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Yoga for You!

Welcome to Yoga! Whether this is your first class or you are a longtime practitioner, you are welcome here and I am honored by your presence!

Since 2020, I teach mostly virtual yoga classes on Zoom, some pop up classes in my home studio and spring-fall outdoor classes in Sandviale Memorial Garden

Please visit the calendar link on www.yogasong.net/calendar

Some facts about Yoga

- Yoga is an open system that does not require a creed or statement of belief. It is a natural complement to religious or spiritual beliefs, the 12 steps of Recovery, spiritual and sacred activism and other systems of navigating the world. While influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, it is its own practice and does not require knowledge or participation in those belief systems to practice yoga. In every class I teach, I acknowledge and show respect to the Source culture of the Indus Valley Civilization/South Asia and the ongoing, living breathing tradition of Yoga.
- Yoga is for everybody. All shapes, shades, sizes, abilities, and gender identifications are welcome here. All of our bodies are different and I make no assumptions about what it is to be like in your body. Rather, I invite you to breathe, move and notice what your experience is for you at this moment.
 - Yoga has a whole philosophy and ethical practice about how we show up in our relationship with our own selves, the God of our understanding and the world we live in. It is much more than physical practice. We come into the physical to anchor and ground the mind. An added bonus (or potential side effect!) is finding ourselves falling in love with life even in the midst of challenges.
- Yoga is a way of being in Community with others who are seeking to find peace within themselves and extend that to others and the world we live in. It is a non competitive environment.
- Yoga is the practice of being present. The practice of paying attention with curiosity and kindness to one's own self.

What you need for the practice:

- The Invitation! Here it is!
 - Invite yourself to show up with curiosity and kindness. Releasing expectation of perfection and inviting wholeness.
- You may bring your own mats and blocks. I also have some you can use and am happy to offer them.
- Please dress comfortably. Clothes that are too tight restrict movement and clothes that are too loose can be equally challenging. I like to wear yoga or sweat pants and fitted t shirts. Please wear what makes you comfortable. As you can witness from me, it is not a fashion show! We also do not wear shoes. You may want to bring a water bottle.

Yoga Etiquette:

- Please try to be on time. If this is not possible, please come anyway and make your way into the class quietly to set up.
 - Please turn off your cell phone. If you must have it near you, keep it on vibrate.
- Please avoid heavy perfumes. Essential oils are okay. Many people have a sensitivity to chemicals so perfumes can be a trigger.
- Please remove jangly bracelets and clunky jewelry. This may inhibit your practice and will be a distraction to others in the space.
 - Please do not walk on another person's mat.

- Please wipe your mat if you have borrowed one of mine with disinfectant wipes provided.
- Please take care of yourself during class and honor where you need to be in your body if what I am guiding is not supportive to you.

Components of a Yoga Class:

- Theme. I am a theme based teacher and draw from yoga philosophy and ethics to support students in their journey of self acceptance, peace, compassion and love.
- Centering and Breath Work. This helps support us becoming present to where we are in space and time. We use the breath and grounding to anchor us and invite presence.
- Sound Healing. I have studied Nada Yoga, the yoga of sound and Bhakti, the yoga of devotion for almost 2 decades. I incorporate the use of sound in accessible, basic techniques such as humming, which grounds and stabilizes the vagus nerve in the central nervous system.
 - Warm up movement with breath
- Core Yoga forms with breath, Balance and Vinyasa (moving with breath). Choice is always offered here for pace, stillness vs movement and options to suit you and your practice.
 - Cool down forms
- Meditation. Includes time of silence, guided meditation on theme and live music.

My style of teaching:

I have been a Yoga Practitioner since the early 1990's. I have studied many styles of yoga with various teachers including Iyengar, Ashtanga, Power Yoga and Hatha. I have had teachers that have supported and influenced me tremendously with their caring and compassion on and off the mat.

I studied and became a teacher with Anjali School of Yoga which is a Kripalu style of teaching yoga. It is called the Yoga of Consciousness and is a very helpful practice for regulating the emotions by being in the body in the space of the compassionate witness.

I also have trained extensively in trauma yoga work through The Trauma Center in Massachusetts and many other training and intensives including Off the Mat and Into the World. Additionally, I am trained through [Dynamic Gentle Yoga](#) with a focus on bone density and strength and [Accessible Yoga](#) with a focus on adapting practice for a variety of abilities. . I continue to study fascia and anatomy with [Bo Forbes](#) and have studied Ayurveda for Yoga Teachers with [Indu Arora](#).

[Michelle Cassandra Johnson](#)

[Susanna Barkataki: Yoga Speaker & Teacher](#)

[Meet Pamela - Yoga2Sleep](#)

[TRANSCENDING SEXUAL TRAUMA THROUGH YOGA](#)

[Jacoby Ballard Yoga](#)

These are teachers I have learned from and highly recommend.

I also teach immersions and lead training on [Gentle Yogis platform](#).

I am a faculty member of [The Thread Yoga Collective](#), a virtual platform where experienced teachers provide teaching and mentoring to yoga teachers.

[Christians Practicing Yoga](#) is another platform where I occasionally teach and am a regular contributor on the blog team.

I am a member of [Yoga and Body Image Coalition](#), and am rostered with [The Breathe Network](#), an international network of endorsed providers of healing arts to survivors of sexual violence. In addition to public classes, I work with women in prison, centers for recovery from substance abuse, homeless shelters, in conjunction with BottleWorks and Victim Services Inc offer a program for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

I am committed to my own ongoing practice of healing and have my own practice that allows me to be sustainable in the above settings and be joyful in life and am always learning and inviting that and my faith and enormous love of God to shape, support and guide me.

It is my intention always in every and any class I teach to honor the fragility and fortitude that exists in all beings. To invite students to be able to not only stand being in their own skin but turn down the volume on judgment and self criticism and invite curiosity and kindness. The invitation to feel where we are connecting to the earth, grounding, where we can become aware of our center, igniting our core and where we can from this place of knowing where we are in space and time, open our hearts to ourselves and the world.

I am honored you are here. Please let me know how I can support you.

Om Shanti,

Rachel

Websites that may be helpful:

www.yogasong.net

www.health.harvard.edu