



CONTEMPLATIVE  
PRACTICES FOR  
RESILIENCE AND WELL-  
BEING

A Resource Booklet

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# MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION

*“Awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” – Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Mindfulness and meditation stem from Buddhist tradition as a path away from personal suffering.
- Westernized mindfulness has been adopted as a tool to increase awareness and skillful response to stress and other difficulties.
- Practicing meditation is one way to increase a mindful state.

### *Why*

- Over the past few decades, mindfulness and meditation have become a popular approach in Western culture to manage physical and mental health conditions, increase well-being, and improve other things, such as focus, mental flexibility, and emotional reactivity.

### *How*

- Focus your attention to the present (not the past or future).
  - *Tip: do so by focusing on your breath*
- Adopt a curious attitude toward your experience.
- Notice when you are making judgments (reacting) instead of experiencing.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

1. Find a quiet space with a comfortable chair and have a seat.
2. Set a timer for 1-2 minutes.
3. Before starting the timer:
  - a. Your eyes can remain open or close, whatever feels most comfortable to you.

- b. Maintain an open and curious attitude throughout the practice.
- c. The timer will be keeping track of time, so you do not have to.
4. Start the timer.
5. [The practice]: Begin by taking a few deep breaths. Use the rest of the time to focus on your breath. What do you notice? What sensations accompany the inhale? What about the exhale? Take note of when your mind ‘wanders’ or starts to think about something else. Bring your attention back to your breathing.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *Full Catastrophe Living* (2013) by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD
2. *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life* (2009) by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD
3. *Altered Traits: Science Reveals How Meditation Changes Your Mind, Brain, and Body* (2017) by Daniel Goleman, PhD, and Richard J. Davidson, PhD
4. *Aware* (2018) by Daniel J. Siegel, MD
5. *Practicing Mindfulness* (2018) by Matthew Sockolov

### *Websites*

1. UC San Diego Center for Integrative Medicine  
<https://cih.ucsd.edu/mindfulness>
2. UMass Memorial Health  
<https://www.ummhealth.org/center-mindfulness>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Health  
<https://osher.ucsf.edu/public-classes>
2. Spirit Rock Meditation Center  
<https://www.spiritrock.org/>
3. East Bay Meditation Center  
<https://eastbaymeditation.org/>

### *Smart-device applications*

1. Insight Timer
2. Headspace
3. Calm
4. Ten Percent Happier

## References

1. Kabat-Zinn J. *Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York, NY: Hyperion; 1994.
2. Silananda U. *The four foundations of mindfulness*. Simon and Schuster; 2002.
3. Bishop SR, Lau M, Shapiro S, et al. Mindfulness: A proposed operational definition. *Clinical psychology: Science and practice*. 2004;11(3):230-241.
4. Creswell JD. Mindfulness interventions. *Annual review of psychology*. 2017;68(1):491-516.

# HATHA YOGA & THE 8 LIMBS

*“Yoga is a light, which once lit will never dim. The better your practice, the brighter your flame” – B.K.S Iyengar*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Yoga has become a mainstream practice in the last few decades but has increasingly become popularized as a physical activity.
- At its core, Yoga is a very in-depth system of living life, to reduce suffering, and promote unity with one’s true nature, which encompasses multiple paths and facets.

### *Why*

- As the world becomes more technology focused, fast-paced, and “high achieving”, increasingly people are searching for ways to find their sense of self, connectedness to the world, and inner peace. Yoga, which means “to unite”, provides a methodology for doing just that.

### *How*

- Create a time to regularly examine your values and ethics and reflect if your lifestyle is encompassing those principles.
  - *Tip: Many people love to do the “Morning Pages” – a practice of writing for 3 pages or 30 minutes every morning. A tool described in the book *The Artists Way* by Julia Cameron*
- Explore different types of asana (postures) and pranayama (breathwork) practices, to find the ones that best fit your needs.
- Explore different types of meditation and mindful practices, and regularly practice the ones that fit best for you.
  - *Tip: There is no “one right way”.*

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

1. For this you'll need a quiet space, a place to sit on a chair, a timer, a sheet of paper, and something to write with, and about 30 minutes of your time.
2. Reflection: Set the timer for 10 minutes. Begin writing about your values and ethics. No other prompt – this is just for you. At the end of 10 minutes, fold the paper and put it away.
3. Physical practice: You may do this sitting or standing.
  - a. Move your head in circles very slowly to the right, so you feel a gentle stretch in multiple parts of the neck. Make 2 circles to the right, and 2 circles to the left.
  - b. Move your shoulders in big circles to the front 5x, and to the back 5x.
  - c. Make fist with your hands, place your arms straight out in front of you and shoulder level, and make circles with your fists to stretch the wrists. Make the circles 5x slowly in one direction, and 5x slowly in the other direction.
  - d. Sit down (if not already) and keep your feet flat on the floor. Then, extend the knees by lifting both feet off the ground, and straightening the legs so your feet are (almost) in the same line as your hip. This should be activating the thigh muscles. Hold in this position for 2-3 seconds and place the feet back on the ground. Repeat 5x.
  - e. Remain seated. Gently lift your feet just a few inches off the ground and make circles with your feet to stretch all around the ankles. Make circles 5x slowly in one direction and 5x slowly in the other direction.
  - f. Place the feet back on the ground, hands in your lap, and sit comfortably.
4. Set the timer for 3 minutes. While seated, close your eyes, and pay attention to your breath. Slow your breath down, taking slow and deep inhales and exhales for the 3 minutes. At the end of the 3 minutes, reset the timer.
5. Set the timer again for 3 minutes. This time while seated, close your eyes, but this time, simply observe your own mind, breath, and body. Do not try to change anything, do not try to judge anything. Simply observe. At the end of the 3 minutes, reset the timer once more.
6. For the last 3 minutes, take out the original sheet of paper, and write down any observations, sensations, frustrations, or any feelings you may have had during this session.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *The Eight Limbs of Yoga: A Handbook for Living Yoga Philosophy* by Stuart Ray Sarbacker and Kevin Kimple
2. *Light on Yoga* by B.K.S. Iyengar
3. *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* by Swami Satchitananda
4. *30 Essential Yoga Poses* by Judith Lasater
5. *Yoga: The Spirit and Practice of Moving into Stillness* by Erich Schiffmann

### *Websites*

1. Ekhart Yoga – for classes, explanations, and good articles about the 8 limbs of yoga  
<https://www.ekhartyoga.com/>
2. Yoga Journal – for information and learning about yoga  
[Yogajournal.com](http://Yogajournal.com)

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. Yoga in Daily Life  
<http://yogaindailylife-bayarea.org>
2. Isha Foundation  
<https://www.ishayoga.org/>

### *Smart-device applications*

1. OM Matters
2. Hatha Yoga for Beginners
3. Pocket Yoga
4. Yoga Studio by Gaiam

# TAI CHI: SUN STYLE

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Tai chi is a movement-meditation practice focused on mind and body integration, fluidity of movement, and breath awareness that originated in China.
- The purpose of tai chi practice is to enable the “qi”, or life force, to flow through the body. The concept of qi is fundamental in traditional Chinese medicine, and it is believed that when your qi is strong and harmonious you will maintain good health. The place where the qi is storage is called the dan tian, or body core, an area located three fingers below the navel.

### *Why*

- This tai chi program is based on Sun Style and the curriculum was developed by the Tai chi for Health Institute.<sup>1</sup>
- An 8-week tai chi program has been shown to reduce pain relief, stiffness, and improve ability to manage activities of daily living. In this randomized control trial, participants also said they felt better about their overall wellness and tai chi improved their balance.<sup>2</sup>

### *How*

- Tai chi is practiced standing or in a chair. The movements are slow, smooth, and continuous. The slow transfer of movement from one leg to another improves motor control and balance. Be patient and give yourself time to move at a slow tempo.
  - *Tip: Use mental imagery when you practice. See and sense the flow of water when you move.*
- Practice using principles:
  - Jing – mental quietness or serenity; by focusing on posture, body awareness, and breath, you will get a quiet mental state.

- Song or Loosing of the joints. Visualize elongation of joints, this allows to move with greater flexibility.
- Alignment –vertical, open, look at the relation of head, ribs, pelvis.
- Weight transfer, become aware of weight transferred in each step.
- Slow, smooth, and continuous movement keeps internal energy flowing.
- Gentle Resistance –strengthen ligaments and grows internal strength in deep muscles.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

Use awareness of breath, posture, and weight transference during situations that could increase your risk of fall: getting out of bed in the middle of the night or early in the morning, walking on uneven ground, climbing, or descending stairs.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *Tai Chi for arthritis & fall prevention handbook*. Tai Chi Productions. Australia, 2017.

### *Websites*

1. On Lok 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center <https://alwaysactive.org/tai-chi-for-arthritis>
2. Tai chi for Health Institute <https://alwaysactive.org/tai-chi-for-arthritis>
3. Tai chi for health information center <http://www.americantaichi.net>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. Tai chi for arthritis classes
  - Where: On Lok 30<sup>th</sup> Street Senior Center (or online)
  - Instructor: Diana Lara, MS, RSMT, (415) 418-8905, [dlararodgers@onlok.org](mailto:dlararodgers@onlok.org)

## References

1. Tai Chi for arthritis & fall prevention handbook. Tai Chi Productions. Australia, 2017.
2. Leigh F. Callahan, Rebecca J. Cleveland, Mary Altpeter, and Betsy Hackney. Evaluation of Tai Chi Program Effectiveness for People with Arthritis in the Community: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity*, 2016, 24, 101 -110

# THE POWER OF BREATH

*"For breath is life, so if you breathe well, you will live long on earth." – Sanskrit Proverb*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Although we breathe automatically, taking over 24,000 breaths every day without thinking, our habits influence the way we breathe and the impact of our breath on health.
- It is historically known that slow-paced breathing can help regulate mood, as propounded by the Yoga Sutra 2,000 years ago, spreading across to the western world in the mid-20th century.<sup>1</sup>
- Healthy breathing, without over-breathing, supports healthy oxygen-carbon dioxide exchange, promoting both mental and physical health.<sup>2</sup>

### *Why*

- Slow, paced breathing not only induces a greater state of relaxation, but it can improve a variety of health conditions, including insomnia, high blood pressure, stress, anxiety, depression, and PTSD.<sup>1</sup>

### *How*

- Focus your attention on how you are breathing.
  - *Tip: Pay attention to your posture and where you are breathing from (chest, belly, etc.)*
- Attempt to change your breathing, by taking slow, belly breaths.
  - *Tip: Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your belly to help guide your breath lower*
- Consider using a pacer at 6 breaths per minute (5 second inhale, 5 second exhale) daily for 10 minutes.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*"Low and slow breathing" – Try it before session!*

1. Loosen tight clothing, belts, buckles, zippers, or anything else that might obstruct free movement of the diaphragm (your diaphragm lies in between your chest and abdomen).
2. If possible, recline on a chair or couch.
3. Set a timer for 5 minutes.
4. Place a hand on the abdomen and a hand on the chest to feel where the breath is going. If you are lying down flat, another option is to place a tissue box on the abdomen to watch it rise and fall with each breath.
5. To help guide your breath lower, imagine that there is a balloon in your belly. What color is it? Now, with every inhalation, imagine that you are gently inflating the balloon and with every exhalation, you are gently deflating the balloon.

As you INHALE, your stomach EXPANDS (inflating the balloon)

As you EXHALE, your stomach CONTRACTS (deflating the balloon)

6. Inhale comfortably, and exhale smoothly, slowly, and fully, until your lungs feel comfortably empty. Allow the exhalation to be slightly longer than the inhalation.
7. Try not to push your stomach out, or pull it back in. Let your body breathe for you, without any application of effort.
8. **Advanced tip:** Once you get comfortable with "low and slow breathing," you can add in a pacer for paced breathing. There are breath pacers available online and several apps that allow for paced breathing. We recommend starting anywhere from 7-10 breaths per minute and working your way down to 6 breaths per minute.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art* (2020) by James Nestor
2. *Biofeedback and Mindfulness in Everyday Life: Practical Solutions for Improving Your Health and Performance* (2019) by Inna Khazan, PhD
3. *Draw Breath: The Art of Breathing* (2019) by Tom Granger
4. *Exhale* (2020) by Richie Bostock

## Websites

1. Brigham and Young University Counseling and Psychological Services  
<https://caps.byu.edu/paced-breathing>
2. Breathe Slowly (a web app for paced breathing)  
<https://xhalr.com>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. UCSF Biofeedback  
<https://www.ucsfhealth.org/treatments/biofeedback>
2. Community Events in the Bay Area  
<https://www.eventbrite.com>  
\*search "breathwork"

### *Smart-device applications*

1. Breathwrk
2. iBreathe: Relax and Breathe
3. Breathing Zone
4. Breath+ Breathing Exercises

## References

1. Sevoz-Couche, C. & Laborde, S. Heart rate variability and slow-paced breathing: when coherence meets resonance. *Neurosci. Biobehav. Rev.* 135, 104576 (2022).
2. Khazan, I. Z. *The Clinical Handbook of Biofeedback: A Step-by-Step Guide for Training and Practice with Mindfulness*. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

# QIGONG: A MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION PRACTICE

*“Qigong is an effective and joyful way of loving yourself and others” – Master Mingtong Gu*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- From the Chinese philosophy and medicine traditions, Qigong is a movement meditation and was developed into exercises for health and well-being in relative recent years. Although the name “qigong” was not in general use until the twentieth century, there is evidence from Chinese historians and archeologists of qigong-like practices dating back 5,000 years.
- What is Qigong? Qi is the vital life-force energy that flows through and enables all things and Gong is movement. Qigong is taught in the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program as a complementary meditation. It aligns with the goal of the MBSR course, which is a behavioral and education practicum where participants learn skills for stress reduction and emotion regulation.

### *Why*

- Qigong is a type of meditation. Like mindfulness meditation, which is the primary mind-body skills intervention that is practiced in MBSR, through regular practice, reductions in the perceptions of as well as the physiological signs and symptoms of stress can be achieved.

### *How*

- With coordinated and harmonized focus on breath (Qi) and gentle movement (Gong) while standing or sitting, these exercises establish one-pointed concentration in your mind/body helping to activate your parasympathetic branch of the nervous system thereby producing endorphins, calming & relaxing your body, and reducing stress and anxiety.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

1. Click the following link, where you can connect with the teachings of Master mington Gu.
2. Click on the 'resources' and 'FreeChiTV' and explore: [www.chicenter.com](http://www.chicenter.com)

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Websites*

1. The Chi Center  
<https://chicenter.com/about/>
2. Wild Coast Qigong  
<https://wildcoastqigong.com/>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. You can discover local practitioners, consider recorded online, and in-person Qigong sessions, and glean invaluable information about practicing Qigong for health and well-being from the above websites.

# GUIDED IMAGERY

*The light is within. It is already there. Take your time to see it. -Swami Satchidananda*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Yoga and mindfulness have been found to provide significant stress reduction benefits, which can be amplified through Guided Imagery.
- Guided Imagery is a convenient and simple relaxation technique that can help you quickly and efficiently manage stress and reduce tension in your body.

### *Why*

- Guided Imagery can have many health-related physical and emotional benefits. It can help you feel less nervous or upset. It can also help reduce pain, improve sleep, and improve overall well-being.

### *How*

- Guided Imagery works because our bodies do not discern whether an image is real or imagined. When we bring an image to mind, the same parts of the brain light up as if the actual event was happening.
- Moreover, in a state of relaxed focus (which Guided Imagery promotes), we are more sensitive to imagery, which makes us capable of more intense healing, growth, learning, and change.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

### Before you begin:

- Find a quiet spot.
- Take a comfortable seat.
- Set up your favorite guided imagery audio recording (optional).

### To practice:

1. Sit or lie down in a quiet, comfortable area.

2. Close your eyes. Take several deep breaths. Lengthen your inhalation, extend your exhalation, and keep breathing deeply as you continue this relaxation technique.
3. Imagine a peaceful scene like a lush forest, a majestic mountain range, or a quiet, tropical beach.
4. Think of the details in the scene. Imagine the sounds, scents, and sensations of being in this peaceful, calming place.
5. Envision a path in your scene. Picture yourself walking along the path, imagining the details and sounds as you walk this path.
6. Relax in your scene for several minutes. Continue breathing deeply.
7. After 15 minutes, count to three. Open your eyes.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *Guided Imagery for Self-Healing* (2010) by Dr. Martin L. Rossman
2. *Staying Well with Guided Imagery: How to Harness the Power of Your Imagination for Health and Healing* (1995) by Belleruth Naparstek

### *Websites*

1. Johns Hopkins Medicine  
<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/imagery>
2. Dr. Andrew Weil  
<https://www.drweil.com/health-wellness/balanced-living/wellness-therapies/guided-imagery-therapy/>
3. Rogel Cancer Center, University of Michigan Health  
<https://www.rogelcancercenter.org/support/managing-emotions/complementary-therapies/guided-imagery>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Smart-device applications*

1. Calm
2. Headspace
3. Insight Timer

## References

1. Nguyen, J., & Brymer, E. (2018). Nature-Based Guided Imagery as an Intervention for State Anxiety. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 1858. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01858>
2. Felix, M. M. D. S., Ferreira, M. B. G., Oliveira, L. F., Barichello, E., Pires, P. D. S., & Barbosa, M. H. (2018). Guided imagery relaxation therapy on preoperative anxiety: a randomized clinical trial. *Revista latino-americana de enfermagem*, 26, e3101. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1518-8345.2850.3101>

# GRATITUDE AND LOVING KINDNESS

*“At first we begin to cultivate loving kindness, and over time, loving kindness cultivates us” -  
Eileen Kierra*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- The Loving Kindness practice dates back over 1300 years originating in the Buddhist teachings as a part of a larger quartet of teachings called the Brahma Viharas (in Sanskrit) or The Divine Abodes. The Divine Abodes include the Loving Kindness practice, Compassion practice, Appreciative Joy practice and Equanimity practice. These are known as cultivation practices and have been shown to help people cultivate a sense of compassion, care, appreciation, and an equanimous mind.
- Paired with Gratitude Practice, Loving Kindness practice can be a powerful tool for opening the heart, supporting oneself through difficult times, and connecting more deeply with what is good.

### *Why*

- As the world becomes more disconnected, people become more exhausted and overwhelmed, and as life becomes more achievement oriented and fast paced, these practices remind us to slow down, to appreciate what is already in our lives, and to connect more deeply with ourselves and others by recognizing our own inner goodness and the goodness of others.
- Mindfulness, which includes Loving Kindness and Gratitude practice, is not just a practice, but a way of life, helping reduce suffering and fostering self-connection, connection to the world, and inner peace.

### *How*

- **Gratitude:** Reflect on various things/people/places/experiences you are grateful for.

- *Tip: Feel any sensations and emotions that arise for you as you focus on your gratitude.*
- **Loving Kindness:** Bring to mind an image of yourself or a feeling in your body. Then, recite these five phrases in your mind:
  - May I be safe and protected.
  - May I be happy just as I am.
  - May I be healthy in body in mind.
  - May I live with peace and well being.
  - May my heart be open to love and connection.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

1. Find a quiet place, a comfortable seat, and a relaxed posture.
2. For the Gratitude practice, think of something you are grateful for. Hold the image of this thing/person/place/experience/etc. in your mind.
  - a. Notice any feelings, emotions, or sensations that arise as you reflect on your gratitude and connect with it.
3. For the Loving Kindness practice, think of an image of yourself, either now in present time, or at another time in your life, when you would have really benefited from love, care, and kindness.
  - a. Hold the image of yourself in your mind. Place your hands on your heart or belly to feel the felt sense of yourself in that moment.
  - b. Begin to recite the following phrases to yourself as an offering, as if you are wishing these for yourself.
    - i. May I be safe and protected, or May I be safe and free from harm.
    - ii. May I be happy just as I am, or May I be happy and full of gladness.
    - iii. May I be healthy in body in mind.
    - iv. May I live with peace and well being.
    - v. May my heart be open to love and connection.
  - c. Return to the felt sense of yourself or the image of yourself as you recite the phrases.
  - d. Notice the sensations in your body or emotions that arise in response and be present with them.

- e. Imagine the following people and extend love and kindness to each of them:
  - i. A person that is easy to love
  - ii. A benefactor (someone who has benefited, helped, or cared for you)
  - iii. A neutral person (someone you really don't know but maybe you see them around in your life)
  - iv. A difficult to love person (do not do this until you have cycled through the others first)
  - v. All beings
- f. Continue to recite these phrases for yourself and the others.
- g. Do not be concerned if you do not feel openhearted right away. Remember, this is a practice that takes time to cultivate.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *Lovingkindness: The Revolutionary Art of Happiness* (1995) by Sharon Salzberg
2. *Loving-Kindness in Plain English: The Practice of Metta* (2017) by Bhante Henepola Gunaratana
3. *Words of Gratitude for Mind, Body, and Soul* (2001) by Robert A. Emmons and Joanna V. Hill

### *Websites*

1. Greater Good Magazine Article: How Gratitude Changes You and Your Brain  
[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_gratitude\\_changes\\_you\\_and\\_your\\_brain](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_gratitude_changes_you_and_your_brain)
2. Mindful Article: How to Practice Gratitude  
<https://www.mindful.org/an-introduction-to-mindful-gratitude/>
3. Mindful Article: This Loving-Kindness Meditation is a Radical Act of Love  
<https://www.mindful.org/this-loving-kindness-meditation-is-a-radical-act-of-love/>
4. Greater Good Loving-Kindness Meditation

[https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/loving\\_kindness\\_meditation](https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/loving_kindness_meditation)

5. Center for Contemplative Mind in Society Loving-Kindness Meditation

<https://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree/loving-kindness>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. UCSF Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program

<https://osher.ucsf.edu/public-classes/MBSR>

2. Greater Good Science Center at University of California, Berkeley

<https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/>

### *Smart-device applications*

1. Insight Timer

# MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION

*“With self-compassion, we give ourselves the same kindness and care we’d give a good friend.”*  
– Kristin Neff

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Self-compassion is the process of turning compassion inward. For example, being kind and understanding rather than harshly self-critical when we fail, make mistakes, or feel inadequate. Giving ourselves support and encouragement rather than being cold and judgmental when challenges and difficulty arise in our lives.
- The primary goal of the mindfulness self-compassion program is to help people know when they are suffering and respond with compassion to themselves and others in daily life.

### *Why*

- Research has shown that self-compassion greatly enhances emotional wellbeing. It boosts happiness, reduces anxiety and depression, and can even help maintain healthy lifestyle habits such as diet and exercise. Being both mindful and compassionate leads to greater ease and well-being in our daily lives.

### *How*

- Write a letter to yourself, being kind and understanding about a mistake you made or in some way you feel inadequate.
- Consider how you would treat a friend if a friend were in your shoes. How might things change if you responded to yourself in the same way you typically respond to a close friend when they are suffering?
- Practice being mindful (the act of knowing what is happening in a clear and balanced way)

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*All activities taught during the workshop. Try them after session!*

- Take a self-compassion break.
- Try the soothing touch exercise.
- Try the 5-minute self-compassion mindfulness exercise.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *Self-Compassion: Morrow* (2011) by Kristin Neff
2. *A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook* (2010) by Bob Stahl & Elisha Goldstein
3. *The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook* (2018) by Kristin Neff & Christopher Germer

### *Websites*

1. The Center for Mindful Self-Compassion  
<https://self-compassion.org/the-program/>
2. Christ Germer's website  
<https://chrisgermer.com/>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. Center for Mindful Self-Compassion  
<https://centerformsc.org/course-teachers-list/>

# RESTORATIVE YOGA

*"The antidote to stress is relaxation. To relax is to rest deeply. This rest is different from sleep. Deep states of sleep include periods of dreaming, which increase muscular tension, as well as other physiological signs of tension. Relaxation is a state in which there is no movement, no effort, and the brain is quiet." Judith Hanson Lasater, Ph.D., P.T.*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Restorative yoga is a series of gentle supported poses, using props to facilitate relaxation.
- Restorative yoga is about opening up and softening into the positions.
- As your body relaxes, your mind quiets down.

### *Why*

- To shift your nervous system from fight-or-flight, into rest and digest. This is the state where healing takes place.

### *How*

- Lying on a yoga mat, using blankets, bolsters, and pillows to support yourself in extremely comfortable positions.
- Warm, dark, and quiet are the essential ingredients of Restorative Yoga
  - *Tip: Put your hands on your belly, so you can feel your belly rise and fall with each breath*
- Bring your awareness to your breath.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

1. Lie down on a yoga mat and have an eye pillow handy.
2. Put your feet up on a chair, supporting your lower back and your head with a folded blanket.
3. Cover yourself with another blanket.
4. Before starting the timer:

5. Make sure you are feeling comfortable and can relax. Put the eye pillow over your eyes.
6. Set the timer for 10 minutes.
7. Use your imagination to help you relax. Imagine you are in your favorite vacation spot- engage all of your senses- see the colors, hear the sounds of the birds in the trees, smell the flowers, feel the warm breeze on your cheek.

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. *Relax and Renew: restful yoga for stressful times* (2016) by Judith Hanson Lasater
2. *Restore and Rebalance: Yoga for Deep Relaxation* (2017) by Judith Hanson Lasater
3. *The Heart of Yoga: Developing a Personal Practice* (1999) by T.K.V. Desikachar
4. *Integral Hatha Yoga* (1998) by Yogiraj Sri Swami Satchidananda
5. *Light on Life* (2005) by B.K.S Iyengar

### *Websites*

1. Dr. Judith Hanson Lasater's website  
<http://www.judith.yoga>
2. Dr. Judith Hanson Lasater's online Sangha  
[www.lasater.yoga](http://www.lasater.yoga)
3. New York Times  
<https://www.nytimes.com/guides/well/beginner-yoga>
4. Yoga Journal  
<https://www.yogajournal.com/poses/types/restorative/>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Health
  - When: Monday morning at 10:00 am
  - Where: Zoom
  - Instructor: Marcia Degelman
  - Cost: **free!**

<https://osher.ucsf.edu/public-classes/restorative-yoga>

2. SF Yoga Studio  
<https://haumsf.com/>
3. San Mateo Yoga Studio  
[nandiyoga.com](http://nandiyoga.com)

#### References

1. “Relax and Renew: Restful Yoga for Stressful Times,” by Judith Hanson Lasater, Ph.D., P.T.

# SOMATIC MOVEMENT

*“You are not a drop in the ocean, you are the ocean in a drop” - Rumi*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### *What*

- Body Mind Centering® (BMC) is a somatic movement technique created in the 1960s by Bonnie Bainbridge-Cohen.
- Somatic movement techniques use sensory awareness, movement, touch, breath, mental images, and sound to promote body awareness, and foster mind-body integration.

### *Why*

- Loss of mobility, especially in the spine, is common among older adults and is linked to impairments in physical function.
- Age-related loss of flexibility in the spine, hips, and shoulders is associated with poor posture.
- Spinal flexibility and postural awareness can be cultivated by practicing BMC.

### *How*

- In BMC sessions, the information is delivered using different channels including:
  - Visual images, such as drawings, anatomical software, and models.
  - Auditory information from guided journeys that facilitate an “embodied experience” of the anatomical and physiological concepts and sounds and music that provide support for the embodied experience.
  - Self-touch or touch by another person using hands or props such as balls, bands, and fabrics.
  - *Tip: guided explorations conducted slowly and with attention to sensory information support body awareness and re-pattern of non-functional movements.*
- BMC fosters attention to movement as well as inner sensations, such as breath, heartrate intensity, digestive system movements, and emotions.

## AT-HOME ACTIVITY

*Try it before session!*

1. Awareness of the tridimensionality of your body: Sit in a chair or lay down in the floor in a comfortable position. Bring awareness to your whole body as a unit, as a being that is breathing.
2. Bring your attention to the front of your body from your face to your toes, and then to the back of your body, from the back of your head to your heels. Feel the space between the head and feet. This is the length of your body.
3. Feel the right edge of your body, your ear, side of the neck, shoulder, side ribs, side of the hip, side of the leg and ankle. Do the same with the other side of your body. Sense the space between the right and left side of your body, feel the width of your body.
4. Now place one hand in your forehead and other hand in the back of your head and feel the space between both points. Do the same now placing one hand in your chest and the other in your back, feel the space and the organs between both hands. Now place one hand in your belly and the other in your lower back, feel the organs and tissues between both hands. This is the depth of your body.
5. Experience the volume and tridimensionality of your body and move slowly bringing your attention to your whole living body. Explore different shapes in your body standing, sit or in the floor. Have fun!

## WHERE TO LEARN MORE

### *Books*

1. Cohen, B.B. Nelson, L, & Smith, N.S. (1993). Sensing, feeling, and action: The experiential anatomy of Body Mind Centering®. Contact Editions.
2. Eddy, M. (2016). Mindful movement: The evolution of the somatic arts and conscious action. Intellect Books

### *Websites*

1. School of Body Mind Centering website:  
<https://www.bodymindcentering.com/>
2. International Somatic Movement Education and Therapist Association  
<https://ismeta.org/>

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND TAKE ACTION

### *Community Resources*

1. You can discover local practitioners and glean invaluable information about practicing Somatic Movement from the above website.

## References

1. Cohen, B.B. Nelson, L., & Smith, N.S. (1993). Sensing, feeling, and action: The experiential anatomy of Body Mind Centering ®. Contact Editions.
2. Eddy, M. (2016). Mindful movement: The evolution of the somatic arts and conscious action. Intellect Books
3. Hanna, T. (1986). What is somatics. *Somatics: Magazine-journal of the bodily arts and sciences*, 5(4), 4-8.
4. Araújo, C. G. S. D. (2008). Flexibility assessment: normative values for flexitest from 5 to 91 years of age. *Arquivos brasileiros de cardiologia*, 90, 280-287.
5. Bergström, G., Aniansson, A., Bjelle, A., Grimby, G., Lundgren-Lindquist, B., & Svanborg, A. (1985). Functional consequences of joint impairment at age 79. *Scandinavian journal of rehabilitation medicine*.