

The Love in the Room:

*Yoga Skills to Enhance the
Therapeutic Relationship*

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www.yogafordepression.com

Agenda

- ⊕ Centering strategies – Amy will lead several
- ⊕ We'll learn various components including:
 - ⊕ self-empowered imagery
 - ⊕ Breathing Practices
 - ⊕ Hand Gestures
 - ⊕ Using Mantra
 - ⊕ Meditative intention setting
- Benefits
- Practice with each other

Centering Meditation

- ⊕ Candle Gazing (Tratak)
- ⊕ Toning (Nada Yoga)
- ⊕ Yogic Three-Part Breath (Dirga)
- ⊕ Ocean-Sounding Victory (Ujjayi)
- ⊕ Intention (Sankalpa)
- ⊕ Smile Yoga

*The Love in the Room =
the Therapeutic Bond*

- ✦ Meta-analysis of over 400 manualized treatments for depression, the greatest predictor of a beneficial outcome was not the therapeutic modality utilized, but the relationship between client and therapist. (Wampold, 2001)

How Yoga Practices Enhance the Love

- ✦ Strengthens the Therapeutic Alliance
- ✦ Helps Client focus
- ✦ Helps Client access feeling states
- ✦ Provides tools for mood regulation
- ✦ Provides tools for self-care
- ✦ Helps in management of Bipolar Disorder & schizophrenia (Visceglia, 2011)
- ✦ Increases self-efficacy
- ✦ Provides tools and language to access a larger Self
 - ✦ *“You are more than your mood, more than your beliefs about yourself and the world.”*

*Therapeutic Bond –
Rituals & Practices*

- ✦ Lighting of a candle
- ✦ A hand gesture (*mudra*)
- ✦ A simple yoga breath (*pranayama*)
- ✦ A soothing image of sanctuary or peace or calm strength or whatever is sought (*bhavana*)
- ✦ A soothing universal tone (*mantra*)
- ✦ A cleansing breath (*kriya*)
- ✦ Client’s intention reveals itself (*sankalpa*)

***Centering Strategies:
Beginning a Session***

- ✧ Client's image
- ✧ Breath Awareness
- ✧ Breathing Practice
 - ✧ Stair-step (anxiety or depression)
 - ✧ 3-Part (anxiety or depression, only if accessible)
 - ✧ 4:4 (depression); 4:6 (anxiety); 4:4:6 (if accessible)
- ✧ Power Hara
- ✧ Pulling Prana
- ✧ Breath of Joy
- ✧ Hand gesture (mudra)
- ✧ Tone (mantra)

***General Centering with imagery,
sound & breath***

- ✧ Soothing Image
- ✧ Hand gesture
- ✧ Inhale through the nostrils for 4 counts
- ✧ Sustain the breath with the image for 4 counts or as is accessible.
- ✧ Exhale with the mantra "so-ham"
- ✧ Yogic Three-Part Breath (as is accessible)
- ✧ "Intention for our work together arises" or "gift" or "burning bush in the heart"

Centering for Anxiety

- ✧ Image for peace
- ✧ Hand gesture – Eagle Mudra
- ✧ Inhale through the nostrils for 4 counts
- ✧ Sustain the breath with the image for 4 counts or as is accessible.
- ✧ Draw mudra to heart with the mantra "Shamaya"
- ✧ Yogic Three-Part Breath (as is accessible) or Stair Step Breath – Part One
- ✧ "Intention for our work together arises" or "gift" or "burning bush in the heart"

Centering for Depression

- ⊕ Image for calm strength
- ⊕ Hand gesture, breath and sound
 - ⊕ Inhale arms out in front of the solar plexus (4)
 - ⊕ Sustain the breath with the image, 4 counts or as is accessible
 - ⊕ Exhale hands in Eagle Mudra to the solar plexus with mantra “Mahara” 3x
 - ⊕ Repeat same gesture and breath to the heart 3x, using mantra “Mahaya”
 - ⊕ *Give the heart a little rock, the image for calm strength on the altar of your heart.*

Centering for Depression

- ⊕ Image for calm strength
- ⊕ Hand gesture, breath and sound
- ⊕ Inhale through the nostrils for 4 counts.
- ⊕ Exhale with the mantra “Mahara” to solar plexus (3x)
- ⊕ Yogic Three-Part Breath (as is accessible) or Stair Step Breath – All parts
- ⊕ Intention for our work together arises

Centering for Trauma

- ⊕ Inner Sanctuary
- ⊕ 4:4:6 Breath
- ⊕ Movement & Mudra
 - ⊕ Inhale arms out in front of the heart
 - ⊕ Exhale hands in Eagle Mudra to the heart
- ⊕ Toning (Nada Yoga)
 - ⊕ Sha-ma-ya

Talking Points

- ✦ Language: Image from nature, or a time when you felt _____, or where you can imagine feeling _____.
- ✦ Delivery: Speak slowly
- ✦ Invite client to soften the eyes
- ✦ Keep your own eyes open
- ✦ Client leads the breath
- ✦ Avoid “I would like you to...”
- ✦ Use “Allow your ...” or “Invite your...”

*Yoga Practices
in a clinical setting*



Psychologist and LifeForce
Yoga Practitioner Dr.
Deborah Lubetkin with a
client, Lotus Mudra

Practice

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Image for calm strength ✦ Hand gesture, breath and sound <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Inhale arms out in front of the solar plexus (4) ✦ “Sustain. See that image of..” (4 or as is accessible) ✦ Exhale the hands to the solar plexus in Eagle Mudra with “Mahara” 3x ✦ Repeat language but “draw the hands to the heart with “Mahaya” 3x ✦ Give the heart a little rock, the image for calm strength on the altar of your heart. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Image for peace ✦ Hand gesture, breath and sound <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Inhale arms out in front of the heart (4) ✦ “Sustain. See that image of..” (4 or as is accessible) ✦ Exhale the hands to the heart in Eagle Mudra with “Shamaya” 3x ✦ Give the heart a little rock, the image for peace on the altar of your heart. ✦ Perhaps there’s an intention for (your life/this session) that reveals itself. ✦ As you’re ready, open your eyes. |
|---|---|

Chanting Om Shown to Deactivate the Limbic System

Researchers compared 15 seconds of “OM” (5 – O; 10 – m) to 15 seconds of the sound “Ssssss...” and to 15 seconds of rest. Significant deactivation in the amygdala as well as other emotional areas only during ‘OM’ chanting

Bangalore G Kalyani, et al., “Neurohemodynamic correlates of ‘OM’ chanting: A pilot functional magnetic resonance imaging study” *International Journal of Yoga*. 2011 Jan-Jun; 4(1): 3-6.

Therapeutic Bond – Rituals & Practices

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- ⊕ Client’s intention reveals itself (*sankalpa*)

Overview of Biochemical & Physiological Changes

- ⊕ Decrease in cortisol levels (stress hormone)
- ⊕ Increase in GABA levels (primary inhibitory neurotransmitter)
- ⊕ Increase in HRV (heart rate variability)
- ⊕ Increase in BDNF (neuroplasticity, genetic expression)
- ⊕ Deactivation of the limbic brain through vagal nerve stimulation

Pranayama Breathing Practice Basics

Breath count for Anxiety: extend the exhalation. Inhale for 4; Exhale for 6.

Breath count for Depression: extend the inhalation. Inhale for 6; Exhale for 4.

Meeting the Mood

- ⊕ Beginning by watching the breath or trying to slow it down may not be the most efficacious way of calming your client's anxiety
- ⊕ Meet the anxiety, normalizing it with a slightly more rapid breath like "Stairstep."

Stair Step Breath

(Anuloma Krama) Meets Anxiety

- ⊕ Take little steps through the nostrils, as though climbing a mountain (usually 4 to 8)
- ⊕ Sustain for four counts (as is accessible) at the top of the mountain. A soothing visual image may be cued here.
- ⊕ Now slide down the mountain. (Trolley, escalator)
- ⊕ Practice two or three times.

Stair Step Breath

(Viloma Krama) Meets Depression

- ⊕ Take an elevator ride through the nostrils up the mountain.
- ⊕ Sustain for four counts (as is accessible) at the top of the mountain. A visual image may be cued here.
- ⊕ Take little steps down the mountain through the nostrils.
- ⊕ Practice two or three times.

***Stair Step Breath
Complete Practice***

- ⊕ Little Steps up to capacity.
- ⊕ Sustain with visual image. (brief retention)
- ⊕ Little steps down until empty.
- ⊕ Return to Analoma Krama, i.e. ending with a slide down the mountain.

Bellows Breath – Inhale

one breath per second



Bellows Breath - Exhale



Cue to Direct Sensation—Why?

- Why we must be specific and direct, not global
- ✦ Many clients are living from the neck up.
 - ✦ For them and for those who have a history of trauma, it may not be “safe” to feel the body.
 - ✦ “Feel the sensations in your body” “Notice the sensations in your body,” can provoke anxiety, even trigger panic.
 - ✦ Cues must be to specific body parts, particularly those parts with a lot of nerve endings or sensation evoked by the practice you’ve led.

Cue to Sensation

- ✦ Specific and direct, not global
- ✦ Start with face, extremities
- ✦ “Sense into the face, the arms, the palms of the hands.” (Body awareness)
- ✦ Perhaps there’s a tingling, an effervescence in the palms.” (energy awareness)
- ✦ “Sense the fingers. Sense the space between the fingers.” (spacious awareness)

*Alternate Nostril Breathing
in a clinical setting*



Psychologist and
LifeForce Yoga
Practitioner Dr. Sue
Dilworth leading a
client in Alternate
Nostril Breathing

Alternate Nostril Breathing



*Vishnu Mudra – Hand Position for
Alternate Nostril*



Opening Occluded Nostrils for Alternate Nostril Breathing



Standing Hara Breathing

- ⊕ Breath of Joy with mantra
 - ⊕ 3 inhalations-arms front, side, up
 - ⊕ Exhale into chair pose with “Lum”
- ⊕ Pulling Prana
- ⊕ Power Hara with mantra
 - ⊕ 2 inhalations while twisting with hands on shoulders
 - ⊕ 2 exhalations while twisting with arms crossing the body and “Ram”

Pulling Prana (standing)

1. Through the nostrils inhale arms up; exhale down (5 – 10x)
2. Inhale arms out in front of chest; exhale back (5 – 10x)
3. Alternate arms, inhale out, exhale in
4. Arms out with fists, sustain breath to comfort level as arms are pumped toward chest.

Mudras

- ✦ Nerve endings in fingers speak directly to the brain
- ✦ We're programmed for effort-driven rewards, using our hands. "Did we lose something vital to our mental health when we began pushing buttons and stopped plowing fields?" Kelly Lambert, PhD, *Lifting Depression: A Neuroscientist's Hands-On Approach to Activating Your Brain's Healing Power*

✦ **Experiment**

**Energizing Mudra
Ganesha Mudra**



**Energizing Mudra
Brahma Mudra**



*Calming Mudra
Adhi Mudra*



*Calming Mudras
Dhyana Mudra*



*Shanmukhi Mudra –
Clinical Setting*



Psychologist and LifeForce Yoga Practitioner Dr. Deborah Lubetkin teaching an anxious client suffering from anorexia the Shanmukhi Mudra that accompanies Bee Breath (Brahmari) to calm her racing thoughts and focus her mind for the transition into therapy.

Bee Breath: Calming

✦ **Bee Breath (Brahmari) – exhale only**

- ✦ Chin slightly tucked
- ✦ Lips Closed
- ✦ Root of the tongue to back of throat

Mudra: Shanmuki

- ✦ Index points to brow point
- ✦ Middle covers eyes
- ✦ Ring at edges of nostrils
- ✦ Pinky at edges of lips

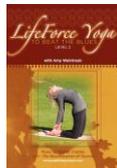


Practice

- ✦ Lead one standing Breathing Practice to meet an agitated mood
- ✦ Cue to sensation
- ✦ Check in
- ✦ Lead a centering

LifeForce Yoga®

- ✦ *Yoga for Depression* (Broadway Books)
- ✦ *Yoga Skills for Therapists* (W.W. Norton)
- ✦ Newsletter - research & news on yoga & mental health
- ✦ Trainings & Retreats
- ✦ Award-winning Yoga practice DVDs and CDs
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