

Prison Yoga Project YTT Guest Lecture Series

January-June 2026

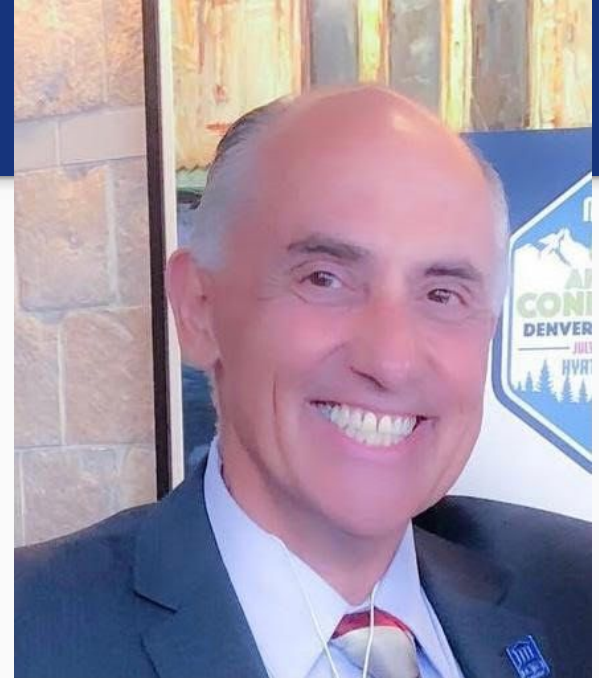
Judge Victor Reyes

Authenticity in Service Work

Date/Time: February 24th

Bio: Judge Victor Reyes is a retired New Mexico judge and longtime yoga practitioner, known for integrating mindfulness and ethical leadership into justice reform work.

Summary: Explore the importance of authenticity and ethical considerations in service-oriented yoga facilitation.



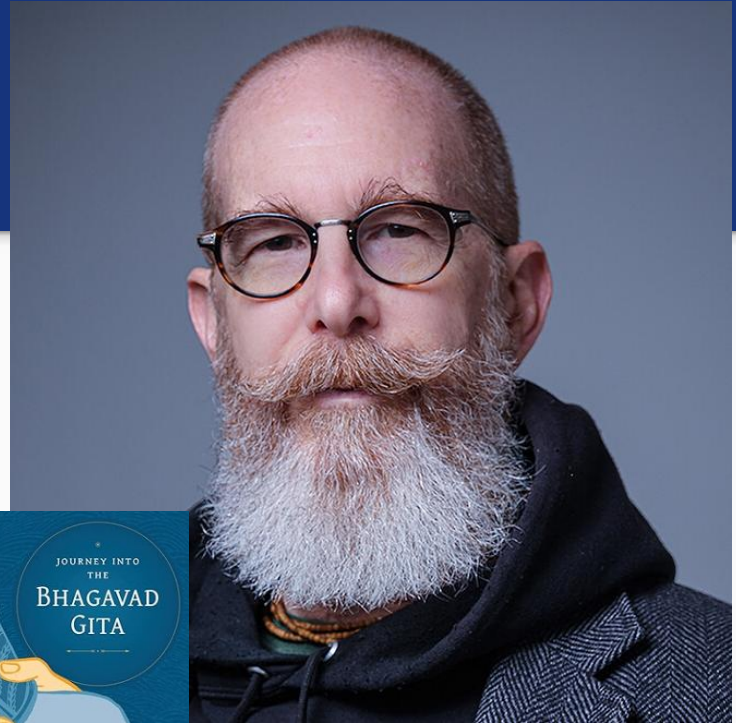
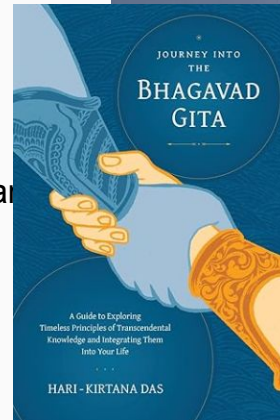
Hari-Kirtana Das

Exploring the Bhagavad Gita

Date/Time: February 25th

Bio: Hari-Kirtana Das is a yoga philosophy educator and author, known for making ancient teachings accessible and relevant through his grounding in Bhakti tradition, devotional practice, and social ethics.

Summary: Dive into the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita and explore how its timeless wisdom informs modern trauma-informed and healing-centered yoga facilitation.



Kristie Torbick

Counterposes & Life Balance

Date/Time: March 4th

Bio: Kristie is a yoga educator with a background in integrative body-based healing, trauma-informed care, and personal experience with incarceration. She brings deep insight into the emotional and physical needs of justice-impacted individuals and uses yoga as a tool for empowerment, healing, and resilience.

Summary: Explores how balancing movement patterns supports physical and emotional regulation, offering practical tools for trauma-informed sequencing—while also reflecting on the lived realities of healing within and beyond systems of harm.



Sachi Doctor

Healing with Ayurveda: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Restoring & Maintaining Balance

Date/Time: March 9th

Bio: Sachi Doctor is an Ayurvedic practitioner and founder of Elemental Alchemy. She combines science and spirit to support individualized nervous system care rooted in the rhythms of nature.

Summary: Discover how Ayurveda complements trauma-informed yoga. Learn tools to balance participants' unique constitutions and create grounding and healing practices.



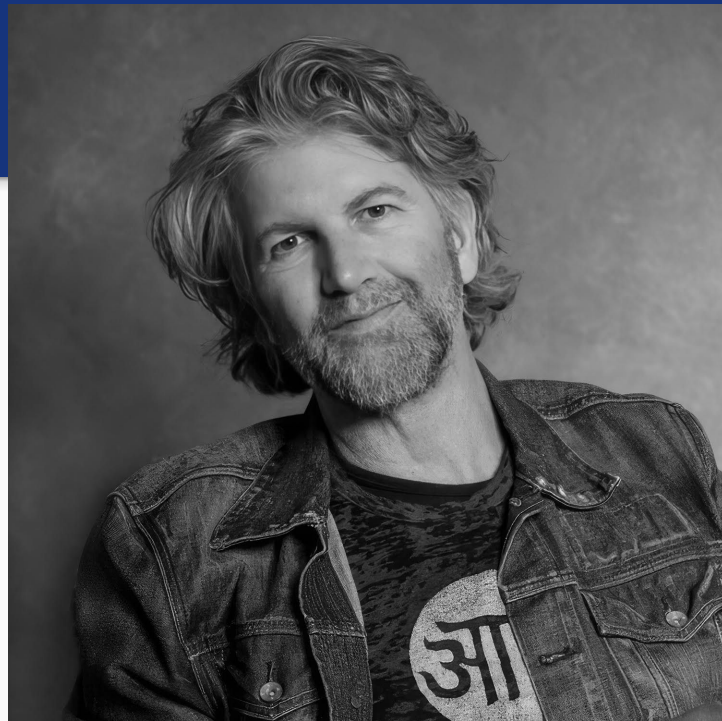
Robert Sturman

To Be Seen: Yoga, Dignity, and the Art of Witnessing in Prisons

Date/Time: March 16th

Bio: Award-winning photographer who has spent over a decade documenting moments of vulnerability, strength, and transformation inside prison walls. His work bridges the gap between isolation and belonging, capturing the dignity of incarcerated individuals practicing yoga.

Summary: With a camera in hand, Prison Yoga Project photographer Robert Sturman has spent years witnessing what is too often hidden—moments of vulnerability, strength, and healing inside prison walls. His photographs offer a rare glimpse into the yoga world where it's least expected, serving as a bridge between isolation and belonging. This talk will explore how the act of seeing and being seen can become a form of healing, both for the subject and for the world.



Nicole Hellthaler

Managing Challenging Behaviors in Trauma-Informed Spaces

Time/Date: March 17

Bio: Nicole Hellthaler is a trauma-informed educator with expertise in de-escalation, restorative practices, and holding space in high-intensity environments. Her work centers on compassionate leadership and behavioral understanding.

Summary: Learn tools for addressing and de-escalating challenging behaviors while maintaining safety and compassion in trauma-informed spaces.



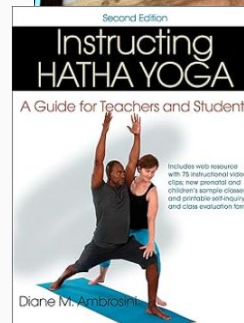
Diane M. Ambrosini

Understanding the Vagus Nerve through the Lens of Yoga

Date/Time: March 31st

Bio: Diane Ambrosini is a yoga therapist and author who blends functional movement, nervous system science, and yoga philosophy to support embodied resilience and emotional regulation.

Summary: Learn the connection between the vagus nerve and yoga practices, and how to leverage this understanding to support participants' self-regulation and nervous system health.



Kim Peacock

Guiding Youth Programs

Date/Time: April 1st

Bio: Kim Peacock is the Canadian Ambassador to PYP and a trauma-informed educator with more than a decade of experience teaching in youth correctional facilities. Her work is rooted in compassion, cultural responsiveness, and systems awareness

Summary: Discover best practices for working with incarcerated youth, including age-appropriate sequencing and strategies for building trust and engagement.



Sonia Brown-Diaz

Maintaining Facility Relationships & Self-Regulation in the Carceral Setting

Date/Time: April 14th

Bio: Sonia Brown-Diaz is the founder of Yoga on the Inside and PYP's Australian Ambassador. She brings deep experience in building ethical relationships within carceral systems and guiding facilitators in sustainable, embodied service.

Summary: Explore best practices for maintaining professional relationships within carceral settings and techniques for self-regulation to sustain effective facilitation.



Dr. Jennifer Bourgeois

Cultural Responsiveness & Humility in Criminal Justice Spaces

Date/Time: TBD

Bio: Dr. Jennifer Bourgeois is a trauma-informed counselor, researcher, and speaker specializing in culturally responsive care in justice-impacted communities. Her work focuses on identity-conscious facilitation and ethical engagement.

Summary: Explore the importance of cultural responsibility and humility when working in criminal justice systems. Learn strategies for fostering trust, safety, and inclusivity within carceral settings.



Vanessa Ramos

Understanding Accessibility & Disability Justice

Date/Time: TBD

Bio: Vanessa Ramos is a disability justice advocate and accessible yoga facilitator whose work centers on inclusion, somatic healing, and body sovereignty in wellness spaces.

Summary: This lecture explores disability justice principles and offers practical strategies for making yoga more accessible and inclusive for participants of all abilities.



Dr. Haunani Chong Drake

Cultural Stewardship & The Five Elements

Date/Time: TBD

Bio: A Native Hawaiian scholar and healer, Dr. Haunani Chong Drake integrates Indigenous wisdom and cultural stewardship with trauma recovery through the elemental lens of traditional Hawaiian practices.

Summary: Delve into the cultural significance of the 5 elements in traditional practices and learn how to integrate these principles into trauma-informed facilitation with cultural sensitivity



Nikki Meyers

Healing in the Margins

Date/Time: TBD

Bio: Nikki Myers is the founder of Yoga of 12-Step Recovery (Y12SR). Her work addresses trauma, addiction, and collective liberation, emphasizing embodied recovery and radical compassion in service.

Summary: Explore the intersections of trauma, addiction, and recovery in marginalized communities. Learn strategies to create inclusive spaces for healing and transformation.



Bill Brown

Beyond Asana: Integrating Wisdom from Tradition, Science, and Life

Date/Time: TBD

Bio: Bill Brown is Director of Programs and Advocacy and a longtime practitioner integrating yogic philosophy with social action. His work explores personal dharma as a tool for sustainability in service.

Summary: This session invites you to explore how inspiration can move from the heart and mind into meaningful words. Together, we'll learn how to weave insights from yoga philosophy, modern science, and personal experience into short, impactful Dharma talks. By the end of the session, you'll have practical tools and the confidence to create short talks that create the opportunity for students to connect the physical practice with life experience.



Josefin Wikstrom

Adapting Trauma-Aware Yoga for Mental Health

Date/Time: TBD

Bio: Josefin Wikström is an internationally recognized leader in trauma-informed yoga for clinical and carceral mental health settings. She specializes in accessible practices that support dissociation and nervous system dysregulation.

Summary: Gain tools and techniques for adapting trauma-informed yoga practices to support mental health, with a focus on working in diverse clinical and community settings.

