through nose, exhale through mouth
  1. Breathing through nose allows the hairs of the nostrils to filter out dust and dirt that can be harmful to lungs
  2. Maintain proper balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide
    - Releasing carbon dioxide too quickly can cause arteries and blood vessels to constrict, not allowing oxygen in our blood to reach the cells in sufficient quantity
- Video: [Pranayama – an introduction](#) (15 mins)

### 8 LIMBS OF YOGA – PATANJALI’S YOGA SUTRAS

#### Yoga Sutras – History

- Divided into four books:
  1. Understanding the mind
  2. Purifying the mind

3. Stabilizing the mind
4. Going beyond the mind

## Yamas (Collective Support/Considerations for our interaction with the world)

*(How do we give these to us and then to others)*

- Do we speak, act, and think in line with our personal truth? Are we open to opportunities for ourselves and support opportunities for others or do we steal these opportunities? Are we seeking comfort or satisfaction beyond our physical self or are we able to sit with discomfort and learn way to heal from within? Do we hold on to pain or familiarity that no longer serves us?
- Satya (Truth)
- Ahimsa (considering non-harm; service/support)
  - Is this harmful?
- Aparigraha (non-attachment/release)
- Asteya (non-stealing; gifts/opportunities)
- Brahmacharya (non-excess; moderation)

## Niyamas (Self-support/Considerations for internal exploration)

- Sauca (cleanliness/purity)
- Svadhyaya (self-study)
- Isvara Pranidhana (surrender)
- Santosa (contentment)
- Tapas (self-discipline)

## Asana (Physical practices)

## Pranayama (breathing/breath awareness and control)

## Pratyahara (Withdrawal of the senses)

## Dharana (Focusing attention through concentration)

## Dhyana (Absorption in the object of attention, effortless concentration)

## Samadhi (The experience of oneness, or union, with the object of attention)

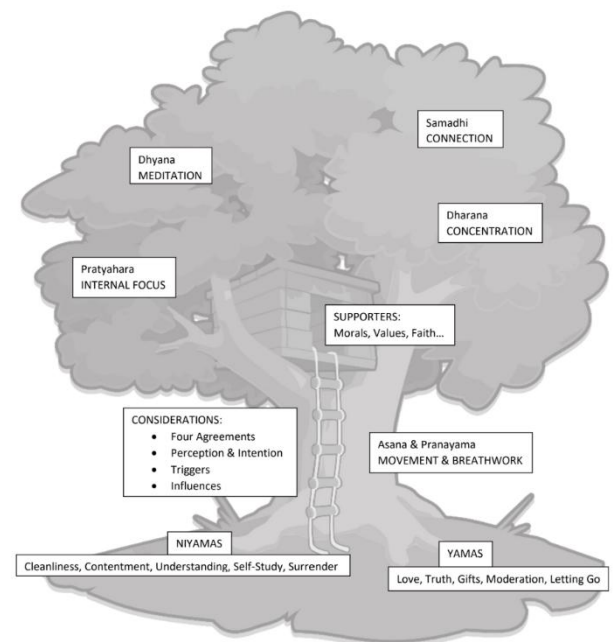
- Sense of inter-being with the world
- Sense of bliss, or the balanced alignment of your mind, body, and spirit

*It is not always acceptable to “remain undisturbed by the errors of others”. But this is more suggesting that we observe and act but do not embody this pain within ourselves so that we can remain united within our own course of action*

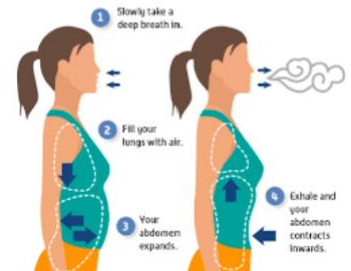
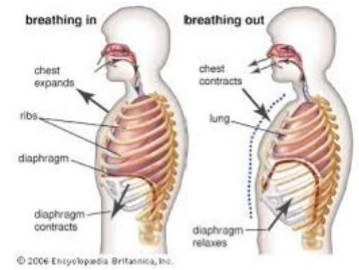
## THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

### Lungs & Cellular Respiration

## THE YOGA TREE



- Lobe-finned fish – historical the first organism (fish) to breathe air with lung
- Cellular respiration
  - Moving oxygen from the atmosphere to lungs, blood, and to cells while moving carbon dioxide from cells to blood, to lungs, to atmosphere
    - Step 1: draw air into lungs
    - Step 2: oxygen travels into the pulmonary circulation from the lungs to the heart and in the systemic circulation from the heart to the cells of the body and carbon dioxide travels in the opposite direction
  - Three main sets of muscles: intercostal, abdominal, and respiratory diaphragm
- Video: [respiratory system](#) (10 mins)
- Animation: [3D view of respiration](#)



## NORMALIZING MODERATION, GROWTH, & COMPETENCY

### Setting foundation of patience and curiosity

- Come from a place of acceptance
- Non-competitive, but rather focused on own goals and progress
- Confidence, inclusion, and connection
- Invitational cueing
- Normalizing variations of postures
- Encouragement
- Article: [progression to deep integration – simple yoga](#)

## MODULE 3 ROOTED IN SERVICE:

### INTRODUCTION TO SEQUENCING

#### Traditional Arch Sequencing

- Centering → Spinal Warm-up → Sun Salutation → Standing Postures (Sagittal Plane) → Standing Postures (Frontal Plane) → Abdominals → Balance → Deep Stretch → Inversions & Twists → Relaxation

#### Healing-Centered Sequencing

- Discharge/Energetic Release → Range of Motion Warm-up → Centering & Somatics → Strength & Resilience → Coordination & Focus → Integration & Relaxation → Closing Breathwork

### TRAUMA-INFORMED SEQUENCING: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

#### Energetic Awareness Sequencing:

- Supporting participants to release or balance excess or low energy through dynamic and natural movements, such as shaking, stomping, or rhythmic tapping.
  - More examples: shaking limbs, jumping jacks, shoulder rolls, rubbing hands together, body circles, hula-hooping the hip or torso rotation, vocal release
- Notice what your body may need in a moment, may be dysregulated/unregulated
- Know how to hold space for others while honoring yourself
- Supporting nervous system vs. posture-focused sequencing
  - Acknowledgement that the space they were in before may have been a lot through energy release/work through
  - Gearing up to co-regulate together
- Heart rate variability (HRV)
  - Gently tuning into body's energetic shifts = promotes nervous system regulation and creates muscle memory for self-regulation

#### Range of Motion Warm-up:

- Encouraging participants to explore joint mobility and focus inward through gentle movements like spinal flexion, rotation, or shoulder circles.
- Movement head to toe and see how the body is feeling today
- Just starting to move the muscles but not necessarily engaging them yet
  - Examples: spinal movement – flexion, rotation, lateral flexion, shoulder movement (internal and external rotation with Y, T, W shapes), hip movement (abduction and adduction), eye movement (focus on right/left as the head turns opposite), neck movement (turn side to side – not rolling head to the back)

#### Centering & Somatics:

- Creating moments for breath and body awareness, helping participants connect with sensations and regulate their autonomic nervous system (ANS).
- Could be stillness, could be tense and release – whatever can take someone inward

## **Strength & Resilience:**

- Guiding postures that generate heat and engage the body to build strength and mental focus.
- Start to add more traditional looking postures (e.g., muscle contractions and releasing; sun salutations, standing postures)
  - Engaging muscles
  - Examples: seated or standing cat/cow, dragon lunges, sun and moon salutations, warrior postures

## **Coordination & Focus:**

- Supporting balance and flexibility while reinforcing mindful awareness of the body's movements and needs.
- Built space within the mind to have coordination and focus
- Examples: balance – tree variations, eagle variations, mountain, stretch postures – pyramid, forward fold, triangle variations

## **Integration & Relaxation:**

- Transitioning to restorative postures and breathwork to help participants connect with a sense of calm and closure.
  - Examples: seated hip openers, supine twists, stretches, bridge variation, legs up wall variations, seated meditation

## **Closing Breathwork:**

- Important to close out so that they can be aware, alert, and focused to return to the community they were just in before this and close out practice
- Bringing in Pranayama throughout each section as well

## ***Things to Consider When Sequencing—***

- Understanding participant's energy/mobility level
  - Class welcome – be a detective and see what the class looks like
  - Energetic release
  - Dynamic movement
- Offering opportunities for self-soothing
  - Centering
- Building competency
  - Strength and mobility
- Building self-awareness
  - Concentration and focus
  - Integration and relaxation
- **Questions to ask yourself:**
  - What are you “asking” of participants?
    - What movement, pace, and postures are you doing?
    - Understanding if postures may not be accessible or may be triggering for someone (could be triggering: thread the needle, wall support, hands and knees, tailbone in the air, child's pose, downward dog/forward folds, happy baby)

- Are you setting people up for success?
  - Have you offered postures that support the body?
  - Are you building opportunities to deepen self-awareness & self-soothing?
- Do the movements complement one another?
  - Are you offering movements that allow for safe transitions?
  - Are you considering what is necessary in each posture?
- **Disclosures for yoga classes:**
  - Moment of learning for yourself if something you do is activating or triggering
  - Giving space to voice opinions or feelings in nonjudgemental way
  - “Here are some things that you may or may not experience”
  - Orient to the room: “here are where the tissues are”
  - “Here are some emotions you may or may not feel”
  - “Here are some things that I have felt in these situations” (self-disclosure to allow others to feel like they can or give words to their experiences)
  - Conversational/community approach vs. directive/instructional approach
    - Introduce yourself with name and why did you come to yoga, what are you hoping to get out of this, what are you expecting or are you expecting anything?

## TRAUMA-INFORMED METHODOLOGY IN ACTION

### Example Class Flow:

1. **Arrival & Check-in:** Facilitator welcomes participants and sets the tone for the class. Props are provided to meet individual needs.
2. **Energetic Awareness:** Dynamic and natural movements like shaking limbs, stomping, or arm circles to release excess energy or generate energy within the body.
3. **Range of Motion Warm-up:** Gentle movements to mobilize joints and explore “today’s body,” such as spinal rotations and hip circles.
4. **Centering & Somatics:** Breath-focused practices and grounding postures to support regulation, like Three-Part Breath or seated Mountain Pose.
5. **Strength & Resilience:** Heat-building sequences such as Warrior variations or Sun Salutation modifications.
6. **Coordination & Focus:** Balance-focused postures like Tree Pose and deeper stretches to explore flexibility.
7. **Integration & Relaxation:** Restorative postures, guided visualizations, and closing breathwork to foster reflection and calm.

## YAMAS – AHIMSA (non-harm)

### Ahimsa & the Inner Journey

- Harm vs. non-harm
  - Within relationships
    - Self
    - Knowledge (is your knowledge/lack of knowledge harmful?)
    - Humans
    - Living beings – if you put your beliefs outward to judge others it is harm

- Nature/environment
- Electronics/technology
- Information (in the information you receive/what do you let in?)
- Interests (do they nourish or deplete you? Are they your interests or put on you?)
- Survival
  - Shelter
  - Nourishment
  - Livelihood
- Where are your actions/reactions rooted from? Are they rooted in harm or non-harm? Will your actions help the healing?
- We let the outside harm us rather than looking inside and ask “how does this help me?”
- Identifying harm vs. ahimsa
  - Can you identify the ahimsa?
- Perception and ahimsa
  - The mirror consideration
    - What perspective are decisions made from?
    - Choice by reflection or by embodied connection?
  - Ahimsa says that we have all the answers we need internally and inside, we don't need to worry about what other people think or say or do, we have all the answers when we turn internally and realize you deserve to feel empowered and you are the most important person

## Seeing self, seeing others

- Healing centered yoga
  - Lack of ahimsa when our own energy is disrupted by external influence
    - Causing discomfort, detachment, and distrust within our minds, bodies, and connection to our contented selves
  - Yoga offers opportunities to identify what these influences are, how they are causing harm, and how to relieve the embodied residue that harm leaves behind

## Identifying Assumptions and Perceptions

- Holding awareness of the assumptions and judgements we carry
- How can we practice Ahimsa to advocate for healing support within the justice system and how can this shift support the healing of our communities?

## FROM THE GROUND UP; ROOTING THROUGH THE FEET

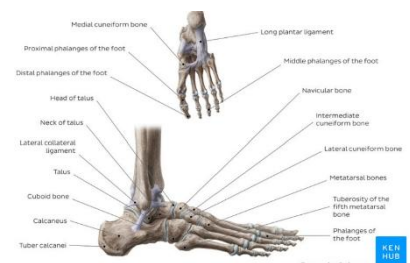
### Foot as a connection to the ground/Earth

- Video: [bones of the foot](#) - Supports the rest of the body
- Pada Bandha (foot lock): [video \(4 mins\)](#)

## BUILDING CORE AWARENESS

### Physical and spiritual core to draw inward and support ourselves

- Abdominals





- 3 layers
  - External oblique (on top of the internal oblique)
  - Internal oblique
  - Transverse abdominis (beneath internal oblique)
- These create a girdle around the waist, tied together in the front of the rectus abdominis
- Attach along bottom of ribcage, then head down to the top of the pelvis and the iliac crest
- For stability and movement of trunk
- Can move the pelvis = if the ribcage is stabilized, the pubic bone can be lifted upwards, creating a posterior tilt of the pelvis

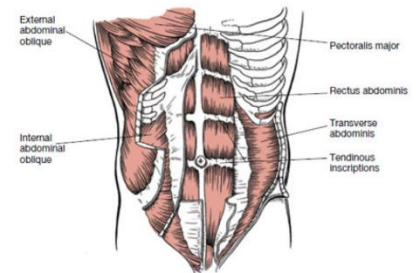


Figure 1-29  
Muscles of the abdominal wall

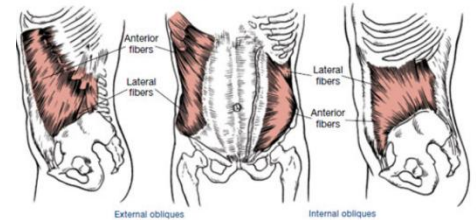
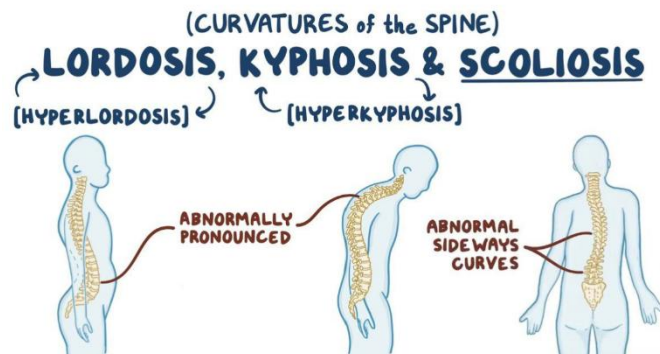
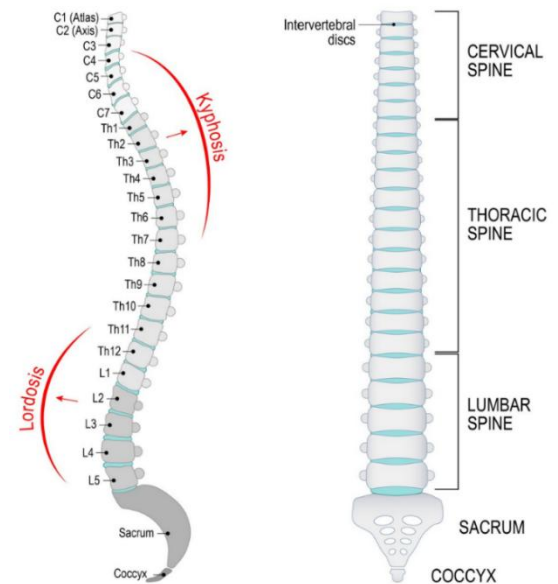


Figure 1-30  
External and internal obliques

## EXPLORING THE SPINE

### Central connection: the spine

- Video: [anatomy of the spine](#) (3 min)
- Each vertebra connects with fascia, blood vessels, muscles, and nerves
- Spine is a system of skeletal, neurological, electrical, vascular, and chemical input = when balanced and connected creates fluid movement
- Spine as a pyramid:
  - In stacking the vertebrae bottom to top, the spine has a broad base and narrow top, giving it stability
- Spine as a string of pearls:
  - Exceptionally mobile, joined like pearls strung together to form a necklace, each pearl with independent movement
- The weak links of the spine:
  - Some segments are limited = located at junctions where the curves of the spine change direction
- Cervical spine:
  - Supports the skull
  - Angled lordotic curve, the curve's bow arches toward the front of the throat
- Thoracic spine:
  - Kyphotic curve, the bow of the curve arches towards the shoulders
- Lumbar spine:
  - Lordotic curve, the fused sacral and coccyx, a slight kyphotic curvature





# MODULE 4 UNCOVERING TRUTHS (SATYA):

## INVITATIONAL CUEING/ACCESSIBLE OFFERINGS

### Inclusive language:

#### **Introduction to class**

- Introduce yourself
- Welcome each individual to the room
- Invite them to share their experience and goals for their practice
- State your intention in offering the practice
- Verify participants' consent to be present
- Allow time for the conversation

#### **Guiding practice**

- Offer postures and cues with attention to all who join
- Guide clear anatomical cues to bring each body safely to the pose
- Then you can provide opportunities to explore, expand, embody
- Guide with attention to Ahimsa and Satya
- Recognize ways asymmetry may appear in yoga room
  - How can you offer participants the opportunity to explore their inner guidance and wisdom?
  - How can you invite equality, equanimity, and support into the practice?

#### **Anatomical cues**

- Verbally guide a participant to move their body into the postures you are offering safely
- Examples:
  - Slowly reach your arms toward the front of the room
  - Gently shift your weight to your left leg
  - Bend your right knee as it is comfortable

#### **Exploratory cues**

- Examples:
  - Notice how your side body feels as you begin to lean to the right
  - What sensations do you feel as you deepen your lunge?  
What do you observe as you begin to slide your left foot back?
- Demonstrate smaller movements to start with, observing how the participants move with you
  - Example: if you offer a posture with hands placed at the hips and offer an invitational cue to lift the arms overhead but only two participants seem to have the range of motion to do so, demonstrate the variation with lifted arms but return your hands to your hips, or perhaps offer arms reaching at chest level if that is more accessible to the group

#### **Invitational cueing**

- **(What do you) Notice ...**
  - Notice how your body responds to your breath

- What do you notice as you shift your weight to your heels, the balls of your feet?
- **Give yourself permission to...**
  - Hold this posture for another breath
  - Soften your shoulders
- **Explore...**
  - Moving in and out of this warrior pose
  - Your range of motion as you move your arms overhead
- **Take time to observe...**
  - The felt sense of your heartbeat as we begin to find stillness
  - How the muscles of your arm engage as you bend and straighten your elbow
- **I invite you to...**
  - Soften your gaze or close your eyes as you are comfortable
  - Rest your hands on your heart and your belly
- **How does it feel (when/if)...**
  - You reach toward your knees (shins, ankles, toes)?
  - You roll your shoulder, maybe rotate your body toward a gentle twist?
- **Bring your awareness to...**
  - Your connection to the earth
  - The activity in your mind

## **YAMAS – SATYA (truth; sot-yah)**

### **Satya, Exploring our Truth**

- Non-falsehood, non-distortion, non-ignorance
- Suggests that lying is a form of harm and to carry untruths contributes to pain and suffering
  - Also considers awareness of the harms that truth can inflict
  - There are also occasions where truth causes harm to ourselves but benefits others
- “Think before we act/speak” and choose words that do not compromise the truth, but also do not distort, use, or manipulate the literal truth for personal benefit or gain
- Gut instinct provides us with a few thoughts on how to best proceed

### **Global Truths**

- Social justice violations
- Yoga is a powerful tool for social justice = how to reclaim and develop life skills, physical, and mental resilience and not become overwhelmed by the injustice they face and see in the world

### **Barriers to truth**

- What we have lived through impacts our truth
- “Popular opinion” = quid pro quo or “it is what it is”
- Generational “truths”
  - The lore may be preserving the memory of the individual – lets find the balance between the truth and honoring the individual
  - What was it true for them and why is it true/not true for me?
- Conditioning (samskara)

- Conditioning to believe that you're the problem
- If this is what lives within us, what are we sharing externally?
- Distorted/conditioned falsehood
- Environment & no exposure to alternative

## **Vidya & Avidya**

- To know and perceive, see & understand
- Clear perception of self and being truthful to that

## **When telling the truth causes harm**

- Personal attacks, manipulation, assumptions and biases

## **When withholding the truth causes harm abuse/assault cover-up**

- Abuse/assault cover-up, genocide, 'status quo'

## **Connecting to truth**

- What calls to you
  - Nature, stories (tales of: triumph, overcome, discovery, curiosity)
  - What stirs you?
  - What is always present?
  - Intentions, sankalpas, mantras
- Ideas of self (perception)
- Global understanding (environmental, political, resources)
- Relationships (interpersonal, community, country)
- Spirituality
- Truth as color perception
  - Truth in relation to the person and how to understand that (even if you don't have the same truth as them) but rather you recognize its physically impossible to

## **PRANAYAMA**

### **4 Part Breath – Kumbhaka Pranayama**

*Use a visual like a box (inhale 4, hold 4, exhale 4, rest 4)*

- Supports respiratory system & circulation
- Boosts creativity, concentration, and cognitive function

### **Victorious Breath – Ujjayi Pranayama**

- Builds heat in the body
- Increases awareness/presence
- Decreases blood pressure and calming
- Supports lung capacity & oxygenation of blood
- Reduces phlegm and relieves coughing

### **Alternative Nostril Breath – Nadi Shodhana**

*Plug left nostril, release out right nostril, plug right nostril and release out left nostril*

- Supports oxygenation of the blood
- Supports clear & balanced respiratory channels
- Calms nervous system
- Supports mental clarity/function
- \*offer tissues beforehand
- \*Could be triggering for those with drug addiction

### **Lion's Breath – Simhasana Pranayama**

*Inhale through nostrils and exhale through mouth with tongue out, eyes open, forceful slow*

- Relieves tension in head, face, and chest
- Supports throat/voice
- Therapeutic for asthma, sore throat, and respiratory ailments
- Supports bad breath

### **Bee Breath – Bhramari Pranayama**

*Plug your ears, breathe in, make a humming noise as you breathe out through your mouth*

- Relieves cerebral tension
- Stimulates pituitary and pineal glands
- Supports throat ailments and voice
- Supports mental clarity
- Supports quality of sleep
- Dissipates anger

### **Breath of Fire – Kapalabhati Pranayama**

*Inhalation passive stomach out, exhalation (quick and forceful, stomach in)*

- Rapid increases of alertness
- Balances energy
- Stimulates solar plexus
- \*Not super accessible, particularly for those

### **Cooling Breath – Sheetali Pranayama**

*Inhale through curled tongue and exhale through nostrils or open mouth*

- Cools physical body
- Encourages free flow of energy
- \*Not accessible if you can't curl your tongue (just let tongue hang)

### **Cyclic Sighing**

*Inhale slowly, at the top sip a little more air, exhale slowly and fully, repeat*

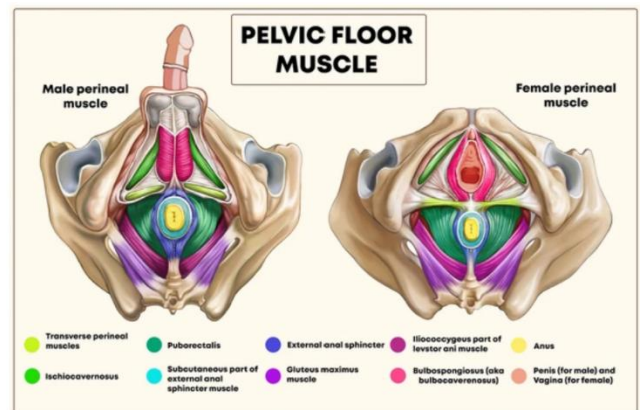
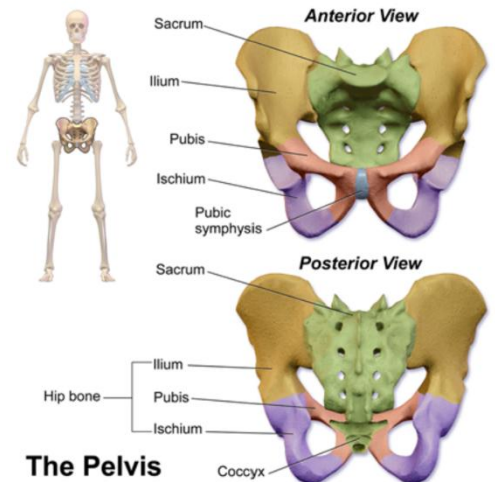
- Probably the one to use the most

- Decreases anxiety
- Supports mood
- Supports rest

## HIP/PELVIC JOINTS & STRUCTURE

### The pelvis

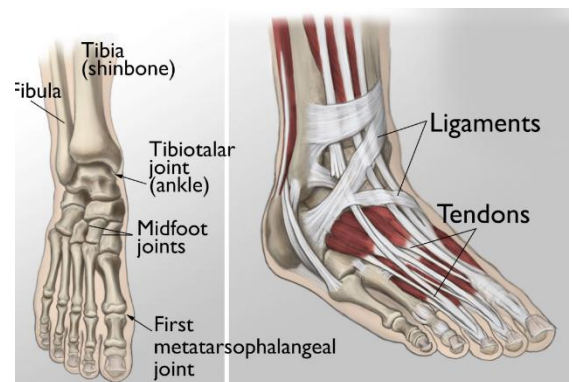
- Hip joint = connection of the lower limbs to the axial skeleton
- The head of the femur bones, the large bones at the top of the leg, our thigh bones → connect to the acetabulum, a socket groove that joins the ischium and ilium
- The femoral head and the acetabulum = ball and socket joint of our hips = mobility
- Purple area = the ischium
  - Two points on the bottom of the ischium = ischial tuberosities or sitz bones
    - May be uncomfortable in seated postures → sitting on block or bolster may alleviate some pain in hips and pelvis
- Muscles of core and how these muscles support posture and attach our legs to the hip girdle
- Pelvic floor muscles
  - Help maintain urinary and bowel continence
  - Support sexual activity, pleasure, and comfort
  - **Mula Bandha** is the yogic energy lock of the pelvic floor
- Video: [hip joint/pelvis anatomy](#) (10 mins)



## KNEES & ANKLES

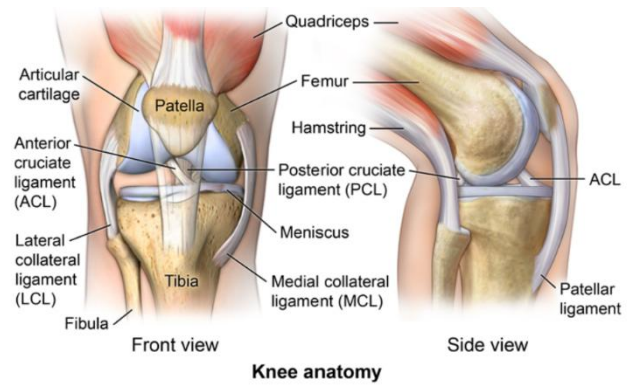
### Ankles

- May have history of injury, leading to 'mistrust' of ankles
- How to build confidence within ankle structure can create strong foundation to continue to build mindful connection to own strength/abilities
- Exploring ankle movement:
  - Lifting and lowering heels while standing (using the wall or chair for balance as needed)
  - Directional movement of the ankle (e.g., writing a word or phrase)
  - Option to engage ankles during standing postures by lifting onto the balls of the feet
- Video: [anatomy of ankle](#) (7 mins)



## Knees

- Participants could have a history of knee injuries
  - Prolonged time spent in kneeling postures, hands and knees, squats, lunges, or transitions that put strain on knees may contribute to discomfort
  - Could offer supportive props (e.g., blankets, mats to provide extra cushion)
  - Mindful of alignment and engagement of knee joint and supportive muscles
- Video of [knee anatomy](#) (11 mins)



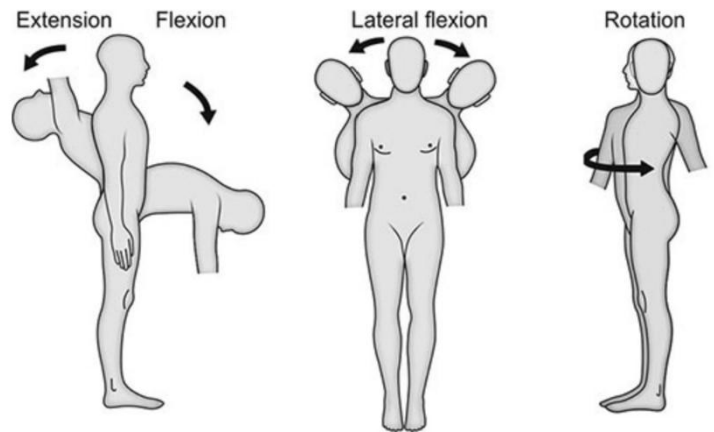
## POSTURES & SEQUENCING – SPINAL MOVEMENT

### Warming up the spine

- Lengthening, flexion, extension, lateral flexion, and rotation
- Video: [spine stretches](#) (8 mins)

### Range of Motion Sequencing

- “Today’s body”
  - Value the needs of your body in the present moment
- “Personal edge”
  - The point where a stretch sensation is felt without progressing into strain or discomfort
  - Brings agency and self-empowerment, establish personal boundaries



## MODULE 5 GIVING AND TAKING:

### TEACHING FOR PARTICIPANTS' NEEDS

#### Creating a safe space

- Intentionally creating a safe space without saying “this is a safe space” but letting them decide that for themselves (or use ‘welcome space’)

#### Avoiding the yoga show

- How you offer the postures contributes to the accessibility of the class you guide

## PHILOSOPHY – ASTEYA & GIVING

### Asteya (ah-stay-yah; non-stealing)

- Considers how we steal opportunities and experiences from ourselves and others with our words, thoughts, and actions
- Control
  - While constructive conversations are supportive and beneficial, the emotions stirred when others do not “do as has been suggested,” steals from them the opportunity to follow their voice and path
- What is stealing? Where did you learn this from?
- Stealing from self (and others)
  - Think of creating opportunity as Asteya
  - Anything that takes from someone’s opportunities or resources
  - Self-doubt, worry, concern, guilt, shame
  - Denying self, we don’t think we are worthy
  - When you listen to respond (how you’re going to respond to someone rather than truly hearing/listening to them first)
  - Perception – stealing from self because believing what others say or believe about you
  - Defensiveness
  - Misaligned expectations
- Ways humans steal from others
  - Mass incarceration, slavery, human trafficking, colonization, oppression, lack of access to resources, gaslighting, body/identity shaming, listening to respond, assumption and biases, projecting expectations, drugs, worry, judgement and prejudice, manipulation

### Kleshas – Barriers of non-stealing

- Ignorance – Avidya
- Ego – Asmita
- Attachment – Raga
- Aversion – Dvesha
- Fear – Abhinivesha

### Confronting the thieves in our heads

- As we are exposed to experiences, we act → react → embody → repeat

- Classical conditioning, habituating to the new 'normal'

## Samskara

- Mental impressions left by all thoughts, actions, and intents that an individual has ever experienced – they can be thought of as psychological imprints
- Conditioning over time

## Trauma and the nervous system – polyvagal perspective

- Our response to the event rather than the event itself = trauma
- Co-regulating with others

## GIFTS OF KNOWLEDGE: BEING A LEARNER, TEACHER, & COLLABORATOR

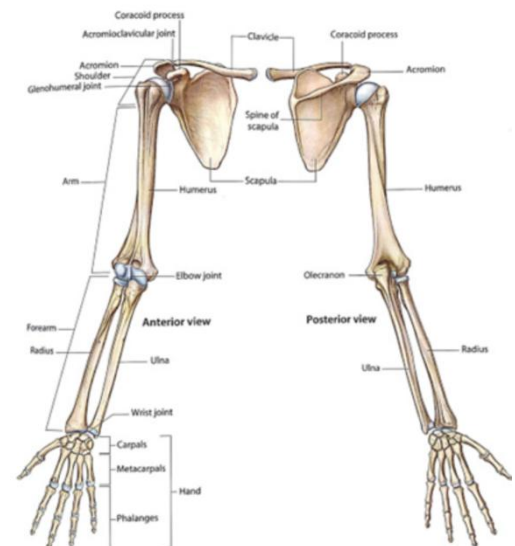
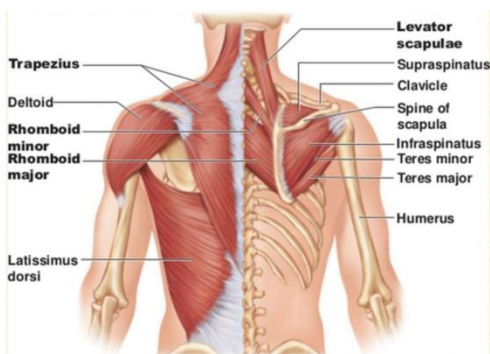
### Give rather than take

- We understand how our body needs to be supported and build competence to accomplish this understanding, so that over time we can achieve the embodiment of the posture
- Stealing = redirecting our hopes or expectations onto others with little to no attention to their own ambitions (e.g., do as I say, not as I do) type of thing

## SHOULDER JOINTS & STRUCTURE

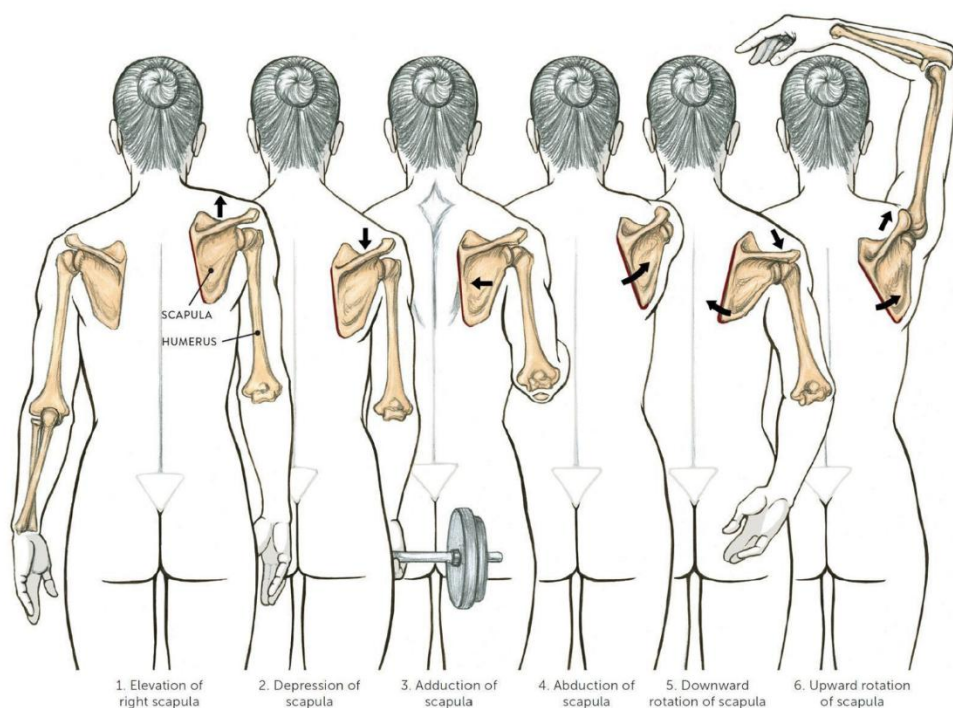
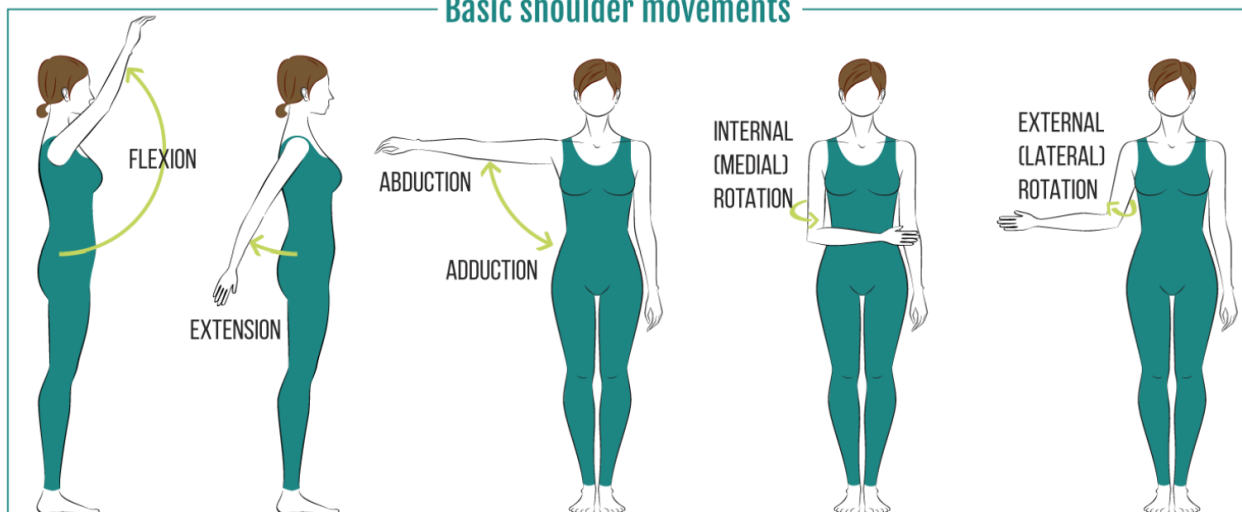
### Shoulders

- Support the arms while connecting the upper limbs to the axial skeleton
- Layering of muscles and bone structure allows for lots of movement
- Greatest range of motion in all of the body
- Video: [shoulder anatomy](#) (7 mins)





## Basic shoulder movements



## WRISTS & ELBOWS

### Wrists

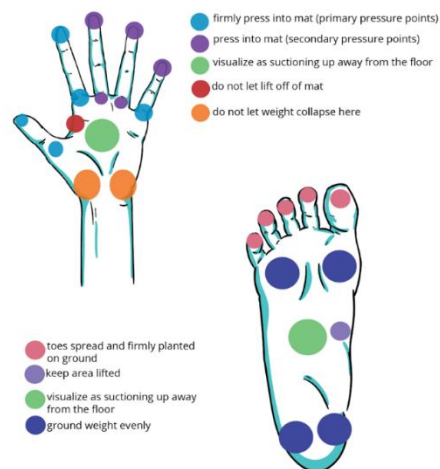
- Weight-bearing structures in postures
- Connecting the hands to the mat can take time for many new participants
- Video: [bones of the hand](#) (3 mins)

### Elbows

- Paying attention to palms and fingers and the engagement of the shoulders will offer support to the forearms, biceps, and triceps to secure the elbows

## HANDS + FEET PLACEMENT

Yoga poses start from the ground up. Having proper hand and foot placement is so important for developing a strong base for stability, and avoiding wrist, hip and knee pain. Below are two simple diagrams for you to refer to when practicing your poses.



- Video: [elbow anatomy](#) (8 mins)

## CENTERING & SOMATICS

### Centering

- Opportunity to pause and unify the mind, body, and sensations
- Space to respond with clarity and authenticity
- Intentional practice and focus
- Honor the present moment
  - When we rush through or skip essential preparatory steps (e.g., balancing energy or warming up the body), we may “steal” from the full potential of the practice
- Taking time to pause
  - Self-awareness
  - Connection
  - Understanding of the present
- Sequencing:
  1. Build awareness of how releasing or balancing energy affects their body (Energetic Awareness)
  2. Unify the movement of joints and muscles (Range of Motion)
  3. Begin connecting these sensations to their ability to self-soothe and regulate (Centering)

### Centering & Somatics Techniques

- Tense-and-release exercises
- Brushing
- Tapping
- Shaking the limbs
- Space orientation
  - Noticing the environment, such as the ground beneath you or objects around you
- Gentle compression or self-touch (e.g., pressing palms together, placing hands on the chest, or giving arms a light squeeze) → can offer grounding/reassurance
- **Heart Rate Variability (HRV)**
  - Supporting nervous system in regulation

# MODULE 6 THE SOCIAL DISEASE OF EXCESS:

## YAMAS – BRAHMACHARYA

### Brahmacharya (non-excess)

- Pronounced Brah-mah-char-ee-ah
- Non-excess or moderation
  - Like the Giving Tree
  - Direct energy away from self and bring it back to self
- Related to social justice
  - Mass consumerism
  - Disproportionate wealth
- Personal consumption/excess
  - Alcohol and drug addiction
  - Food, relationships, consumerism, social media, electronics
  - *Can be anything external that becomes more vital to our existence than our own self is ultimately harmful*
- Addiction
  - Threat and reward processes of the brain
    - Prefrontal cortex = higher-level functioning and decision-making (why we don't like negative consequences)
    - Nucleus accumbens = reward/pleasure (why we like substances)
    - Ventral tegmental area = desire (why we want to use substances)
  - Cycle of addiction
    - Intoxication → withdrawal → anticipation
- Anything that becomes consuming to the mind and body connection
  - If something external of yourself becomes a greater need to your survival and consumes your thoughts, alters your perspectives, and causes harm to your well-being then it does not serve you

## COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION – KLESHAS

### Kleshas

- “Mind poisons” or obstacles that cloud your thoughts and intentions
- False perceptions and negative emotions
- Afflictions are strong, manipulative, deceitful
- Said that 108 human afflictions of the human condition → some traditional practices begin the day with 108 sun salutations



<b>KLESHAS :</b> <b>MENTAL EMOTIONAL AFFLICTIONS</b>	
<b>Avidya</b>	Lack of awareness or understanding, ignorance, clouded perception, misapprehension
<b>Asmita</b>	Distorted sense of Self, egotism-thinking more or less of who you are in relation to others, I-am-ness, misidentification with the body, mind, prana, buddhi/beyond
<b>Raga</b>	Clinging or addiction to past pleasures, dwelling, attachment, holding onto the experience, hungry heart, realm of the hungry ghosts
<b>Dvesa</b>	Clinging to past suffering or pain, discomfort, resentments, avoidance, rejection, anger reaction, resistance, aversion to the memory of painful experiences
<b>Abinivesha</b>	Fear of loss, death, of letting go of the story of "me", "mine" & "I", primitive survival instinct for self-preservation

## STRENGTH & RESILIENCE

### Transitioning into strength and resilience

- Example: Warrior One Pose = can provide a foundational landing place for participants, can explore the pose in accessible anatomical variation = creating sense of competency and belongings
- Moving through poses allows for cultivating self-awareness
  - Can observe and influence their inner narrative

### Supporting awareness and regulation

- Facilitators guide at steady pace, clear and deliberate cues to support connection with breath, body, and sensations
- Regular pauses for centering → checking in with body, reflect on sensations, regulate nervous system
- Observe breath, exertion, and heart rate to deepen self-awareness and promote regulation
- Cultivate HRV

### Permission to be powerful

- Physical strength supports mental clarity ↔ emotional resilience enhances physical capability
- People may arrive at practice feeling disconnected, lost, or burdened
  - Through practice, awareness and curiosity are invited = can rebuild relationship with their bodies (and reestablish safe and supportive space)
- Honor all abilities and unique needs = cultivate strength and resilience through permission for self and guide others to be powerful

## MODULE 7 CLARIFYING OPPORTUNITY:

### SETTING INTENTIONS

*“Hurt people, hurt people. Healing people, see people.”*

#### Sankalpa (intention)

- Definition: purpose, an objective, a goal, an intended direction
- Medical definition: the process of healing a wound
- Trauma-informed yoga “intention” definition: provide an opportunity for the practitioner to consider their physical, mental, or spiritual goals while building awareness of their connection to the body and breath (so a little bit of both of the above definitions)

#### Compartmentalization

- People often compartmentalize parts of themselves
- Thinking of themselves, but not that they *are* themselves
- Considering an intention/goal for practice → supports ability to refocus when their mind might otherwise focus externally on tasks, obligations, or concerns rather than connecting to who they are and what they might need in their healing journey

#### Setting the intention itself

- An affirmation or positive statement that speaks, present tense, to a future goal
- An area of focus that a person is building within their life
- “I am...”
  - ...healing”
  - ...strong”
- Offers a focus point & attention redirection when the mind fluctuates or wanders
- When we are disconnected from ourselves, it can be hard to clarify what words we need to say and hear
  - Offering examples of intentions can help with this
  - If you choose a reading or have planned to share a theme for the class, you may want to offer examples of intentions that support the class structure

## YAMAS – APARIGRAHA

#### Aparigraha (letting go/non-attachment); (Ah-par-ee-grah-hah)

- Things that are causing disconnect and pulling further from your truth
- Receive only what is necessary and let go of anything beyond this
- Letting go → as a means of personal growth
  - When we hold onto the familiar, what we have always done, even when it no longer serves us we are limiting ability to learn and experience something new and potentially beneficial
- Releasing who/where/how I *should* be
  - Examples: “After I get through this...” “when I’m settled...” “when I save more money...” “when I finish...”



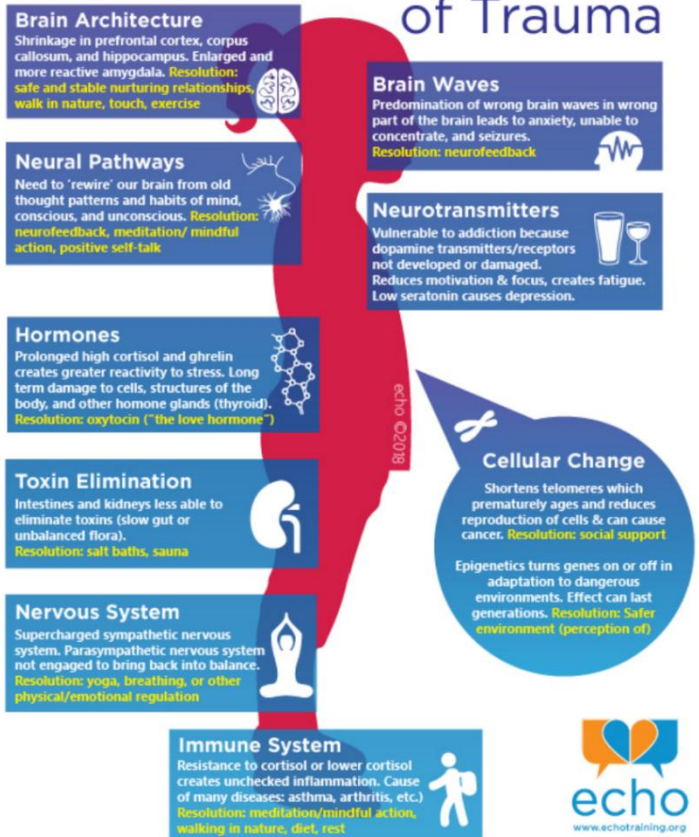
- Attachments towards others
  - How can support look without expectation?
- Barriers to letting go
  - No understanding of how/why
  - Lack of resources/options/support
  - Fear (past experience, unknown is scarier than what is known)
  - Identity (who am I without...this relationship, job, etc.)
  - Guilt (hurting others, concern for others' well-being)
  - Self-doubt
- Support for letting go
  - Deepen relationship to self
  - "Feel everything, let go of everything, or you will be held captive by everything"
  - Approach external relationships mindfully
    - Impeccable with word, do your best, NOT personal, no assumptions
    - Non-harm, truth, non-stealing, non-excess

## THE NEUROSCIENCE OF TRAUMA

### How yoga helps calm the SNS & stimulates the PNS

- Breath
  - Exhale slowly = stimulates the PNS → can begin to shift into restoration and calm
  - Exhale in an inverted position where head is lower than the heart
    - Examples: forward fold, rag doll, humble warrior, down dog, puppy pose
    - Seated forward fold, bringing torso toward their knees and breathing
- Movement
  - Helps NS regulate itself
  - Energy release and discharge
  - Rolling wave-like journey of stimulation and restoration to allow for embodied understanding of how the body, breath, and heart rate react naturally
- Embodied connection
  - By guidance and cueing we can support individual's understanding of their body's natural reactions
  - How to work with their breath to engage or restore themselves
- Video: [childhood trauma & the brain](#) (5 mins)

## Physical Impact of Trauma



# THE CHAKRA SYSTEM – A COMPARATIVE LOOK

## Chakras

- Offer an energetic preview of our body's function and flow of information, looking at body function and emotion as a marker of the health and flow of these centers
- Pre-scientific insight that the NS was being prevented from communicating to the body effectively
- 7 Chakras
  - Root chakra (Muladhara)
    - At the base of the spine
    - When functioning correctly, body is physically and emotionally stable & secure, bowel and bladder elimination is complete and without discomfort
  - Sacral chakra (svadhishtana)
    - Between pubic bone and belly button
    - Connects to reproductive function and emotionally links to our level of self-control, acceptance, and creativity
  - Solar plexus chakra (Manipura)
    - Abdomen in the belly area
    - Body's digestive system works comfortably
    - Emotionally, we are confident and maintain high self-esteem
  - Heart chakra (Anahata)
    - Center of chest
    - "Heart center" cue
    - Connect to one's heart
    - When open, the circulatory system functions freely, and we are emotionally available to compassion and empathy
  - Throat chakra (Vishuddha)
    - We clear, we can communicate effectively, both with words spoken and words received
    - Physically, our ears, nose, and throat are without pain, inflammation, or infection
  - Anja (third eye)
    - Center of forehead between eyebrows
    - Mental clarity and sight
    - Sight = "in the moment" and our ability to navigate the next steps along life path
  - Crown chakra
    - At top of head envisioned just above
    - Balanced and clear = alignment of other six chakras
    - Functions of brain and NS
    - Connection to this supports our relationship to our life's purpose

## POSTURES & SEQUENCING: CONCENTRATION & FOCUS

### Concentration & Focus Sequencing

- Exploring balance, coordination, and mindful stretching

- Connect with their bodies, observe inner narratives, build resilience through self-compassion and patience
- Balancing effort and recovery
  - Explore balance physically and mentally
  - Challenge stability, focus, and intention
  - Awareness of how participants respond to challenges
  - Accessibility
    - Offer variations with props or supports for safety
  - Coordinative movements that engage the right and left sides of the body independently
    - Encourage focus and clarity
    - Strengthen neural pathways
  - Can feel vulnerable = honor personal truths and how bodies are feeling in the moment
  - Opportunity to explore agency, empowerment, boundaries
- Transitioning to mindful stretching
  - After balance and coordination, lengthen and release the muscles and joints engaged during strength and resilience section
  - Examples:
    - Forward folds, dragon lunges, supported pyramid pose
- Engaged seated stretches
  - After standing stretches, seated or chair postures
  - Examples: seated camel pose, bridge pose, or arm balance variations to foster playfulness and build confidence
  - Note: backbends and arm balances may not be ok for all groups

## **Building awareness & empowerment**

- What personal beliefs might limit your practice or create impatience?
  - Release attachment to outcomes (Aparigraha) to create freedom
- Observe and influence inner narrative
  - Balancing can explore boundaries, agency, self-advocacy, and challenge limiting beliefs



# MODULE 8 EXPOSING THE DIRT & WORKING FOR CLARITY:

## YIN YOGA & YOGA NIDRA

### Yoga Nidra

- Deep guided meditation, breath awareness, center, and setting an intention
  - Examples of intentions: “I am powerful and courageous” “I am calm”
- Visualized body scan:
  - Offer a tour of the body (e.g., “left wrist”) naming parts of the body for the participant, while resting still, to mentally bring awareness to these parts of the body
- Then imagery, exploratory meditation, sensory meditation
- Benefits:
  - Increase vitality, reduce stress, lower blood pressure, enhance concentration, emotional and physical healing, change destructive habits, clear negative thoughts and beliefs, encourage love and compassion for self and others
- Yoga Nidra Links
  - [How to write a Yoga Nidra script](#)
  - [iRest for guided meditation](#)
  - [Guided meditation](#) (20 mins)

### Yin Yoga

- Provides balance within the body to support a warming asana practice
- Postures held for several mins and focus on joint support
- Benefits:
  - Increase circulation in the joints and increase flexibility
- Seeking personal “edge” = settling within each posture that unifies your personal balance of challenge and comfort where you feel you are “at the edge” of where you can be, but mindful to not go over that edge to harm
- Postures for hip:
  - Frog, Bug Pose, Pigeon, and Cow Face
- Postures for knee:
  - Hero’s Pose, Squat, Pyramid
  - Props such as towel under the heels in squat or behind the knees may provide support
- Postures for spine:
  - Child’s Pose, Bow, Seated or Supine Twist
- Postures for shoulder:
  - Thread the Needle, Eagle Arms, Supported Fish, Bananasana

## NIYAMA – SAUCHA

### Saucha (sou-cha; cleanliness and purity)

- Literal interpretation = personal hygiene and decluttered space
- Consider personal truth as it relates to moral and ethics
- Listen to inner voice, gut instinct, or conscience

- Examples:
  - Occasions where actions/reactions compromised inner voice (did these lead to guilt or shame?)

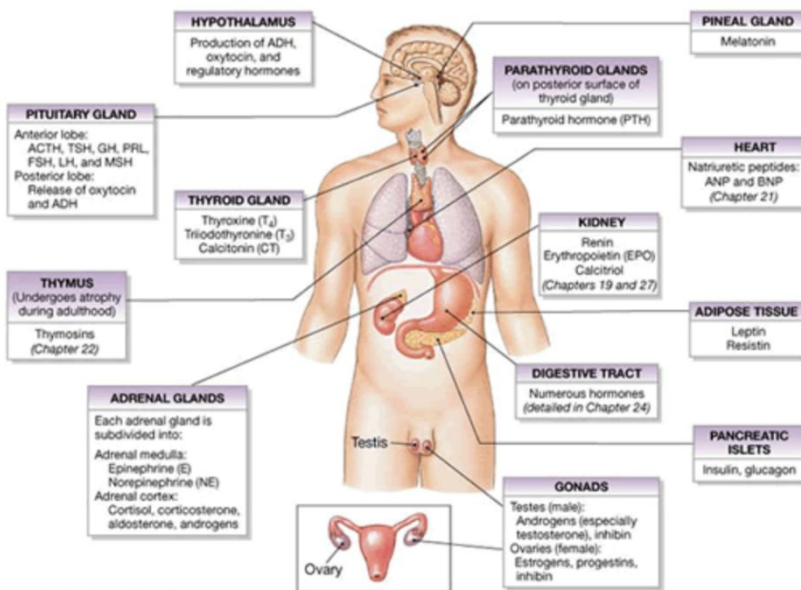
## Exposing the Dirt

- Earth justice
- Encourage deep breaths but millions of people live in areas of the world where the air is too contaminated to breath without significant health risks

## THE ENDOCRINE SYSTEM

### Endocrine System

- Made up of glands throughout the body that carry hormones
- Main function = release hormones into your blood while continuously monitoring levels
- Hormones = affect growth, energy, digestion, temperature, sexuality, and fluid and water retention
  - Carry messages through the blood to organs, skin, muscles, and other tissues
  - Hormones affect metabolism, homeostasis, blood pressure and blood sugar, growth and development, reproduction, sleep-wake cycle, mood



Copyright © 2004 Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Benjamin Cummings.

## ENERGY LOCKS (BANDHAS)

### Bandhas

- Mula Bandha = root lock, also referred to as a pelvic or anal lock
- Uddiyana Bandha = the sacral or abdominal lock
- Jalandhara = the throat lock
- Maha Bandha = the activation of Mula, Uddiyana, and Jalandhara Bandhas at the same time
- “Bandhas” = to lock, hold, or tighten

- Can be beneficial for concentration, steady and long breath, and a calm clear mind
  - Also regulates and controls internal systems, hormonal, sexual, metabolic, digestive, and more
- The Bandhas: [video](#)

## INTEGRATION & RELAXATION

### Active Engagement to Stillness

- Traditional Corpse Pose (Shavasana)
  - May feel vulnerable or activating for some
    - So could offer Relaxation Pose (seated meditation, side-lying positions, reclining with props or support)
    - Invitational language
- Incorporate Yin Yoga or Yoga Nidra
  - Postures: Forward Folds, gentle twists, chest openers (Supported Fish Pose, Supported Bridge Pose)
  - Provide opportunities for reflection, connection, aligning with the Niyama of Saucha (purity)
- Emotional awareness is key
  - Grounding language and reassurance
  - Remind participants that emotions are natural and part of the healing process → they are in control
- Conclude practice with gentle Pranayama
  - Examples: alternative nostril breathing
  - Support nervous system regulation
  - Transition from yoga space to participants' daily environments

## MODULE 9 INTERPRETING CONTENTMENT:

### CHAIR YOGA

#### Exploring Chair Yoga

- Using chair can: build balance, muscle strength, and joint mobility while being gentle on the body
- Settings: school or office setting
- Can be used as a prop to provide support to parts of the body and allow focused attention to other parts of the body
- Offering chair variation can remove stigma around the use of props and will normalize the varying needs of participants
- Chair yoga videos: ([7 mins](#) & [25 mins](#))

### USING PROPS/CREATIVE PROPS

#### Using props

- Offer the most accessible variation of a posture first to allow all participants to discover what suits them
- The perception is sometimes that those who need props are inferior in some way
  - Want to break this down and offer an environment where they are tools to explore regardless of level of familiarity, body design, or range of motion
- Examples:
  - Guiding Mountain Pose and Standing Forward Fold standing on blocks to offer opportunities to explore balance and flexibility
  - Pigeon Pose with a block placed under the hip of the front bent leg – shifts the sensation of the stretch but also allows for participants to explore movement of the rear leg and engage the core and pelvic floor

### SANTOSA & INTERPRETING CONTENTMENT

#### Santosha (san-toe-sah) - Contentment

- Santosha: contentment and lack of desire for anything that one does not have
  - Invites satisfaction with things that one already has
- Consideration of contentment and shift toward inner focus on personal growth and healing
- When we are connected to our yoga practice supported by the Yamas, we should also give permission to trust our personal path
- Suggests that if you are being honest with yourself and are committed to healing, trust that you are on the right path for you and offer gratitude
- Contentment = ability to find gratitude for who we are and appreciate everything we do have

#### Sustainable support for contentment

- What can I realistically do at this time in my life?
- What do I stand for?
- What do I purchase? What does my entertainment look like? What is my waste?

- What do I want to contribute to community?

## Yoga supporting contentment

- Guiding perspectives of self (e.g., assess personal needs, unique healing needs)
- Deepening personal connection (e.g., awareness of unique needs of nervous system, awareness of mind/body)
- Lessons of Bhagavad Gita
  - Human Dilemma
  - Action vs. Inaction
  - Perceptions & Intentions

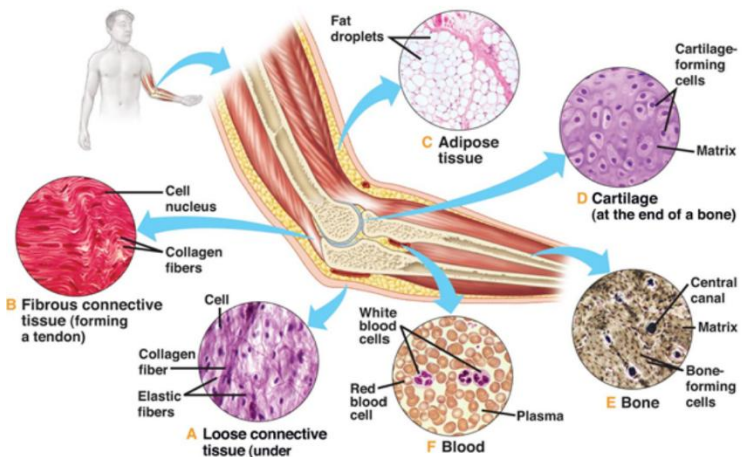
## SKIN, FASCIA, & CONNECTIVE TISSUE

### Skin

- Most visible organ of the body
- It feels – receptors for sensation (touch, pressure, vibration, temperature, and pain)
- Regulates body temperature
- Protects internal organs from infection and impact

### Connective tissue

- Holds us together
- Creates structure of the body
- Transports fluids throughout the body
- Stores energy
- Provides defensive protection for the body
- Groups:
  - Connective tissue proper (fat, tendons, ligaments, fascia)
    - Tendons (muscle ↔ bone)
    - Ligaments (bone ↔ bone)
    - Fascia (connects & stabilizes throughout the body)
  - Supporting connective tissue (cartilage and bone)
    - Cartilage (absorbs shock, reduces friction and compression)
    - Bone (structural support)
  - Fluid connective tissue (blood & lymph)
    - Blood (carries oxygen to and carbon dioxide from body tissue)
    - Lymph (contains white blood cells & supports immune function)



### Invitational language

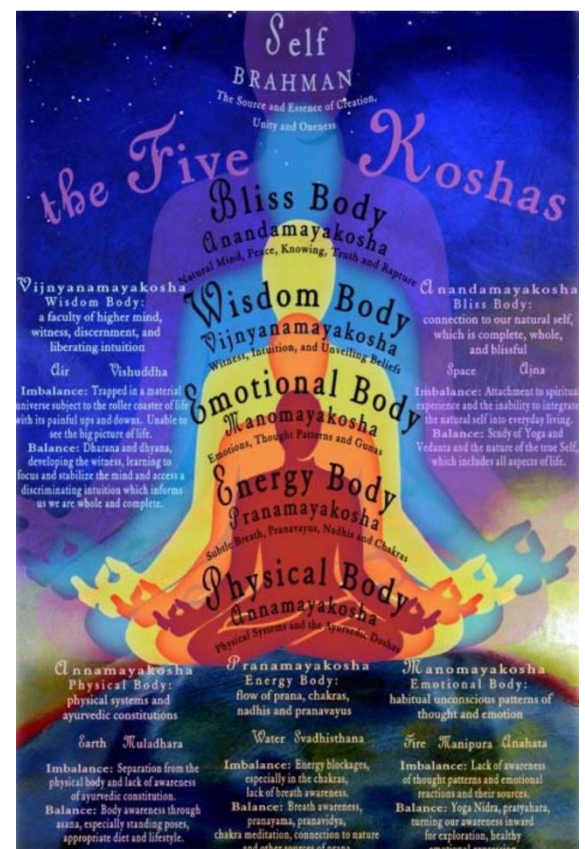
- Expectation of invitation (there isn't one)
- Establish space for curiosity and exploration
  - Why practice yoga? What are their motivations or intentions?
  - Can you offer space for curiosity without assumption?
- Power of words

- Accessible variations of postures, choosing invitational, supportive language, support competency growth, reduce competition between participants, and dismantle guru ideologies
- Words to avoid:
  - If you can't/if you can
  - If you want a challenge (uses of challenges)
  - Adjustment/correction
  - If this is too much...
  - I want you to...
  - You'll feel...doesn't this feel good? (Value-based cueing)
  - Gender specific language (e.g., ladies, gentlemen, guys)

## COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION – KOSHAS

### Five energetic bodies of consciousness (Koshas)

- Annamaya
  - Outermost
  - The physical body
  - Abilities for healing and transformation
- Pranamaya
  - Nadis reside
  - Energy body
  - Has an effect on the physical body
- Manamaya
  - The mental body
  - Holds qualities of the mana (rational mind) & buddhi (intellect)
- Vijnanamaya
  - Knowledge body
  - To make decisions about personal wisdom
- Anandamaya
  - Innermost
  - Bliss body
  - Nestled within this is the self



## PRACTICE FOR SPECIFIC NEEDS

### Back pain, hip tightness, and shoulder tension

- Range of motion exploration
  - Hip circles, shoulder rolls, spinal flexion and extension (cat/cow) to warm up these areas
- For spine:
  - Supported twists, forward folds, gentle backbends
- For hips:
  - Seated figure-four or variations of Pigeon Pose

- For shoulders:
  - Eagle arms or chest-opening poses like Supported Fish Pose
- Encourage curiosity during these movements and distinguishing between muscular tension and discomfort that may indicate joint or nerve issues (invitational language to understand beneficial without causing strain or pain)

### **Supporting respiratory health**

- Examples: asthma or respiratory illness
- Important during Energetic Awareness and Integration & Relaxation phases to emphasize breath-based practices
- Gentle Pranayama techniques
  - Alternative nostril breathing, or three-part breath (promote awareness with breath)
- Chair yoga



# MODULE 10 YOGA AS A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE:

## PRATYAHARA

### Pratyahara (sense withdrawal)

- When you're so immersed in something you don't realize time how time has passed
  - A moment when you suddenly pause and recognize that you were so focused that you tuned out anything beyond = Pratyahara
- Approaching from a hobby or interest perspective offers support
- Encourages awareness of how distracting external objects can be to our focus/attention
- Pratyahara in the Bhagavad Gita
  - The five senses are compared to the five horses of a chariot
    - The mind = the reins
    - The soul (the atman) = the passenger
    - In order to keep the chariot (the human) on course, it is important to keep the horses in control
  - Like the turtle withdrawing limbs, the yogi turns their senses away and attains steady wisdom
  - Ladder of destruction: attachment → desires → anger → delusion → loss of memory → loss of intellect & discriminatory power → total annihilation
  - If self-controlled, even though moving among objects, attains peace since senses are free from attraction

## PRACTICING DHARANA

### Dharana (concentration)

- Focusing attention on a single point or object
- [Video](#)

## EXPLORING DHYANA

### Dhyana

- More concentrated and immersed form of meditation
- Own meditative state = find comfort in the act of being
- [Yoga meditation – Dhyana video](#)
  - Binding consciousness to an object or focus
  - Steady or continuous flow of attention and concentration
- [Dhyana - Achieving Concentration](#)

## TAPAS

### Tapas (tap-az; self-discipline)

- Tapas = think of like a personal trainer or coach who understands your goals and believes in your ability to succeed
  - Burns down old view of self and offers new perspective



- We are strong, capable, and worthy of healing
- Defining discipline & self-discipline
  - What if self-discipline could mean sustainable self-care and self-forgiveness?
- Analogy of fire or phoenix
  - Burning down past images, ideals, and expectations
    - What belongs and serves you in your life and what harm or residue of harm remains?
    - What do you burn down or leave behind?
  - Redefining ideals, images, and expectations
    - Relationship with self
    - Who are you? How are you who you are?
  - Check-in and re-evaluate
    - Fuel for the fire
      - Presence, passion, connection to self
    - Rest & reset
- Discipline as self-compassion/support can look like:
  - I am able/willing to...
    - Do/not do, say/not say, stay/go, learn/share, rest/act/plan
  - I choose what is sustainable for me at this time
    - (e.g., self-care, relationships, work, activities, projects, support)
  - I continue to evaluate what is sustainable for me
    - (e.g., “I haven’t done this day yet, what I need today might be different)
  - I consider my intentions behind my decisions
  - I support my continued learning of what I need and how I can sustain

## **Building your Tapas Team**

- How do you commit to self-support?
- Who nourishes/replenishes/supports you?
- Who do you nourish/replenish/support?
- What ideals/images/expectations cause more harm than benefit?
- How can you redefine these ideals/images/expectations to better serve and support your path?
- Willingness to evolve and learn?
- Humility and humanity

## **IMMUNE & DIGESTIVE SYSTEM**

### **Science of postures for immune function**

- Lymphatic system – part of immune system
  - Protects body from invasive illness and maintains fluid levels within the body by removing cellular waste and absorbing fats from the digestive tract
  - Dependent on gravity and movement
  - Hydration and daily aerobic & anaerobic movement support lymph to be able to move effectively and combat illness and infection
- [Lymphatic system](#)

- [Yoga for Lymphatic system detox](#)

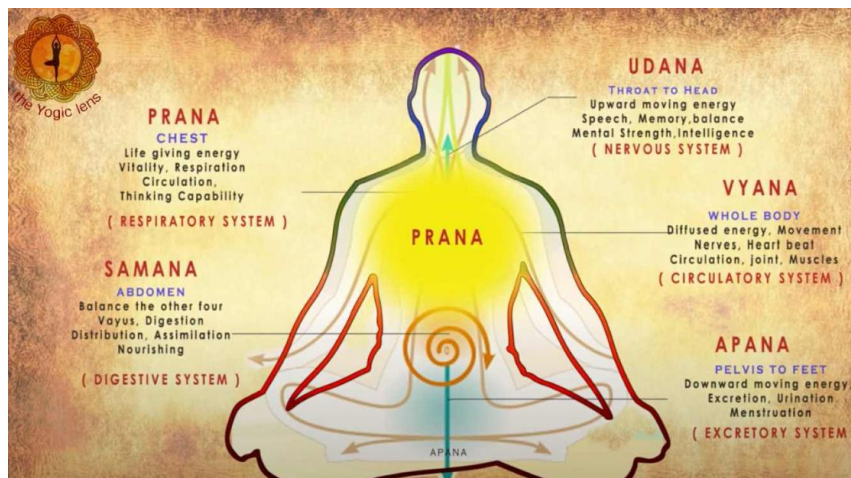
## Digestive system

- Processes food we eat into nutrients and energy & disposes what is not absorbed
- Organs: mouth, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, and anus
- [How yoga can help digestion](#)
- Best thing we can do for digestive system is to calm down
- [How the digestive system works](#)

## COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY – VAYUS

### Vayu

- Energetic force that moves within an energetic body supporting its function
- [Five primary Vayus](#), each flow in a different direction
  - Apana Vayu = downward current of energy
    - Related to exhalation, nourishes the pelvis, reproductive, and eliminatory systems
  - Prana Vayu = upward current of energy
    - Related to inhalation, nourishes the chest, cardio-respiratory, and immune system
  - Samana Vayu = horizontal current of energy
    - Expands on inhalation and softens on exhalation
    - Nourishes the solar plexus and the digestive system
  - Udana Vayu = uppermost current of energy
    - Rises on inhalation and circulates on exhalation
    - Nourishes the neck, head, nervous, and endocrine systems
  - Vyana Vayu = all-pervading current of energy
    - Expands on exhalation and concentrates on inhalation
    - Supports circulation to the extremities



## INCORPORATING MEDITATION & PRANAYAMA

### Meditation into yoga practice & self-care

- Niyama of Tapas (discipline or inner fire)
  - Encourages consistent commitment to one's practice
  - Reframed as *radical self-care*
  - Meditation asks participants to sit with their thoughts, sensations, and emotions
- Facilitators can normalize the challenges
  - Showing up with curiosity and patience
- Healing-centered principles:
  - Safety & agency
    - Invitational language, remind participants they are in control of their experience
    - Offer seated, reclined, or other meditative positions
  - Adaptability
    - Tailor to meet the needs of participants
    - Adjust the sequence to include more movement or choosing restorative practice (e.g., Yoga Nidra) over seated meditation based on differences of any given day
  - Self-reflection
    - Encourage participants to explore breath, body, and mind connection
    - Offer opportunities to notice sensations, thoughts, and emotions without judgement
    - Creating pathways for self-regulation and healing
  - Empathy and connection
    - Use compassionate listening during check-ins to understand emotional and physical states of participants
    - Allowing you to guide practices to meet their current needs
- Incorporating tactile tools:
  - Examples: squeezing tennis balls, engaging in art, journaling, or working on puzzles
  - These can be alternative to meditative practices → accessible entry points to mindfulness
- Flexible class structure
  - Flexibility is key
  - Integration & relaxation section is natural space for meditation or breathwork but may be times when shifting order of a class is more supportive
    - Example: after a high-stress event, participants may benefit from full Yoga Nidra practice or additional movement to release pent-up energy before settling into stillness
    - Example: there's a mandatory search before a class → participants may feel frustrated or preoccupied → adjusting practice to prioritize grounding and restorative techniques over physical exertion can foster a greater sense of calm and safety
- Connecting your facilitation style
  - Explore different modalities
    - Cyclic sighing, three-part breath, or guided visualizations as accessible entry points into meditation
      - These can be integrated into movement and asana

- Centering and somatics is a place to implement gentle and supportive meditation experiences, encouraging participants to connect with their breath and body
- Normalize meditation challenges
  - Meditation is a journey, not a destination
  - Participants may have discomfort, distractions, or frustration during practice (remind them that the effort to show up is an act of self-compassion)
- Prepare for variation
  - Who is present, the energy, and external circumstances will all be different
  - Build a diverse set of tools:
    - Movement, breathwork, guided meditations, and restorative practices
    - Alternative materials (e.g., tennis balls, art supplies, journaling)
- Be empowered

# MODULE 11 EMPOWERMENT & CHANGING THE NARRATIVES:

## INSTRUCTING YOUTH

### Yoga for youth populations

- Reduce time spent on one activity for optimal focus
- Modify poses to support growing bodies
- Create opportunities for games and activities that promote leadership, compassion, and prosocial behavior
- [Video for serving youth](#)
- Video: [Trauma-sensitive yoga for kids](#) (15 min)
- Video: [Trauma-Sensitive Chair Yoga for Teens: Triggers](#) (20 mins)

### Neuroscience of yoga/impact of youth trauma

- Prefrontal cortex is still developing
- Dissociation is a common survival mechanism from trauma
  - Making it harder to experience emotion
- Yoga practice designed to help concentration
  - Not asking to focus too long on one task
  - Novel experiences to experience joy in a safe and controlled environment
- Trauma-informed yoga to help youth recover:
  - Increase sense of control & agency
    - Trauma can cause youth to feel things are in their control, including their body
  - Rewire the stress response
    - Can change the neural pathways to move away from SNS to be activated all the time
  - Improve self-regulation of emotions & increase behavioral control
    - Youth with trauma can be hypervigilant, sensitized, and overstimulated
    - Causing alarm state that affects impulse control, acting out, etc. when feeling vulnerable
      - Yoga, meditation, and breathing exercises to regulate NS

### Guiding trauma-informed and healing-centered classes for youth

- Key components:
  - Playful and accessible postures
    - Creative names or storytelling elements to make practice engaging
      - (e.g., “Star Pose”, “Tree Pose”)
  - Shorter activities
    - Brief and dynamic to maintain focus
    - Mini-games, quick transitions between poses, rhythmic or repetitive movements to match developmental needs of youth
  - Leadership and prosocial activities
    - Offer opportunities for youth to lead poses or create short sequences
    - Promotes self-esteem, agency, and social connection

- Integrate mindfulness and self-regulation
  - Breathwork, guided meditations
    - (e.g., cyclic sighing or creative visualizations for youth to experience calm & focus)
- Alternative tools and materials
  - Youth may have barriers to traditional meditation or stillness
  - Alternative materials
    - Tactile tools (e.g., squeezing tennis balls)
    - Art supplies
    - Journal prompts
  - Beneficial in:
    - Building bridges to stillness
    - Supportive integration
    - Engaging mandated participants

## Sequencing & structure for youth

- Flexibility is key
- Consider Yoga Nidra if youth are in heightened stress
- Centering & Somatics is particularly valuable for youth = self-regulation
- *Potential class structure for youth:*
  1. **Energetic Awareness:** Start with grounding and engaging movements like jumping, stomping, or rhythmic tapping.
  2. **Range of Motion Exploration:** Incorporate gentle, accessible stretches for growing bodies, such as shoulder rolls, hip circles, or Cat/Cow.
  3. **Centering and Somatics:** Introduce a tactile or creative activity to support self-regulation and reflection.
  4. **Strength & Resilience:** Explore dynamic, playful postures like Warrior poses or balance-focused movements that encourage confidence and agency.
  5. **Concentration & Focus:** Use rhythmic breathing, guided meditations, or focused activities like journaling to cultivate mindfulness and clarity.
  6. **Integration & Relaxation:** Conclude with restorative practices, such as supported forward folds, visualization, or tactile tools for reflection.

## ESTABLISHING A CLASS THEME

### Class Theme

- Used to connect sequence of the practice and provide opportunities to support participants with words and ideas in addition to movement and breath work offered
- Themes concepts:
  - Can share yoga philosophy
  - Bring focus and attention to emotions
  - Inspire strength, healing, or patience
  - Offer connection with healing journey
- What concepts have resonated with you?

# NIYAMA - SVADHYAYA

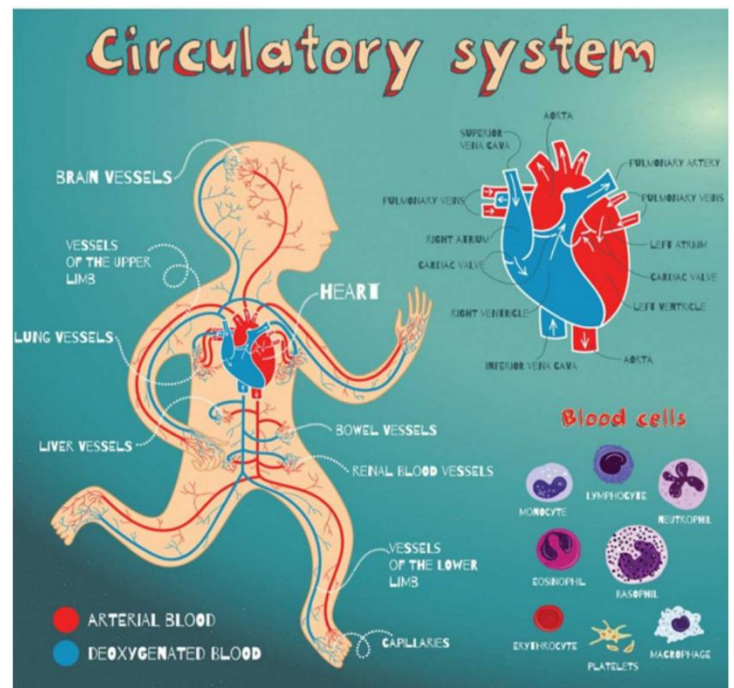
## Svadhyaya (svad-ya-ya; self-study)

- Collecting information to support your growth and practice
- Catch up with yourself and become reacquainted
- Personal history + experiences = our perception of self and growth of self
  - Avidya
    - Ignorance/incorrect understanding/false perception
  - Our belief in this avidya (false perception) grows until we have hidden true selves away
    - These new beliefs are Samskara (sam-scar-ah), emotion and perceptive scars we develop out of survival that can potentially deepen the harm done
    - Avidya → Samskara → Kleshas (fear/avoidance/attachment/ego)
- Svadhyaya = opportunity to investigate where samskaras exist
  - May lead to change
  - Honor curiosity; listen; ask questions; learn more; take the time
- Yoga as path to self and collective liberation
  - Consider expectations placed on you – were this aligned with goals you had for yourself?
  - Permission to be true to who you are is a powerful right that many try to influence
  - Self confidence is a revolutionary force all on its own
- Justifiable rage
  - Consider local, community, national, and international events happening – when and how do you want to learn more or become more involved?
  - US history timelines defined by war, riots, scandals, colonization, and the ‘celebrated accomplishments’ of White men

## THE CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

### Circulatory system

- Keeps us going like an engine running a machine
- Heart = pumps blood throughout the body
- Accepts blood in and pumps blood out = acting as a filtering system to bring fresh oxygenated blood to our body systems while accepting toxic blood to cleanse in the lungs with new fresh breath
- [Yoga is heart-healthy](#)
  - Yoga may help put the brakes on the body's stress response by activating the PNS (rest or digest) through deep breathing and relaxation
- Video: [heart & circulatory system](#) (3 min)
  - Heart pumps ~5qts of blood/min





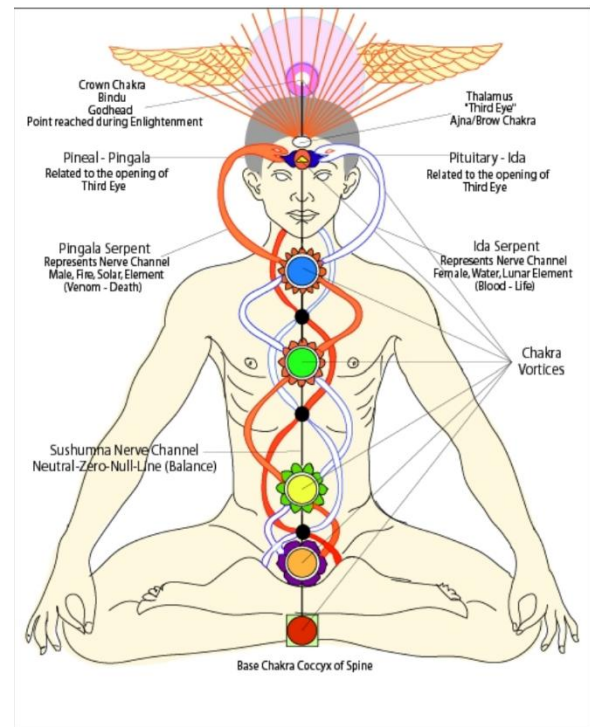
- Heart beats ~100,000 beats/day
- Right side of heart collects & pumps blood to lungs through pulmonary arteries → lung refresh blood with new supply of oxygen → then enters left side of heart to pump → through aorta → body to supply tissues with oxygen
- Heart has electrical wiring to keep it beating

## Heartbeat & breath: Instructing self-soothing

- Stress response:
  - Video: [fight-flight-freeze response](#) (3 min)
  - Article: [Medulla oblongata](#) (7 min)
    - Lower half of the brainstem
    - Cardiac, respiratory, and vasomotor control centers are in medulla (so heart rate, blood pressure, breathing)
- Sequencing
  - Opportunities to stimulate rapid heart rate and quicker or shallow breath to simulate the embodied sensations of the Fight, Flight, Freeze response in a “controlled” environment
  - Facilitators should call attention to these to increase awareness of the physiological sensations
    - (e.g., “notice the beating of your heart”; “bring your awareness to how your body is receiving and releasing breath”)
  - Can support impulse control, anger management, stress relief, and ability to relax/restore, all while supporting blood pressure and cardiovascular system

## Comparative look at the Nadis

- Nadis = energy channels that connect the chakra system and support the rising kundalini
- Kundalini is a spiritual energy that sits at the base of the spine
  - When it is able to rise it is said one experiences a level of awareness that conquers the ego
- Three main Nadis, interweave through the chakras
  - Main channel = Sushumna
    - Follows along the spine
    - The left (Ida) and the right (Pingala) intersect at the chakras, acting as blockage releasers as breathwork, movement, and chanting support their energetic flow
      - Ida – carries cooling moon energy/feminine energy
      - Pingala – carries warming sun energy/masculine energy (also referred to as prana)



# MODULE 12 WORKING FOR A JUST & EQUITABLE FUTURE:

## PREVENTATIVE SELF-CARE

### Mitigating the risk of burn-out

- Burnout vs. compassion fatigue
  - Burnout = results from stresses in the workplace
    - (e.g., problems with coworkers, loss of economic security or position, diminished control)
    - Characteristics: emotional exhausting, alienation from work-related activities, reduced performance
  - Compassion fatigue = emotional and physical burden created by the trauma of helping others in distress, which leads to a reduced capacity for empathy toward suffering in the future
    - Characteristics: intrusive negative thoughts, physical problems (GI issues, headaches, lethargy), loss of hope, questioning one's contribution, skepticism and guilt
- The Four Agreements:
  - Be Impeccable with your Word
  - Do Not Make Assumptions
  - Do Not Take Anything Personally
  - Always Do your Best



### The "Discipline" of Practice – Teaching Commitment to Self

- Self-care like a healing-centered sequence:
  - Each day make time to release excess energy
  - Move your body through the range of motion for your major muscles and joints
  - Take time to center yourself and set an intention
  - Build your strength and flexibility (mentally and/or physically)
  - Find your personal balance and pay attention to your needs
  - Replenish yourself and rest

## Incorporating Mudras

- Mudras = symbolic hand gestures
  - Some people are tactile learners → incorporate hand gestures into practice and they can feel a deeper connection to the emotions that arise through practice
  - Can add an extra level of focus to movement and meditation practices
  - Said to soothe pain, stimulate endorphins, alter mood, and increase energy
  - Used in many Hindu and Buddhist rituals

## Index to mudras-Mudras for emotional well-being

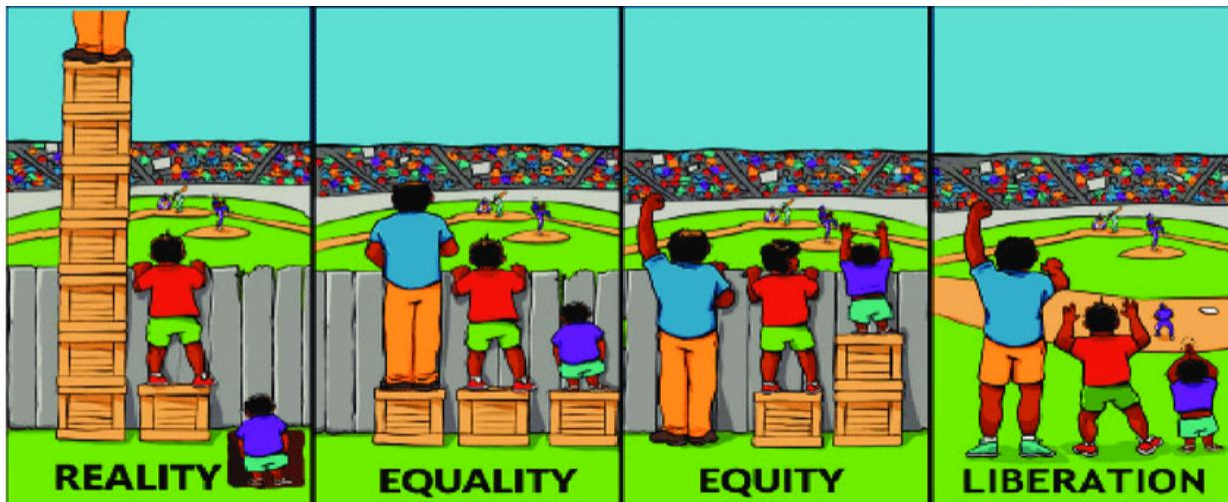


## NIYAMA – ISVARAPRANIDHAHA

### Isvarapranidhana (Ish-va-rah-praw-nid-han-ah)

- Translation: “to lay your actions at the feet of God” and speaks to surrender
- Surrender to self, trust in self, and working through accountability for the actions we take in this world
- Trust that following one’s truth without harm to self or others will provide deep connection to self
  - When trusting in self, you can surrender to self and reduce influences of the Kleshas over us
- You can give yourself permission to truth that if this practice/path is beneficial to you, then it is right for you at this time
  - Don’t doubt the ‘good things’
  - You are deserving of good things
- If we can move and breathe to connect to our physical body, soften and focus our minds = Samadi (bliss)

## WORKING FOR A JUST & EQUITABLE FUTURE



## **Aligning your higher purpose (past, present & future social justice work**

- Envision yourself facilitating yoga practice for others:
  - What does it look like?
  - How do you feel?
  - Where are you?
- What's Next?
  - What can you do to align yourself to set your passions into action?
  - How can you emerge as a leader in your current environment and serve?

## **HONORING FATIGUE, AVOIDING INJURY, & INCORPORATING PERSONAL EDGE**

### **Practicing with awareness**

- Principles of Yamas and Niyamas provide foundational framework for practicing with mindful awareness
- Safety in mind (body mechanics, planes of movement, and how muscles & joints support one another during transitions & postures)

### **Personal edge**

- Point where the body is challenged but not strained or harmed
- Can vary daily
- Influenced by: sleep, nutrition, stress, & recovery
- *To support this:*
  - Encourage exploration with Svadhyaya (self-study)
    - Invite participants to reflect on their unique physical, mental, and emotional state during practice
    - Encourage self-awareness and help participants tune into their bodies, fostering deeper connection with sensations and needs
  - Model accessible variations with Ahimsa (non-harm)
    - Demonstrate the most accessible variation of a posture to promote inclusivity and reduce the risk of overexertion or injury
    - Prioritize own safety = demonstrate in ways that allow you to focus on holding a safe and supportive space for participants
  - Guide with Aparigraha (non-attachment)
    - Encourage participants to let go of expectations or comparisons, embracing their practice as it unfolds in the present moment

### **Reducing risk and promoting safety**

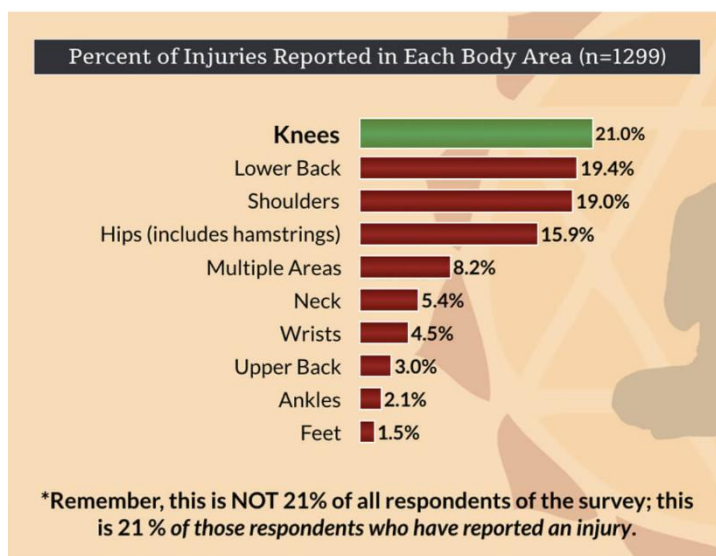
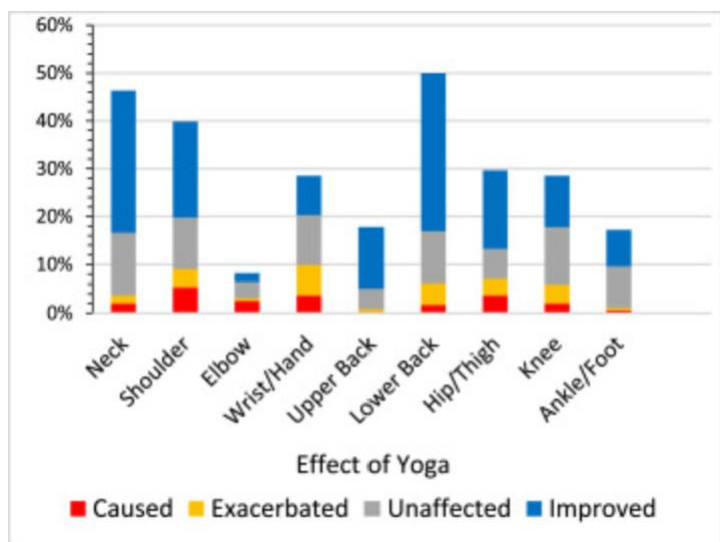
- Start with inviting participants to share any injuries, sensitivities, or physical concerns
  - Build sequence that balances joint mobility, muscle conditioning, and restoration
  - Also allow for participants to meet their unique needs while reducing the risk of strain or discomfort
- Key strategies include:



- Incorporating Rest with Santosha (Contentment): Encourage participants to embrace rest and recovery as vital parts of their practice, cultivating a sense of contentment and belonging within their bodies.
- Creating a Nonjudgmental Space with Satya (Truth): Foster an environment where participants feel empowered to honor their truth by sharing concerns and choosing modifications that align with their needs.
- Offering Workshops with Tapas (Discipline): Dedicate time to patiently and mindfully explore postures, helping participants build competency and resilience through disciplined practice.

## Addressing injury and recovery

- Encouraging gentle, mindful movement
- Slow and steady exploration to reconnect with their bodies and avoid harmful “no pain, no gain” thought patterns
- Even if initial frustration by slower pace
- For physical injuries:
  - Gentle postures like Cat/Cow, seated forward folds, and supported twists can alleviate tension and promote mobility
- For muscle fatigue:
  - Include restorative poses like Child’s Pose, or Supported Bridge Pose to encourage relaxation and recovery



## STRUCTURING TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES

### Designing a sequence

1. **Energetic Awareness:** Begin with grounding practices inspired by Brahmacharya (Moderation) to connect participants to their breath and energy levels without overwhelming or depleting them. Include rhythmic tapping, stomping, or gentle breathwork like cyclic sighing.

2. **Range of Motion Exploration:** Focus on warming key joints and muscles through gentle stretches and rotations, such as shoulder rolls, hip circles, or spinal flexion and extension. These movements align with Aparigraha, allowing participants to release attachment to limitations or expectations.
3. **Centering and Somatics:** Interweave moments of stillness, tactile tools, or journaling inspired by Saucha (Purity) to help participants reflect on their inner experiences and cultivate clarity.
4. **Strength & Resilience:** Introduce controlled, accessible postures that promote strength and stability while embodying Tapas through disciplined and steady effort.
5. **Concentration & Focus:** Incorporate balance and coordination practices that challenge focus and patience, fostering self-awareness through Satya and Svadhyaya.
6. **Integration & Relaxation:** Conclude with restorative practices aligned with Ahimsa, emphasizing rest and recovery through poses like Supported Fish Pose or Yoga Nidra.

### **A facilitator's role**

- Demonstrate safe, accessible postures
- Hold space for participants
- Prioritize own safety and well-being
- Model patience and self-compassion
- Set the tone for participants to embrace their own personal edge and their unique needs
- Follow Yamas and Niyamas to serve as a compass
  - Promoting mindful awareness, safety, and empowerment
- Guide movement + create atmosphere of empowerment where participants feel supported in their journey toward resilience and self-discovery

## MODULE 13 & 14 SERVICE AS A FACILITATOR:

### KARMA YOGA

#### Service as a facilitator

- As awareness of personal history increases, so does the need for support and security
- Fears associated with “stirring the pot” or “opening old wounds”
- Why did you start this program? What called you to sign up and what kept you going? What, if anything, has evolved from those initial intentions? What have you learned about yourself?

### SEEING, HEARING, SPEAKING

#### Taking social justice beyond the mat

- *“Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and redeem the soul of America...When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something.” –Congressman John Lewis*

### BHAKTI YOGA

#### Connecting with ritual

- Foundations of Bhakti yoga are rooted in devotion to God, love, and ritual
- Can be explored beyond traditional prayer and scripture for those who may not connect to a formal relationship to religious practices
  - Some may feel a connection to spirit through Earth rituals, Moon circles, and sound baths
- Focusing on bringing more awareness and understanding to love
- Consider rituals and traditions
  - How can these events and occasions support and deepen your connection to love for yourself and all beings?
  - How can you incorporate nature, theology, philosophy, literature, human history, and pagan readings into your life to navigate a spiritual path?
  - What comes to mind as you contemplate spirit?

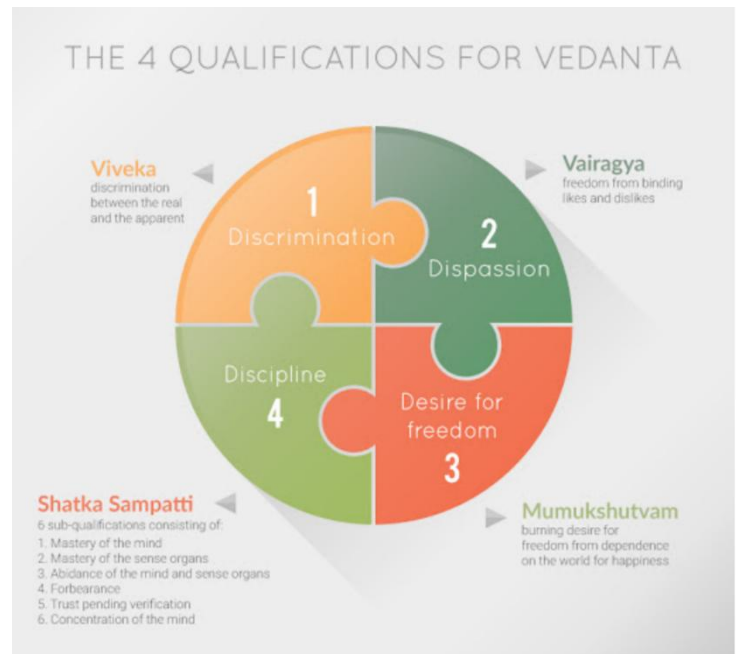
### JNANA YOGA

#### Continuing the quest for knowledge & understanding

- Supports growth of knowledge
- Begins as an individual connects with the understanding that their ignorance contributes to their suffering and commits to seeking knowledge
  - Reading, researching, enrolling in new training programs, and seeking guidance of a skilled knowledgeable teacher to begin shift from ignorance → understanding
- Jnana yoga incorporates Upasana and Karma yoga
  - Karma yoga – yoga of service
  - Upasana yoga – seeks physical, verbal, sensory, and mental discipline
  - When both are practiced = seeker of knowledge gains the 4 qualifications of Vendata



- Qualifications include: ability to determine real from assumed, release of ideals of “like” and “dislike”, discipline the senses to establish present truth from past experience, and desire a freedom from the dependence of ignorance
  - Leads to enlightenment (Moksha) = freedom from Samskara



# COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION – BHAGAVAD GITA

## Dilemma

- The Bhagavad Gita takes place over a relatively short time frame. It is narrated by the poet Sanjaya and told to King Dhritarashtra. Arjuna, a young warrior, and Krishna, a god who acts as Arjuna's charioteer, stand still between two armies while surveying the battlefield.
- In the beginning, Arjuna is struck with sudden and intense doubt about his role in the battle. Although he is one of the generals of the Pandava army, he does not want to fight. He hesitates because the adversaries are his cousins, the Kauravas. Arjuna believes it would be an action of great evil to fight and kill his family members. Krishna strongly counsels Arjuna to fight, nonetheless.

## Yoga

- Most of the Gita is a dialogue that follows Arjuna's pronouncement of despair at the idea of fighting and killing his cousins. Krishna tells Arjuna it is his dharma, or duty, to go into this battle and that by fighting he will be fulfilling his moral obligations. Furthermore, in fulfilling this dharma, Arjuna will be following the path of karma yoga, or the yoga of right action. When performing an action that aligns with a person's duty, one should be unattached to the outcome of that action. By doing this, Arjuna may find wisdom and freedom from the cycle of death and rebirth. Krishna recommends the yoga of right action to Arjuna.
- Krishna and Arjuna also discuss other yogic paths, such as the yoga of knowledge and the yoga of devotion. Krishna goes to great lengths to teach Arjuna about these paths. However, he continues to urge Arjuna that the path of action is the one for him. The path of devotion, Krishna argues, can be integrated with the path of action if Arjuna devotes his actions to a personal god. Similarly, the path of knowledge requires action as well, so ultimately the path of action is the heart of all other paths.
- In the end Arjuna runs out of questions and recognizes the validity of Krishna's teaching. He affirms his love for Krishna and decides to go into battle to fulfill his dharma. Learning from Krishna's conversations and teachings elevates Arjuna to a wiser, more enlightened state.

## YOGA PURIFICATION & MISPERCEPTIONS OF "HEALTHY"

*"Your body is your home, your vessel in life. It needs to be respected and loved" – Iskra Lawrence*

- There are different perceptions of what constitutes a healthy individual
- Trauma-informed & healing centered yoga:
  - Invites individuals to honor their mind and body today
  - To connect with who you are in this moment
  - To make decisions about your wellness that feel right for you
  - Yamas = support us to evaluate our relationship with our body and health by first recognizing harm that may exist and commit to ourselves to reduce this harm and any future harm
    - "Am I treating my body in a harmful way?"
    - "Am I doing everything for myself that my mind and body need to be healthy?"
- Considerations:

- Digestive health, sleeping habits, stress level, muscle/joint/nerve health
- What is your level of comfort within your mind and body?
- What healthy routines can you continue or initiate? What changes might you make to support yourself?
- Do you spend more time thinking of how you could feel if only x ,y ,or z?
- Do you procrastinate active involvement in today's well-being because you are distracted by not feeling well?
- Are you getting in your own way of supporting today's mind and body and finding comfort with who you are right now?
- Article: [How Yoga Helps Detox Your Body](#)

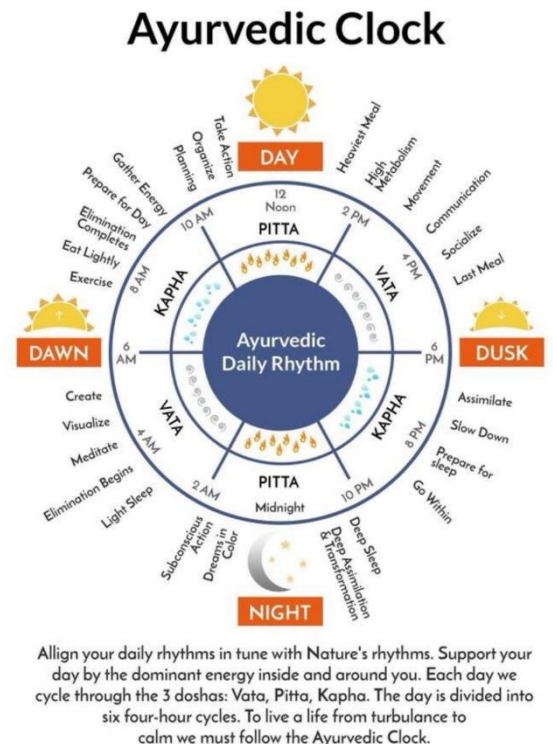
## A LOOK AT AYURVEDA

### 7 ways Ayurveda benefits in your daily life

1. Promotes self-love
2. Promotes better health and well-being
3. Reduces stress and anxiety
4. Removes toxins from the body
5. Maintenance of weight
6. Improve immunity
7. Helps in attaining an overall balance

### Ayurvedic medicine

- Sister science of yoga
- System of medicine dating thousands of years ago in India
- Holistic approach to health and well-being
  - Diet, herbal remedies, exercise, meditation, breathing, and movement as preventative care rather than treatment
  - Customized specifically for the individual
- Earth, fire, water, air, and space
  - Manifest within the body in a unique combination within the aspects of one's personal constitution
  - Personal constitution = Doshas (Kapha, Pitta, and Vata)
  - Based on the specific combination of the Doshas present as an individual's Prakriti (ideal balance), a person should consume/avoid certain foods, temperature conditions, and remedies to maintain personal balance
  - If balance is absent = the impact may vary from digestive problems to skin conditions to mood fluctuations
  - [Additional reading](#)



## Ayurvedic Exploration – Doshas


- Prakriti = true nature = unique combination of these three Doshas
- Forces that determine physiological, mental, and emotional health
  - Pitta: connected with fire & water
    - Strong Pitta = competitive, aggressive, and goal-oriented
  - Vata: connected with air & space
    - Strong Vata = easily distracted but have the ability to think beyond the typical
  - Kapha: connected with earth & water
    - Strong Kapha = dominant people, grounded, support to others, act in a slow and deliberate manner

VATA	KAPHA	PITTA
<b>LATE FALL/EARLY WINTER</b> COLD, DRY, LIGHT, SWIFT, MOBILE, IRREGULAR, ROUGH	<b>LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING</b> COOL, WET, OILY, HEAVY, DENSE, STATIC, STABLE	<b>SUMMER</b> HOT, OILY, LIGHT, LIQUID, MOBILE, SHARP, SOFT, SMOOTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thin, light and wiry frame, long and tapered fingers and toes, small dark eyes, smaller mouths and thin lips.</li> <li>Dryness of skin, hair, lips and joints. Irregularity in bones, teeth, hair, spine ect (scoliosis).</li> <li>Extreme sensitivity to cold, wind, and dry weather.</li> <li>Cold extremities, such as hands, feet, and nose.</li> <li>Erratic appetites and irregular digestion.</li> <li>May suffer from arthritis, fibromyalgia, anxiety, migraines</li> <li>Irregular menstrual cycles with premenstrual physical and emotional symptoms.</li> <li>Light, restless sleep.</li> <li>Very active mind. Creative, artistic with imaginative ideas. Ideas change often. Open and tolerant of others. Energetic but sporadic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stocky build, large and strong frame, tendency to gain weight easily, and well-developed chest. Large and attractive blue or light brown eyes, thick eyelashes, round faces with full lips.</li> <li>Soft, thick, oily hair that is wavy and plentiful.</li> <li>Intolerant of cold, damp environments.</li> <li>Cool extremities that may be clammy (cool sweaty palms/feet).</li> <li>Steady appetite with slow but regular bowel movements and minimal urination.</li> <li>Tendency towards colds, congestion, allergies, water retention, and sluggish digestive systems.</li> <li>Regular menstrual cycles with little premenstrual symptoms.</li> <li>Heavy sleepers with tendency to over sleep</li> <li>Easy going, fun loving, patient, slower moving, endurance, grounded deposition, resistance towards change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium-sized build, moderate muscle tone, ruddy coloring, medium sized eyes that are light in color.</li> <li>Skin is fair, warm, reddish, soft, and moist. Many freckles and moles, with a tendency towards rashes or acne. Soft, thin, light-colored or reddish hair, tendency to grey or bald early.</li> <li>Burn easily in sun. Sensitive to heat and humidity.</li> <li>Extremities are warm with good circulation.</li> <li>Robust, healthy appetites. Become irritable if they skip a meal.</li> <li>Prone to inflammation of muscles and tissues, especially in the shoulders and middle back where they accumulate stress. Indigestion, heartburn.</li> <li>Regular menstrual cycles with heavy bleeding and PMS.</li> <li>Light but moderately good sleep. Often overheat during sleep with tendency to burn candle at both ends.</li> <li>Intelligent, powerful, clear, focused mind.</li> <li>Aggressive, quick temper, competitive, workaholic, overly ambitious, great conversationalists.</li> </ul>


Ayurvedic Psychology	PITTA	VATA	KAPHA
<b>Element</b>	 <b>Fire</b> (fiery, aggressive, critical, contentious, destructive)	 <b>Wind</b> (find it difficult to settle down or be at ease)	 <b>Water</b> (Amorphous like water, sometimes stimulated into changing self)
<b>Role</b>	Governs reason, intelligence, illuminating capacity.	Governs the basic sensitivity and mobility of the mental field.	Governs feeling, emotion, and the capacity of the mind to hold on to form.
<b>Guna</b>	<b>Sattva</b> (being, harmony)	<b>Rajas</b> (activity, seeking)	<b>Tamas</b> (darkness, ignorance)
<b>Vital Essence</b>	<b>Tejas</b> (courage, intellect, drive, radiance)	<b>Prana</b> (helps emotional harmony, balance, creativity)	<b>Ojas</b> (provides peace, calm & contentment)
<b>Balanced Agni</b>	Patience, composure, boldness	Clarity, logic, consistency, bravery	Joy, stability, balance, affection, interest
<b>Imbalanced Agni</b>	Impatient, passivity, overly critical	Indecisive, anxiety, confusion	Depression, desire, withdrawal
<b>Temperament</b>	Motivated, strong-willed	Nervous, changeable	Content, conservative
<b>Positive Emotions</b>	Courage	Adaptability	Love
<b>Negative Emotions</b>	Anger	Fear	Attachment
<b>Personality</b>	Being competitive, they love to win. Intelligent, perceptive and discriminating. See things in a systematic way with a sharp mind. May be opinionated, judgmental or self-righteous. Prone to anger - their main reaction to new or unexpected events, and tend to be aggressive or domineering. Strong willed and can be impulsive or self-willed. Make good leaders but can be fanatic / insensitive.	Quick and agile mind. Changing interests and inclinations. Talkative, informed, and intellectual. Can understand many different points of view. Can be superficial in their ideas and talk on aimlessly. Mind easily wavers. Lack determination, consistency and self-confidence. Often have negative self-image. Get spaced out and may be absent-minded.	Emotional, have much love, devotion and loyalty. Like to belong. They have much desire, attachment and may be possessive or greedy. Slow to learn but retain what they learn. Not creative or inventive. Often traditional / conventional. Good followers - prefer team work. Content and accepting. Stable but sometimes stagnate. Don't like to change and find change difficult.

AyurvedicPsychology.org


# Ayurveda Doshas



**Vata**  
(Air + Ether)



**Pitta**  
(Water + Fire)



**Kapha**  
(Water + Earth)

Balance	Imbalance
Energetic Enthusiastic Bubbly Friendly	Nervous Anxious Forgetful Restless

**What to do in case of Imbalance:**

Listen & be near to water  
Drink hot Lemonwater in the morning  
Be Grounded(Go Get Ayurvedic Massage)  
Cuddle More with your loved ones  
Nap  
Get Yourself some more Routine  
Practice your Pranayama More

Balance	Imbalance
Funny Cooperative Confident Decisive	Critical Angry Dictator Like Workaholic

**What to do in case of Imbalance:**

Allowing Free Time Everyday  
Do not Skip Meals  
Spend More Time in Nature  
Favor Cooler colors in clothes  
Laugh  
Just Let Go, Just Surrender  
Do More Challenging Sports

Balance	Imbalance
Generous Kind Strategic Patient	Stubborn Melancholic Grudge Holding Feels Stuck

**What to do in case of Imbalance:**

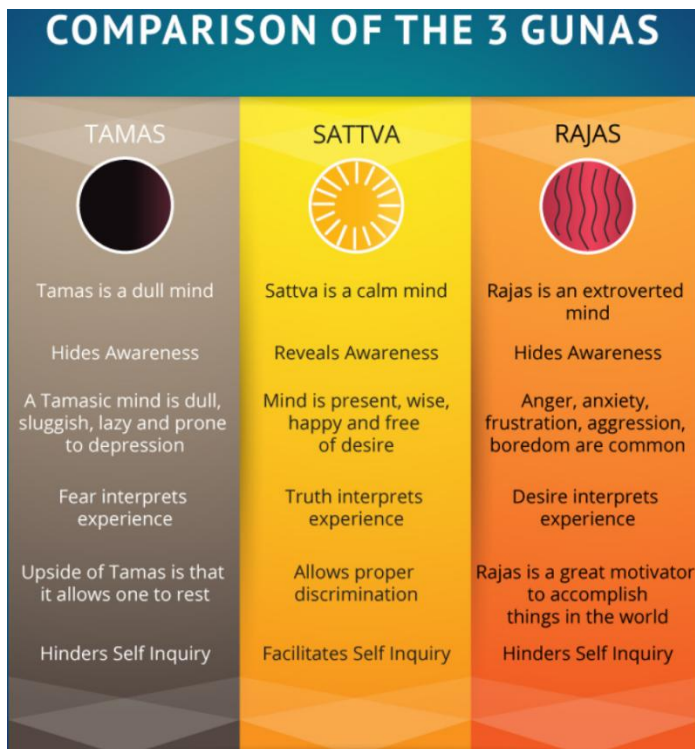
Get a Regular Routine  
Seek Stimulation  
Clear your Space  
Favor warm & bright colors in clothes  
Work Out  
Eat a lot of veggies in a peaceful zone  
Stay warm & dry



# GUNAS & BALANCE

## Comparison of the 3 Gunas

- Energies that affect our actions
  - Sattva: stillness, clarity, and balance, and allows us to move forward
  - Rajas: has us on the hamster wheel, caught in where and how change can enter our life, busy and erratic
    - Can also be explored as anxiety
  - Tamas: stagnation
    - Can also be explored as depression
- While balance actions of Sattva is the goal the majority of the time, Rajas and Tamas are necessary to release energy and rest



## Cultivate a Balanced Mind

Everything we put into our body has an effect on our mind. These lifestyle choices will either support a clear mind and memory or not.

sattva	rajas	tamas
A Sattvic diet promotes love, awareness, joy and intelligence	A Rajasic diet has a stimulating effect on the mind and body.	A Tamasic diet has a dulling effect on the mind.
<b>It includes:</b> Fresh fruit and vegetables, sprouts	<b>It includes:</b> Coffee, tea, Carbonated beverages	<b>It includes:</b> Mushrooms, garlic, onion, beans, hard aged cheese
Whole grains and nuts	Frozen, canned, sour, salty foods	Red meat or canned fish
Milk and ghee	Pungent vegetables like garlic, onion, hot peppers, nightshades	Refined sugar
Plant based oils	Dark lentils	Tamasic foods are chemically-treated, microwaves, stale, old meat and fish.
Lentils and beans	Chocolate	
Sweeteners like raw honey, dates, figs	To reduce Rajas, avoid rajasic foods, over-exercising, over-work, loud music, excessive thinking, and over-stimulation	To reduce Tamas avoid tamasic foods, over-sleeping, over-eating, inactivity, fearful situations
Spices: cardamom, coriander, cumin, fennel, turmeric, fresh ginger		
Herbs: Ashwagandha, Bacon, Gotu Kola, Jatamansi, Shankhapushpi, Tulsi		

more @  
mother of health

<i>Raja</i>	<i>Sattva</i>	<i>Tamas</i>
Activity	Truth / Goodness	Inertia
Passion / desire	Light / illumination	Darkness
Energy	Spiritual Essence	Mass / matter / heaviness
Expansion	Upward flow	Downward flow
Movement	Intelligence / Consciousness	Sloth / dullness
Binds by passion born of craving and attachment.	Binds by means of attachment to knowledge and joy.	Binds by means of ignorance and obstruction.
Is the ruling trait when greed, excessive projects, cravings and restlessness arise.	Is the ruling trait when the light of knowledge shines forth.	Is the ruling trait when darkness, dullness, stagnation, indolence, confusion, torpor, and inertia appear.

## POSTURES & SEQUENCING – NEXT STEPS

### Reflection

- Continued self-study
- Continued self-care
- Building on the principles of Tapas (discipline) and Svadhyaya (self-study) to deepen your connection to your own practice
- May lead toward service
- [PYP Facilitator Resources](#)

### Final practice sequences

- Reflect on the principles of trauma-informed yoga:
  - Safety and Accessibility:
    - How will you create an inclusive practice that meets the needs of your participants?
  - Empowerment and Agency:
    - How will you guide participants to honor their personal edge and explore their practice with curiosity and self-compassion?
  - Adaptability and Connection:
    - How will you structure your sequence to be flexible and responsive to the needs of those you guide?
- Use Yamas and Niyamas to inform facilitation

### Final reflection instructions:

- The reflection could focus on:
  - A specific topic that deeply impacted you (e.g., Yamas or Niyamas)
  - A particular aspect of trauma-informed facilitation
  - Your journey incorporating these principles into your life
  - A community-based project inspired by the training
  - Share a narrative of your overall journey in this program
- Consider the following prompts:
  - How has this training shaped your understanding of your relationship to yourself and others?
  - What practices or philosophies have influenced your personal growth or approach to service?
  - How do you envision applying what you've learned to your current or future work?
- Any medium is ok
  - Writing an essay, poem, narrative, creating art, composing a song, designing a vision board, expressing yourself through movement, comedy, or performance