

PRACTICAL EXERCISES • NUTRITION • MINDFULNESS • LIFESTYLE & WELLNESS

YOGATM

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MOVE • BREATHE • TRANSFORM

**MEN ON
THE *Mat***

ALEX CERRATO
**YOGA &
HYROX**

**MINDFUL YOGA
50+ WOMEN**

**YOGA *for*
INSOMNIA**



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A healing journey **AMARA VALLEY**



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Alex Cerrato

International Model
& Yoga Instructor

Photographer: Marco Lerat

Yoga mat: Be-Doux

Yogawear: Loroetu

Make-Up: Couleur Caramel

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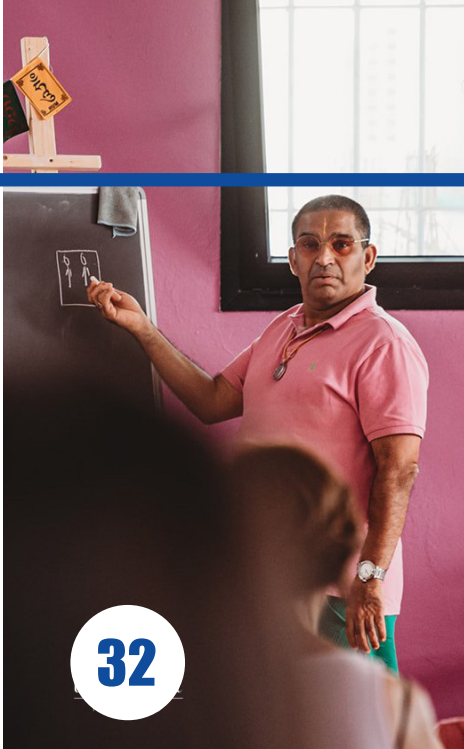
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LUST FOR LIFE

Awaken Your Inner Power

Author: Carolin-Marie Roth, BWY Teacher & Author



Modern life can easily disconnect us from our vitality. Between work, family responsibilities and daily pressures, we often forget what it feels like to connect with our body and notice what truly feeds our happiness and lust for life. Yoga offers a practical way back to ourselves: a space to breathe, move and listen inwardly.

For me, that relationship with yoga has deepened over more than 50 years of practice. It has been a constant companion throughout my life, supporting me through adolescence, a difficult first marriage, motherhood, menopause and through the many challenges that shaped who I am today. In many ways, yoga has been the most loyal partner I have ever had, helping me feel more empowered, healthier and more confident.

From this lived experience, two themes stand out that may seem contradictory yet are closely linked: cultivating a lust for life and learning the power of saying no.

Lust for life and setting boundaries are not opposites; they depend on one another. The more we protect our energy, the more fully we can experience life.

Lust for life is deeply embodied. It can be felt through the senses, presence in the body and through our capacity for pleasure and connection. This is also where sexuality comes in. Regardless of age, body type or circumstances, our sexuality remains a powerful source of physical and emotional health. It can support our nervous system, reduce stress, improve sleep and strengthen our overall sense of wellbeing. Like yoga, it is not something we have to do, but something we can choose to explore and benefit from.

At the centre of both vitality and awareness lies the pelvis – the meeting place of physical sensations, emotional experiences and life force. Through yoga, breath, and conscious

movement, we can reconnect with this powerful centre, awakening energy, creativity, confidence and pleasure.

These simple practices are an invitation to bring warmth, curiosity and awareness back into your body; to awaken your inner power, reconnect with your life force and listen to yourself. Because ultimately, you are the expert on your own body.

Perineum contraction (Mula Bandha)

The root lock (*Mula Bandha*) is not recommended if you have intestinal ulcers, a hernia, unmanaged high blood pressure, heart disease, glaucoma, or if you are pregnant. If you are menstruating, practise gently.

Sit on a chair or on the floor, with your spine straight and your eyes open or closed.

Breathe in through your nose and exhale audibly out through your mouth. Repeat a couple of times. Loud

sighing can lower your heart rate, reduce stress hormones and signal to your brain: 'I am safe, I can relax.'

Close your eyes and bring awareness to the base of your spine and your pelvic floor.

First, focus and contract your sphincter muscles as if stopping and letting go of the flow of urine.

Then, try tightening and relaxing the muscle fibres around your vagina or your penis.

Finally, contract the anal muscles in the back, as if preventing a fart. Now, squeeze all the muscles (front, middle and back) and pull them up toward your belly button while breathing in. Hold briefly and then relax fully on your out-breath.

Repeat the exercise, ensuring that your glutes remain relaxed. If you struggle, simply close both nostrils and pretend you are breathing in. This can help you to feel the squeeze



Once this contraction can be held for longer, you will be able to incorporate it during intercourse and the resulting firmer grip around the penis can enhance pleasure for you both.

Bridge Pose (Dvi Pada Pitham)



Working your deepest pelvic floor muscle - the levator ani - which translates to 'lift the anus'.

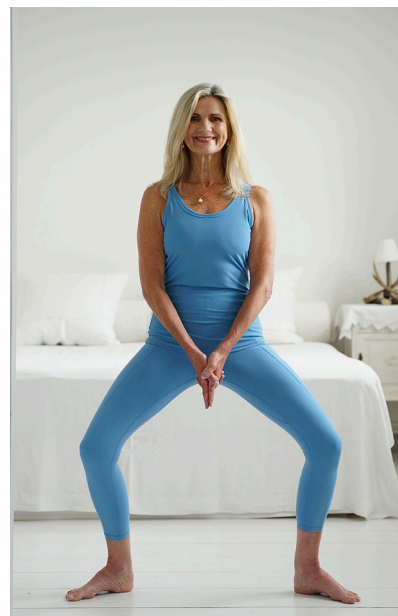
Lie on your back and bend your legs. Keep your feet and knees parallel to each other, hip-width apart. Your arms are over your head behind you on the floor. Soften your shoulders. Breathe in through your nose. Now, breathe out and lift your pelvis and back, while lowering your arms next to your hips. Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles and pull them up during the out-breath. Breathe in, hold the posture, then release the lock. Breathe out and lower your back onto the floor, bringing your arms behind you. Breathe in and lengthen. Breathe out, lift your hips and back, lowering your arms to your hips. Squeeze your pelvic floor muscles and lift them. Repeat a couple more times.

The Dancing Goddess Pose (Utkata Konasana)

Stand with your legs apart, feet turned outward. Bend your legs and sink down with your tailbone as if a weight were pulling your tailbone down. Bring your fingers into Kali Mudra (a hand gesture with fingers interlaced, except the index fingers, which are extended to represent the sword of Kali, with one thumb crossed over the other at the base). On your outbreath, tilt your pelvis gently forward, squeeze and lift your pelvic floor muscles. Release the tilt and the lock as you breathe in. Repeat.

Now, bring your arms out to the side and your fingers into Chin Mudra (thumb and index finger touching). Tilt your pelvis and engage and lift your pelvic floor muscles again. Repeat with your heels lifted.

Then, bring your heels down and start a little dance: move over to the left side, crossing your right arm over your left and your right leg over your left knee.



Forcefully breathe out through your mouth as you return to centre and breathe in through your nose as you move to the right side, crossing your left arm over your right and your left leg over your right knee. Return to centre. Perform this dance rather fast and as often as you like and feel the energy rising from your pelvis into your heart and throat.



The Power of No

Take a moment to settle into a comfortable position.
Gently close your eyes if that feels safe or soften your gaze.
Take a slow breath in through your nose...
And a long breath out.
Again, and again...

Let your breath return to a natural rhythm. No need to control it, just notice it.

Feel the weight of your body supported beneath you.
Feel where you contact the chair, the floor, or the bed.
You are supported. You are held.

Now bring your awareness inward.
Notice any tension you might be carrying, perhaps in your shoulders, your jaw, your chest. With each exhale, allow that tension to soften... just a little more.

Now, gently recall the word: *no*.
Not as rejection...
Not as conflict...
But as clarity.

The word *no* is a boundary.
A line that protects your time, your energy, your truth.

Notice how it feels in your body to say *no*.
You don't have to say it out loud: just feel it.

Maybe it feels unfamiliar.
Maybe it feels uncomfortable.
Or maybe... there's a quiet sense of relief.
All of that is okay.

Take a breath in...
And as you exhale, imagine releasing the need to please everyone.
You are not here to meet any expectations.
You are not here to carry what isn't yours.



With each breath, feel yourself returning to your centre.

Now, imagine a situation where you usually say yes out of habit...
Even when your heart says otherwise.
Picture it clearly, but gently, without judgment.

Imagine yourself choosing differently.
Responding with honesty.
Maybe that response is *no*.
Maybe it's *not right now*.

Maybe it's *this doesn't work for me*.
Notice how it feels to honour yourself in that moment.
Feel the strength in that choice.
Not forceful... not harsh...
Just grounded. Clear. True.

Take a deep breath in...
And as you exhale, feel a strength growing within you.

Saying *no* is not pushing others away.
It is drawing yourself closer.
It is choosing alignment over approval.
Truth over comfort.
Self respect over temporary ease.

You are allowed to take up space.
You are allowed to have limits.
You are allowed to choose your own way.

Silently repeat to yourself:
I trust myself.
I honour my needs.
I choose what aligns with me.
I release the pressure to please everyone.
I give myself permission to say *no*.
My boundaries are valid.
My voice matters.
My path is my own.

Now imagine yourself walking forward on your own path.
It may look different from others.
It may feel uncertain at times. But it is yours.
With each step, you feel more grounded.
More confident.
Free.

Every time you say no to what doesn't serve you...
You say yes to yourself.
And that is where your power lives.

Take a few more slow, steady breaths.
Feel your body again.
Feel the surface beneath you.
Feel the air around you.

You are here.
You are steady.
You are enough.

Carry this feeling with you, the strength of knowing

that you can choose your own way. And that saying *no* can be an act of deep self respect.

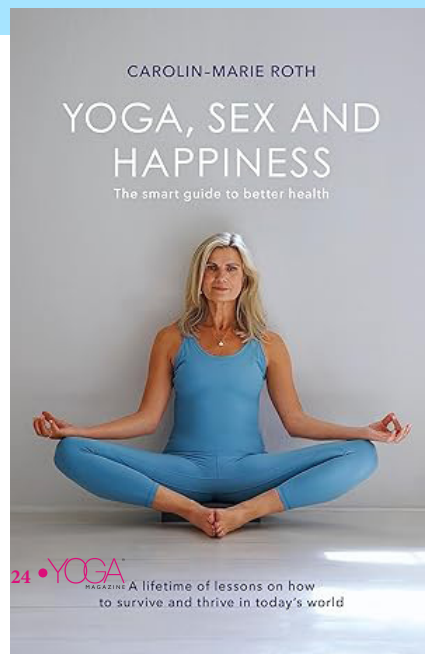
When you are ready, gently wiggle your fingers and toes. And slowly open your eyes.

Conclusion

Yoga is far more than a physical practice; it can be an emotional anchor and a stabilising, empowering force through every stage of life. At its centre lies the pelvis, a true seat of power – physically, in the way the muscles support and stabilise us, emotionally, in the experiences we hold there and energetically, as a reservoir of life force. True empowerment includes both a lust for life or our vitality, aliveness and capacity for pleasure, and the ability to set clear boundaries and say no. These are not opposites: healthy boundaries protect the very energy that fuels our lust for life, allowing us to live more fully, with greater integrity and joy.

Find out more

Explore your lust for life in a BWY Yoga Masterclass with Carolin-Marie Roth on Friday 29 May from 5-6.45pm. Spaces are only £25 and you can also get a discount on Carolin's book: *Yoga, Sex and Life*. Please book here: <https://portal.bwy.org.uk/user/events/1138>



Carolin-Marie Roth is a BWY Teacher, former TV producer and presenter, and author of the book *Yoga, Sex and Happiness*. Her extensive experience of yoga has allowed her to teach a wide range of inspiring people. Her passion for living well through yoga is infectious and her classes are filled with knowledge, warmth and laughter.

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Buy her book: <https://tinyurl.com/YogaSexHappiness>



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THE LONG AND SHORT PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Author: Jeff Cox

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