

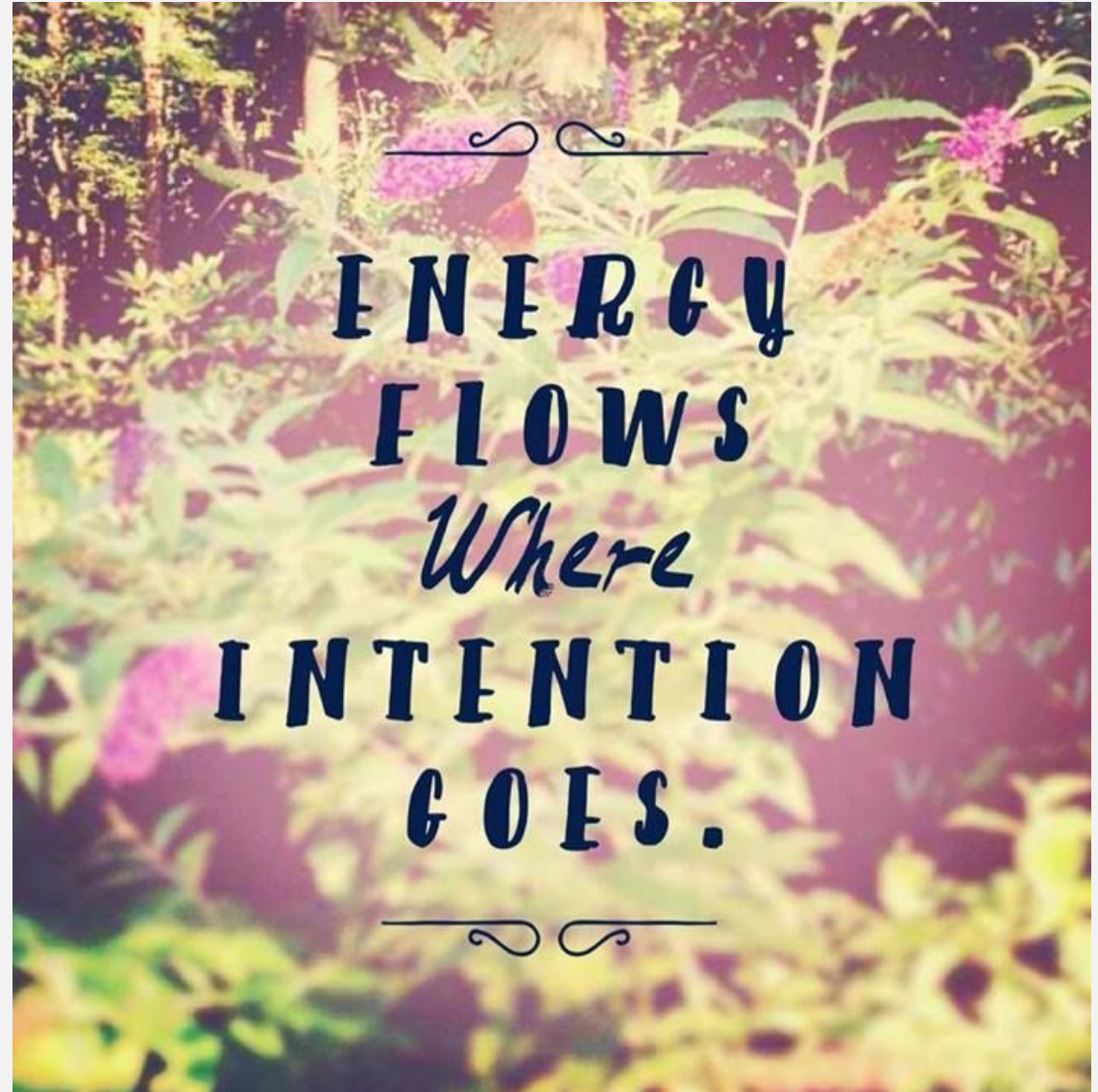
YOGA AND CONNECTION

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March 15, 2022

SETTING AN INTENTION

- attention to a quality that you would like to emulate for our time together
 - That quality could be presence, curiosity, student mind...



WHAT IS YOGA?

The Sanskrit word *yoga* has many interpretations

to unite,

to join,

to be absorbed.

An ancient practice originating in India that involves:

Physical poses (*asana*)

Breathing (*pranayama*)

Concentration (*drishti/dharana*)

Which facilitates connection of body, mind and spirit.





Yoga sutras

1. Yamas (ethics)
2. Niyamas
(virtuous behaviors)
3. Asana (postures)
4. Pranayama (breath)
5. Pratyahara (awareness)
6. Dhahran (concentration)
7. Dhyana (reflection)
8. Samadhi (union)



ASANA

Differences between asana of the past, present and future

- Past: asana was a means to enable a person sit in meditation and connect with Divine.
- Present: Hatha yoga- Lineages from Indian disciples.
 - Ashtanga, Iyengar, Anusara, Kundalini.
 - Hybrid movement and postures, informed by other modalities such as gymnastics, pilates, dance
 - Adapted for all ages and abilities
- Future: Who knows?!

**SURYA
NAMASKARA
A & B**



**ASHTANGA YOGA
PRIMARY SERIES**

**STANDING
SEQUENCE**



**SEATED
SEQUENCE**



**FINISHING
SEQUENCE**



POWER OF ASANA

- *“Becoming more comfortable in our bodies is one of the best-known and most appreciated benefits of asana. The postures stabilize the structural support of the body by balancing range of movement (flexibility) with strength, improving alignment, and integrating the functioning of the muscular-skeletal system”*

- Sandra Anderson





PRANAYAMA

- ‘Asana without pranayama is just stretching’
 - Breath unites the body and mind; becomes a pathway to mindfulness
- Pranayama
 - The breath is our most powerful tool to relax our bodies and clear our minds.
 - Present moment awareness
 - Move energy

BREATHING EXERCISES

4-7-8 breath

Alternate nostril
breathing

Belly breath

Box breathing

POWER OF BREATHING

- *“Conscious breathing, which is a powerful meditation in its own right, will gradually put you in touch with the body...As soon as your habitual state changes from being out of the body and trapped in the mind, to being in the body and present in the Now, your physical body will feel lighter, clearer, more alive.”*

—Eckhart Tolle



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MEDITATION

- **Many types of meditation**
 - prayer, guided imagery, progressive relaxation, Transcendental Meditation (TM), Vipassana, Zen Buddhist meditation, Japa, movement meditation, mindfulness meditation...
- **Mindful Self Compassion (Kristin Neff)**
 - Use of meditation to cultivate self compassion
 - <https://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#guided-meditations>
- **Mantra**
 - Repetition of positive statements/affirmations

GETTING STARTED

Begin where you are

- Graduate up slowly

You must feel safe in your space

- Eyes open or closed

Comfort

- Sitting on a cushion, chair, lying down

Keep searching

- Guided meditation, groups, retreats

POWER OF MEDITATION

- *“Yoga is calming the fluctuations of the mind.”*

—YOGA SUTRAS 1:2



IMPACT OF TRAUMA AND STRESS

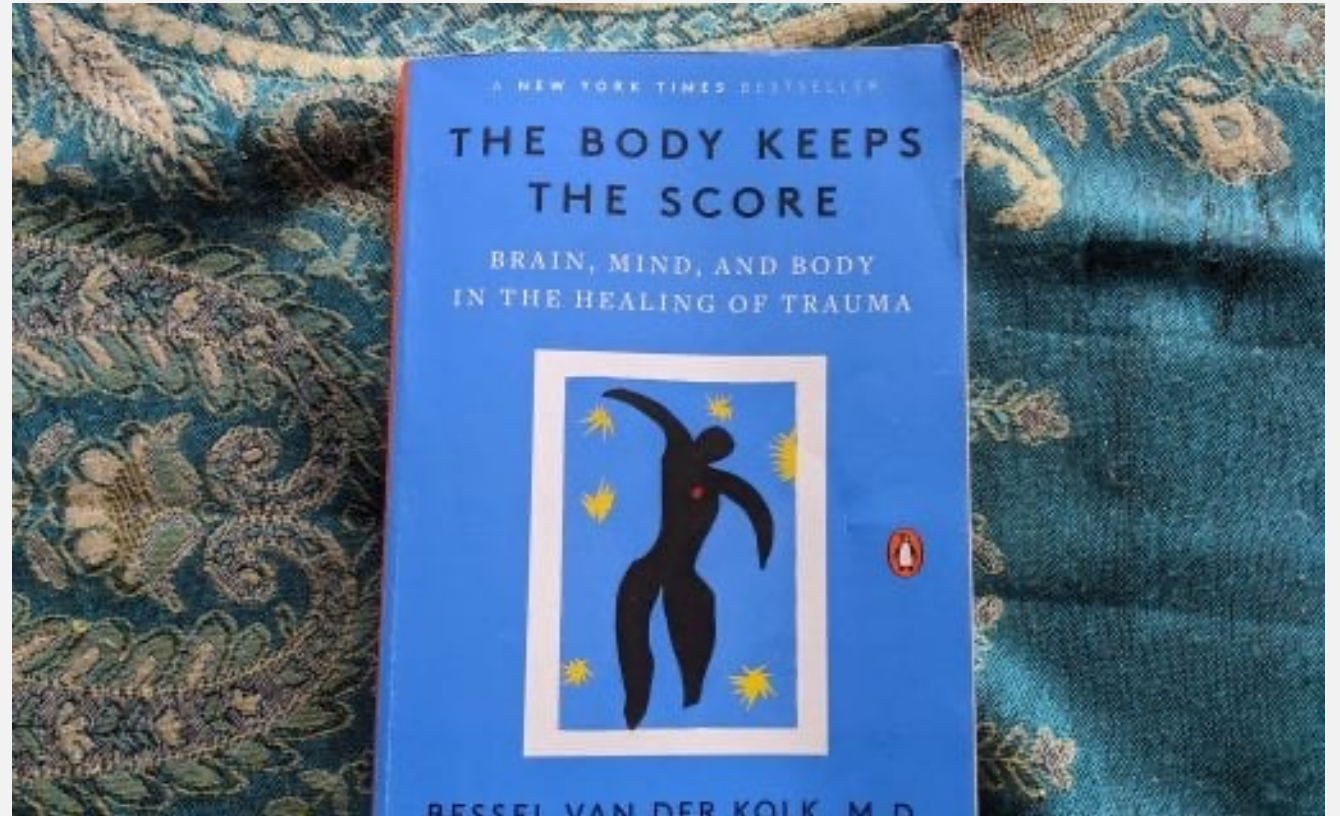
- Trauma and chronic stress rob people of power, control and safety in their body.
 - There is disconnection and distrust of the body, the mind, and the world around them.
- With trauma, the past is alive in the form of gnawing interior discomfort.
 - *“bodies are constantly bombarded by visceral warning signs, and, in an attempt to control these processes, they often become expert at ignoring their gut feelings and in numbing awareness of what is played out inside. They learn to hide from their selves.” (Beth Shaw, 2019)*

INTEGRATION

- In order to heal the trauma imprint at the nervous system level, psychotherapies are turning to yoga practices to bring the whole body into the therapeutic conversation - the physical, energetic, mind, emotional and spiritual bodies
 - Somatic experiencing
 - Polyvagal exercises
 - Mindfulness based stress reduction
 - Mindful Self-compassion

“THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE”

- When talking isn't enough to heal a traumatized nervous system, Dr. Peter Levine and Dr. Bessel Van Der Kolk recommend trauma-informed yoga postures to safely calm the nervous system and release trauma from the body
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmKfzbHzm_s



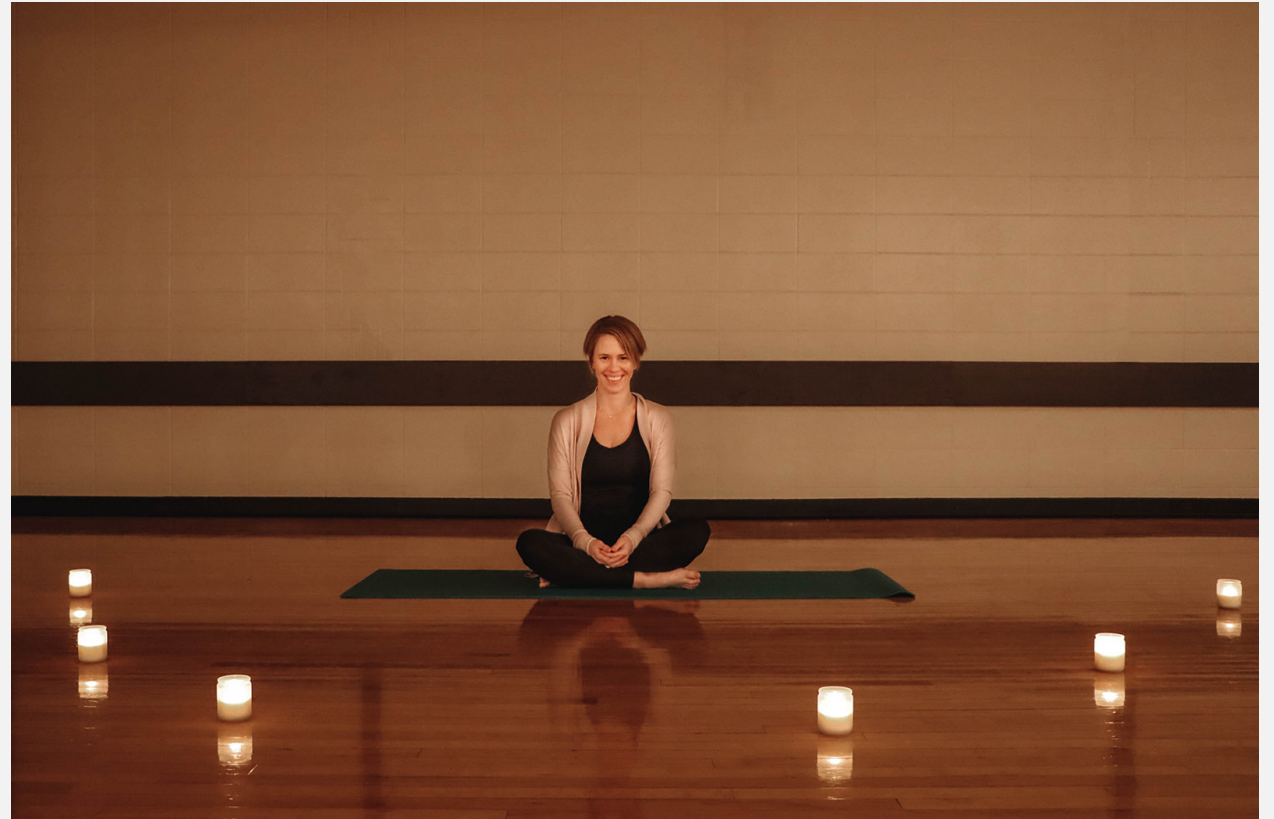
TRAUMA SENSITIVE YOGA



- Use of modified yoga techniques to support clinical treatment
 - Increase comfort and safety
 - foster self-awareness and regulation,
 - increase resiliency and presence
- *Trauma-informed yoga*- being integrated into teacher trainings as well as a workshops to help create safety into yoga classes
 - Knowledge of trauma, language, adjustments, space

REVIEW

- Yoga helps to connect body, mind and spirit through an integration of physical postures, breath and concentration.
- Can be a gentle, safe way for people to befriend their bodies, where the trauma is stored
- Helps calm the nervous system
- Physical benefits- strength, increase heart rate variability, and decreases stress.
- Meditation can be healing, clearing, and simultaneously connecting.



“YOGA IS THE JOURNEY OF THE SELF,
THROUGH THE SELF, TO THE SELF”

—BHAGAVAD GITA