

# SPECTRUM

magazine



Men on  
the mat

Things are changing

Studio in the sun

Take your practice outdoors

Who is yoga for?

Confronting the diversity crisis

summer 2026

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ANCIENT WISDOM: MODERN MINDS  
SOAS University of London & British Wheel of Yoga

# YOGA SUMMIT 2026



## THE ENERGY BODY: Yoga Between Evidence and Experience

With senior academics and practitioners from around the world including: Professor Shaman Hatley, Dr Marleen Thaler, Dr Ruth Westoby, Dr Magdalena Kraler, Dr Marissa Clarke and British Wheel of Yoga tutor Lina Mookerjee.

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OCTOBER  
2026

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TIMES  
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Photograph: Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water

Cover photograph: BWY

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### No medical advice

Our content should not be construed as medical advice or be relied upon for medical, diagnostic or treatment purposes, or as an alternative or substitute to seeking appropriate medical assistance where required. If you have any health concerns or are new to yoga and want to check whether you are fit to partake in a particular yoga exercise, you should seek appropriate medical assistance. When doing yoga, we encourage you to act responsibly and sensibly at all times.

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## Dear members



I'd like to send a big thank you to those who showed their support by joining us for our Annual General Meeting this year. While our AGM is generally not the most stimulating event that BWY puts on, it is important for more than just governance reasons. It is the one time that we present what we have achieved in the past year, what challenges there have been, and how our financials have held up. It's also your chance to pose questions and have them answered during the meeting.

If you missed the AGM, you can view the recording and the questions posed by logging into your BWY account. Just head to My Resources, then select the AGM, EGM and Members Meetings section.

After the close of the AGM, we had the pleasure of presenting the Heart of Yoga Awards again this year. This is the third year we've hosted these awards and the first in which they were presented by a past winner, Jan Palmer. I sit on the committee that chooses the winners and know how hard this task is for us. We only wish all those nominated could receive an award. See page five for the winners.

Our volunteers spend countless hours making this charity exceptional. Your homework: please consider nominating a standout volunteer – whether they organise events, training, or magazines – for the next Heart of Yoga Awards. Nominations open in December, with full details coming in On the Pulse.

And of course, please consider being one of those volunteers. It's a chance to give back to your charity. To volunteer, email us on [office@bwy.org.uk](mailto:office@bwy.org.uk). We would love to hear from you.

**Diana O'Reilly, BWY Chair**

## Yoga is for every 'body'



With summer upon us, we are looking at yoga in the outdoors on page 34. It could be on the beach, a paddleboard, or just stepping into your garden or nearby park. We meet three yoga teachers who love practising yoga in the unpredictable weather.

From the make-up of a typical yoga class to the membership of the BWY, there is no doubt that men are under-represented in yoga, which matters for several reasons. On a purely physical level, many men's exercise regimes neglect flexibility and core strength, which leaves us vulnerable to injury as we age. But as we all know, yoga's benefits go far beyond the purely physical. There is an epidemic of poor mental health among men, with suicide being the leading cause of death for men under 50, exacerbated by the double-whammy of men's reluctance to seek help for health issues and the fact that male friendships tend not to be as emotionally supportive as female ones. Fortunately, things are changing, and our feature on page 37 looks at a few initiatives and organisations that are using yoga as a part of a male-centric approach to wellbeing.

The under-representation of men in yoga is one aspect of the wider problem of lack of diversity in yoga generally, and Dr Sally Brown explores this issue in her article on page 30. As she explains, the barriers to under-represented groups accessing yoga can be practical, perceptual or cultural and, unless we address all of these, and people can experience multiple barriers to participation, our efforts to be more inclusive will be unsuccessful.

Enjoy the summer – whatever the weather.

**Peter Tyldesley, BWY CEO**

Photograph: Andrew Johnston



## Changing times

Welcome to our latest issue – and my very first as your new Editor.

It's safe to say it's been a busy few months since I started, but I hope I have found the right balance of features and articles for you to enjoy. Remember, it's your magazine too, so let me know what you would like to see more, or less of, in future issues.

Our theme for this issue is yoga for social change. At first glance, lying on a mat while focusing on your own breathing seems to be all about self. But there is a ripple effect. By immersing yourself in the philosophy of yoga, it is impossible not to think of others.

On page 30, Dr Sally Brown writes about the lack of diversity within the yoga community. How can we talk about inner peace when there are so many barriers in place that prevent people from accessing it? From people with disabilities, to people of colour, yoga doesn't represent them.

Men too, can 'feel like outsiders' when joining yoga classes made up primarily of women. Ironically, when yoga originated thousands of years ago, it was practised mainly by men. Western society has flipped that concept and now the demographic is overwhelmingly female.

The solution was to form their own men's groups, and you can read about this on page 37.

Practising yoga in the outdoors is a great leveller. No one can control the weather, but breathing fresh air and feeling the sun (or rain) on your skin can make such a difference to your wellbeing. Having your feet on the sand, grass or water, helps you connect with Mother Earth. By practising in public, passers-by can see you and your group, bringing yoga into the community and perhaps even making it more accessible. You can read this feature on page 34.

Yoga reminds us that we are not separate – we are deeply interconnected. When we foster peace and resilience within ourselves, we naturally become more empathetic, compassionate citizens capable of fighting for a fairer world.

Thank you for joining me for this new chapter. Let's keep breathing – together.

Namaste,  
Neil Braidwood, Spectrum Editor

## Meet the contributors...



BWY Tutor **Kari Knight** explains the concept of Flexible Blended Learning on page 16.



**Dr Sally Brown** shares her PhD findings on the lack of diversity in yoga on page 30.



BWY Tutor **Perry Lewis** reveals his favourite asana – the half shoulderstand on page 23.



HEART  
OF  
YOGA  
AWARDS

## HONOURING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our AGM was an opportunity to look back over the last financial year (1 November 2024-31 October 2025) and to celebrate our Heart of Yoga Award winners together. If you weren't able to be there on the day, the meeting recording, Annual Review and Q&A are available in the AGM 2026 folder in the Resources section of the BWY website.

Despite good engagement from members, we received no eligible nominations for the two vacant roles on the Training Committee and the Vice Chair role. These posts therefore remain unfilled, and BWY is actively looking for candidates to take up these important roles.

Following the formal business of the AGM, we announced this year's Heart of Yoga Award winners, shining a light on the extraordinary dedication of BWY volunteers across the UK. Each winner was introduced with a short citation, and one recipient was presented with her certificate live by a local

supporter, bringing a real sense of community into the online space.

"Our volunteers are the true heart of BWY," said Di O'Reilly, BWY Chair. "They embody karma yoga in the fullest sense through giving up their time generously and asking for nothing in return. In increasingly busy and uncertain times, it is their selfless service, steady leadership and willingness to go the extra mile that keep our community thriving and allow us to share yoga more widely. These awards are one small way of saying thank you."

This year's Heart of Yoga Awards recognised six outstanding volunteers. The ceremony also included the presentation of the Wilfred Clark Bursary Award, established in memory of BWY founder Wilfred Clark to support BWY teachers undertaking further training to bring yoga to people with additional needs.

The winners are opposite.

## The Anthony Grover Award for Long Service: Jacqueline Stevenson



Jacqueline Stevenson

Jacqueline has served the BWY community in the North since 2012, when she became Area Rep for Durham, later adding the roles of Regional Editor and Regional Officer and

continuing to organise events, produce an inspiring regional magazine, run the Durham Yoga Group and support workshops across the region.

## Rising Star Award: Kate Holly



Kate Holly

Kate brings energy, commitment and kindness to her work, travelling widely to reach people who might not otherwise access yoga and playing an active role in the South Wales teaching community

through peer support, training and workshops.

## Community Champion Award: Jill Dobbie



Jill Dobbie

Since qualifying at Mandala Yoga Ashram 10 years ago, Jill has been devoted to making yoga accessible to people in Dumfries and the surrounding area.

She volunteers at Lothlorien

Therapeutic Community, specialising in teaching yoga for older adults and people living with long-term health conditions. Her fundraising efforts have raised £9,000 for charities in Nepal and for refugees. She also creates classes and events for diverse groups.

## The Irene Yates Education Champion Award: Hazel Faithfull



Hazel Faithfull

Over the last two years, Hazel has helped build the South committee into a strong, well-connected team and has brought teachers together for informal local meet ups, strengthening professional links

and promoting BWY as an educational resource for members across the region.

## Ambassador of the Year Award: Rachel Claridge



Rachel Claridge

Rachel has given more than 15 years of voluntary service as a BWY Representative, supporting members in the South East and contributing actively

to the Regional Committee, where her encouragement, practical help and much loved home baked cakes help to make the atmosphere warm and friendly.

## Event Volunteer of the Year: Jo Webb



Jo Webb

Over the past year, Jo has supported members not only in Somerset but also in areas without a local representative, and in 2025 curated a rich

programme that included the best attended BWY Sangha of the year in November, as well as standout events with teachers Emma Slade and Zoe Knott, widening access to yoga across the South West.

The ceremony also featured the presentation of the Wilfred Clark Bursary Award, designed to encourage BWY teachers to bring yoga to individuals with additional needs. It is named in tribute to BWY founder, Wilfred Clark.

## Wilfred Clark Bursary Award: Linda Soutar



Linda Soutar

Linda volunteers with Sunnyside Rural Trust (SRT), teaching yoga to adults with learning disabilities, including those with auditory processing difficulties,

limited concentration and sensory challenges. She hopes that chair yoga teacher training will help her better support participants with postural balance issues, hypermobility, weight-related challenges, or who feel unsafe lying down in a group setting.

## YOGA'S ENERGY BODY: BETWEEN EVIDENCE AND EXPERIENCE

Save the date: on Saturday 31 October, BWY and SOAS University of London are teaming up again for a one-day summit on yoga's subtle body – prana, chakras, kundalini and beyond.

The event will bring together leading scholars, researchers and practitioners from around the world to explore yoga's hidden frameworks: the maps of energy, breath and consciousness that yoga has carried for thousands of years, and that modern science is only beginning to examine.

In a world of constant external noise, more people are turning inwards – not as escapism, but as a way to navigate life's intensity. This day asks what yoga offers that nothing else does: Can the yoga experience be measured?

Through talks, panels and guided practice sessions, the summit will explore:

- the science of breath
- philosophies of prana and kundalini
- how energetic practices can shift awareness and deepen experience.

Full programme and booking details coming soon.



Photograph: BWY

Last year's event

## MEET BWY'S NEW QUALITY AND CURRICULUM OFFICER

We're delighted to welcome Juliet Gallagher to the BWY team. And if anyone understands the power of bringing education and yoga together, it's her.

Juliet spent over a decade working in the education sector before taking the leap to build her own yoga business two years ago. It's a move she describes as "living the dream", and it's easy to see why. Teaching yoga has allowed her to weave together everything she loves: the craft of great education and the joy of movement.

Juliet trained as a yoga teacher in Sydney and has been on the mat ever since, teaching from 2017. Her approach is rooted in joyful, functional movement, helping people stay strong, embodied and connected to their bodies in ways that genuinely enrich everyday life. Today, she teaches around 12 classes a week alongside running a community interest company dedicated to bringing yoga into the wider community and creating meaningful opportunities for social connection.

Alongside this, Juliet brings 40 years' experience in Further Education, teaching Performing Arts from Level 3 to Level 6 and building a strong understanding of curriculum, assessment and learner progression. Her work as an External Examiner for Pearson has taken her to colleges across the UK, helping to maintain consistent standards and support high-quality teaching and learning.

In her new role, she'll oversee the standards and development of BWY's training and education programmes, with her first priority being the development of the scope of practice for yoga and the Level 3 qualification, working closely with Kirstin Ficu, BWY's Training Operations Manager.

When she's not on the mat, you'll find Juliet on the golf course, chasing that elusive hole-in-one.



Photograph: BWY

# TRIBUTE TO DI KENDALL

(6 JULY 1944-12 APRIL 2026)



Photograph: BWY

Anyone who had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Di Kendall, or being taught by her, will know how truly blessed they were. Di was a gifted, natural teacher whose calm presence, deep knowledge and gentle humour enriched the lives of so many.

Much of Di's early introduction to yoga came through self-study, long before formal training routes were established. In the early days of the BWY, she applied to become a teacher, and the assessor who observed her class passed her immediately, astonished that she had taught herself from books. From that point on, Di dedicated herself to sharing yoga with clarity, compassion and a genuine love for the practice.

Her interest in the history and philosophy of yoga shone through in every lesson. Di's classes were well structured, thoughtfully demonstrated, and delivered with a calm, steady voice that inspired confidence in all who attended. She supported her students beyond the classroom too, creating home practice materials, a three-day Yoga Lesson Plan as well as tapes and CDs as technology evolved.

Di also taught widely across Yorkshire, throughout

the UK and was invited to teach in Europe, America and Israel. After spending a period living in France, Di returned to Yorkshire, much to the delight of those who had missed her. She resumed her work with North Yorkshire Yoga Federation and began teaching a small group at Wigginton Village Hall, exploring yoga philosophy with her characteristic depth and warmth. Those who attended were once again enriched by her knowledge, humour and friendship. She had a wonderful ability to lighten a serious moment with a well-chosen reading, prompting anything from a gentle chuckle to a full belly laugh. One of her most memorable reminders was: "Get off the bus at your bus stop" – a gentle nudge not to strain or overreach.

Off the mat Di held a number of key roles within BWY; she was the Yorkshire Regional Officer in 1982 and 2008, Honorary General Secretary from 1986 to 1990, Vice Chair in 1990, Chair from 1991 to 1994 and BWYT Chair from 2008 to 2011. Di also held the position of BWY European Representative.

As well as her significant contribution to BWY, Di worked tirelessly as a Trustee alongside Howard Kent and his team at Yoga For Health Foundation at Ickwell Bury in Bedfordshire. This centre provides residential courses especially for MS and remedial yoga; she was a Trustee in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Quietly and without seeking recognition, Di also possessed a natural healer's ability to channel prana through her hands and thoughts. She offered this gift freely to those she knew in need. Di's spirit lives on in the many people whose lives she touched through her teaching, her wisdom and her kindness.

Finally, a quote from a recipe booklet called *Food For Thought*, which Di collated for a Diploma Course.

"At this moment  
there is nothing to do  
but have a good laugh"

● Edited by Lucy Croucher (Yorkshire Regional Officer) with huge thanks to everyone who contributed, whether or not your offering has been included

## MEDITATE FOR INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE ON 21 SEPTEMBER

In the United Nations headquarters in New York, where decisions are made regarding war and peace, there is a meditation room, a quiet space where people of all religions or none can find sanctuary for quiet reflection. This room was designed in 1952 by Dag Hammarskjöld, the then Secretary General of the UN. He believed in what he called: "The inner land", necessary in this building as an essential tool for clear thinking and leadership. He said: "It should be for those who came to fill the void with what they find in the centre of their souls".



The meditation room in 1952

has the world been in such a state of flux. Never has such service been needed more by mankind.

To prepare for this Creative Meditation, sit quietly, clear space in your mind and take time to develop a form of positive affirmation in your own way, visualising the Meditation Room with its

symbolic altar in the centre and the beam of light streaming on to it from above. Picture this light irradiating the minds of all those working in the assembly and all who are in places of responsibility. Become a delegate in thought. Send them goodwill and ask for wisdom and compassion to illumine them in their work. Next, visualise this light radiating out to all countries, peoples, places of conflict, crisis, suffering and need. Take time to create this thoughtform. If practising in a group, say aloud the first stanza of the Great Invocation (© The Lucis Trust), or if alone repeat the words quietly to yourself.

In the room is a central block of iron ore symbolising the conference table in the UN chamber. A shaft of light from an unseen source streams down on it. This represents the light that can come in to illumine the minds of the delegates.

Creative Meditation is practised as a service. Never

Photograph: Creative Commons

## WELL DONE



Photograph: Catherine Hope

Well done to the following students for completing BWY Foundation Course 1 with Catherine Hope in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. This was a fabulous course with some beautiful explorations of yoga and sharing of experiences across the whole group. Above, left to right, front row: Maria Kimei Callieri, Marlene Lieske, Josephine Thomas, Victoria Moorhouse, Penelope Aspinall, John Polley. Back row: Anita Kapil, Adele Vevers, Astrid Lefevre, Esdi Hughes. Not present in the photo Emma Stripe.

May the Forces of Light bring Illumination to mankind.

May the Spirit of Peace be spread abroad

May the Law of Harmony prevail

May people of goodwill everywhere meet in a spirit of co-operation

So let it be and may I do my part.

*Submitted by Angela Stevens, based partly on the work of the worldwide Group for Creative Meditation and Michal J Eastcott's book The Silent Path*

## VOLUNTEER

Do you have some time to spare? The BWY needs more volunteers to run additional events across all the regions. We offer full support and training to anyone who wants to help out, as well as benefits such as free membership. If you are interested, please email us at [office@bwy.org.uk](mailto:office@bwy.org.uk) and we will connect you with your local team.



Simon Low  
meditating with  
children in Kolkata

# TEA AND HOPE

*Simon Low* talks to *Spectrum* about his path to karma yoga  
and how *The Yoga Garden Party* was born

## HOW DID YOU FIRST HEAR ABOUT THE HOPE FOUNDATION?

Almost 20 years ago, in a London pub. I was living in Primrose Hill at the time and one of my regular haunts was The Engineer. On the table was a small card inviting diners to add an optional 50p to their bill for The Hope Foundation (HOPE), a charity working with street connected children in Kolkata.

I was curious, so I asked for more information. Julie Kate Olivier, who co-owned the pub and supported the charity, told me about HOPE and encouraged me to get involved. I was struck by the scale and ambition of what they were setting out to do. That quiet conversation planted a seed that has had a significant influence within my personal relationship with and my activities within the yoga world over the last two decades of my life.

## WHAT WAS IT LIKE WHEN YOU LATER VISITED KOLKATA AND SAW HOPE'S WORK FIRST HAND?

Even though I already knew about HOPE when I first travelled to Kolkata, nothing prepared me for the reality on the ground. The extreme poverty and living conditions were unlike anything I had ever seen before anywhere in the world.

I remember walking past the Bhagar rubbish dump and the Howrah slum along the railway tracks. The density of people, the makeshift shelters, the colours,

the sounds – it hits you in a very visceral way. You can read about it or see it on the news, but standing there yourself is something else entirely.

At the same time, visiting HOPE's projects showed me another side of the city: crèches, after school clubs and safe spaces where children who had known only instability and fear could feel safe, play, learn and simply be children.

## WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE HOPE FOUNDATION THAT MADE YOU WANT TO COMMIT MORE DEEPLY?

I've always felt a deep debt of gratitude to India as the birthplace of yoga. Much of what has shaped my life and teaching comes from that land and its traditions. Supporting HOPE felt like a way to give something back – not in the abstract, but by helping children and communities living with the everyday realities of poverty and inequality.

A few things drew me in. The first was the breadth of their work. The Hope Foundation was founded in 1999 by Irish humanitarian Maureen Forrest to stand up for the rights of disadvantaged street children in India, particularly girls facing poverty, child labour and exploitation. It began with £14,000 to open a protection home for girls in Kolkata and has grown into around 60 projects – Residential Childcare Centres, education programmes, healthcare centres, the HOPE Hospital, night patrols and emergency

response, all focused on those who fall through every other net.

The second was how intelligently and transparently they use funds, especially around education. Today, around 650 children are sponsored by UK supporters at £20 a month, and 100% of that sponsorship goes directly into education programmes. Alongside school, HOPE offers nutrition, healthcare and psychosocial support, as well as creative and holistic activities like yoga. It's a genuinely holistic model of care and education.

I felt that, through my work in yoga, I could be useful – that I could help to direct some of the goodwill in our community towards something tangible and very needed.

## HOW DID THAT LEAD TO THE YOGA GARDEN PARTY?

As my relationship with HOPE deepened, I became a Patron for the charity – a formal way of recognising a commitment that was already there. I wanted to find a way of bringing people together in practice that would directly benefit children in Kolkata and, in a small way, give back to the country that gave us yoga. That's how the Yoga Garden Party began in 2011. A small group of teachers I had trained, with Vikki Stevenson and Ruth McNeil continuously at the helm, made each event possible. Over the years, we've held nine events, mainly in London, Kent and Hampshire, with each one raising a significant sum and collectively generating over £100,000. Every person involved – teachers, support staff and organisers – has given their time and skills voluntarily, and every penny raised, after minimal expenses, goes directly to The Hope Foundation.

## WHERE DOES YOGA FIT INTO HOPE'S WORK WITH CHILDREN?

Yoga and holistic wellbeing run through a lot of what HOPE does. The 'Yoga for HOPE' campaign, tied to International Yoga Day, invites teachers around the world to offer donation based classes in support of the charity. At the same time, yoga is part of HOPE children's experience: practices to calm the nervous system, build self esteem and help them feel at home in their bodies again.

Some of the children who started in HOPE's programmes have now gone into higher education and professional roles. They come back as role models, showing younger children what's possible. To see yoga woven into that journey is incredibly moving.

## WHAT MEMORIES DO YOU CHERISH MOST FROM THE YOGA GARDEN PARTIES YOU HAVE HELD?

The warmth, smiles, laughter and sheer generosity that seem to fill every Yoga Garden Party.

My parents had lived in northern India for a decade while my father worked in horticulture for the Maharaja of Patiala, and they had seen first hand the immense poverty and need for support there. Having encouraged me to grow the Yoga Garden Party, it meant a great deal when my father came to our last event at Bore Place in Kent. We arranged a treatment to ease his pain; he walked out looking lighter and happier – and had completely forgotten the walking stick he usually relied on.

## WHAT CAN PEOPLE EXPECT FROM THIS YEAR'S EVENT?

This year feels like a particularly special chapter. It is the tenth Yoga Garden Party. Seven have been in-person events, and two online in 2020 and 2021, with a yoga retreat in Kolkata in 2018. We've been generously invited to host the Yoga Garden Party at the Castle Ashby estate near Northampton, with the support of Lord and Lady Northampton. On Saturday 1 August, The Falcon at Castle Ashby will be home to a day of yoga, meditation, movement and music.

We have more than 22 teachers involved, including some of the UK's most respected yoga teachers and international guests Sarah and Ty Powers. Across the day you can choose from around 25 sessions – yoga, chi kung, meditation, forest bathing, music and children's yoga – plus a Heritage Walk through the Castle Ashby grounds with Lord Northampton, so there truly is something for everyone.

On the Sunday morning, I'll be offering a free yoga class for the volunteers and teachers who have generously given their time. That session will also be open to the public on a donation basis. As always, 100% of the funds raised – from tickets and from donations – will go directly to The Hope Foundation's work.

## HOW CAN BWY MEMBERS AND THE WIDER YOGA COMMUNITY GET INVOLVED?

The simplest way to help is to come along to the Yoga Garden Party – practise, enjoy the day, bring friends, and know your ticket is making a direct difference.

● Full details of this year's Yoga Garden Party can be found at [www.theyogagardenparty.com](http://www.theyogagardenparty.com)



Photograph: Pixels/Vidya Mandiram

## BWY YTT, FOUNDATIONS, AND SHORT COURSES

### BWYQ TT (Yoga Teacher Training)

*Gain confidence teaching yoga to all abilities on our 300-hour Certificate or 500-hour Diploma.*

### **BWYQ L3 Technical Specialist in Teaching Yoga (Certificate)**

19 September  
Di O'Reilly and Audrey Blow  
Hybrid/Caerphilly

### **BWYQ L4 Certificate in Teaching Yoga**

27 June  
Hayley Giles  
Dorset

18 July  
Hana Saotome  
Hybrid/London

10 October  
Live, Flexible Blended Learning  
Kari Knight  
Online/Residential

14 November  
Sunnah Rose  
London

30 January 2027  
Clare Gibson  
Hybrid/Surrey

### **BWYQ L4 Diploma in Teaching Yoga**

19 September  
Michelle Griffiths  
Barnsley

# TRAINING

10 October  
Live, Flexible  
Blended Learning  
Kari Knight  
Online/Residential

16 January 2027  
Donna Negus  
Romford

17 January 2027  
Catherine Hope  
West Yorkshire

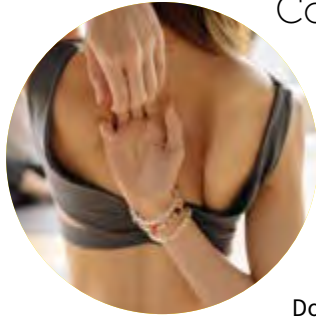
**L4 (Progression to)  
Diploma  
in Teaching Yoga**  
19 September  
Tiffany Thorne  
Hybrid/Cambridge

1 October  
Hayley Giles  
Hybrid/Dorset

1 February 2027  
Clare Gibson  
Online

13 May 2028  
Live, Flexible Blended Learning  
Teacher Training  
Kari Knight  
Online/Residential

## BWYT Foundation Course 1



12 September  
Andrea Newman  
Online

19 September  
Hayley Giles  
Dorset

20 September  
Paula Wade  
Hertford

3 October  
Tori Lang  
Cardiff (Penarth)  
18 October

Anna Ferla and Michele Misgalla  
London

## BWYT Foundation Course 2

*For more info open search on  
the BWY website, select Courses,  
filter for BWYT Foundation Course  
Level 2.*

## BWYT Short Courses

18 July  
Introduction to Yoga Therapy  
Judy Hirsh Sampath  
Online

11 August  
Menopause Yoga  
Petra Coveney  
Brighton

19 September  
Yin Yoga Teacher Training Lower  
Body with Gillian Cawte  
Online

19 September  
Learn to Teach Yoga and  
Mindfulness to Children and Teens  
with Christiane Kerr  
Online

20 September  
Yoga Nidra Training  
with Nickie Short  
Online

24 September  
A Deep Dive into Ayurveda  
with Tarik Dervish  
Online

27 September  
Restorative Yoga with Carol Trevor  
Online

Winter Solstice  
BWY BRITISH WHEEL OF YOGA  
Yoga Festival

At a time of constant pressure and distraction, this online festival, featuring five expert tutors in yoga and ayurveda, invites you to return to what matters most.

Friday 18 December 2026, 9am-5pm, via Zoom  
Tickets from £40 @ [bwy.org.uk](http://bwy.org.uk)

Photograph: Pixels @yankrukov



3 October  
Pregnancy Yoga Module with  
Michele Misgalla and Judy  
Cameron  
Hybrid/Nottinghamshire

10 October  
Restorative Yoga - Polyvagal  
Informed with Judy Hirsh  
Sampath  
London

2 November  
Menopause Yoga Petra Coveney  
Online

20 November  
Yoga for BackCare with  
Anji Gopal  
Hybrid, Online and London

## Recognised Centre Members

MindBody Wellness  
mindbodywellness.org.uk  
office@mindbodywellness.org

TSYP  
tsyp.yoga  
chair@tsyp.yoga

If you're interested in being a  
Recognised Centre Member,  
contact training@bwy.org.uk

## Recognised Centre Members' courses

Mindbody Wellness Courses

BWYQ Yoga Teacher Training  
11 October  
L3 320-hour Teaching Yoga  
Certificate with Mindbody  
Wellness  
Hybrid/LS29 8DS

BWYQ Specialist Yoga Teacher  
Training for Qualified Yoga  
Teachers (any tradition)

13 June: L3 64-hour Teaching  
Postnatal Yoga for Mums and  
Babies (Jun-Jul) with Mindbody  
Wellness, E-learning/Zoom

8 November  
L3 66-hour Teaching Yoga for  
Generalised Anxiety Disorder  
(Nov-Apr) with Mindbody  
Wellness  
Hybrid/LS29 8DS

30 January 2027  
L4 126-hour Teaching Gentle  
Years Yoga with Mindbody  
Wellness  
E-learning/Zoom

TSYP Courses

Oct (date to be confirmed)  
BWYQ L4 Diploma in Teaching  
Yoga (with recognition of prior  
qualifications available)  
Nr Worthing, West Sussex

1 October  
BCYT accredited Yoga Therapy  
Diploma  
Hybrid/KT10 8AU

20 September  
Vedic Chant Foundation Course  
Hybrid/Richmond

## Accredited Training Organisations

Intelligent Yoga Teacher  
Training  
07747 196914  
www.intelligentYogaTeacher  
Training.co.uk

Teach Yoga Naturally  
07722 868397  
info@teachyoganaturally.org

The Yoga Academy  
07770 222042  
www.theyogaacademy.org

Trueyoga  
info@trueyoga.co.uk

Yogacampus  
020 7042 9900  
www.yogacampus.com

## BWY Teacher Training

A full list of upcoming BWYQ  
courses can be found on the BWY  
website, select Courses within  
the Search options.

## CPD Listings

For CPD in your region/nation,  
(including online courses)  
turn to our regions/nations pages  
from page 42. Full listings on the  
BWY website, select BWY Events  
in the Search bar.

# RESTORE YOURSELF

*Judy Hirsh Sampath introduces her new BWY short course on polyvagal theory and the pathways to restoration*

**A**S TEACHERS, intention is everything – each practice matters. Each choice of posture and instruction holds so much power for the student – consider language, pace, touch, modifications and props in guiding how deep to go, how long to hold and what impact it might have.

If yoga students leave a class feeling inadequate, not good enough, loving their bodies even less, how are we doing as teachers? Having experienced this first hand as a student, I regularly ask myself what I hope for my students when they leave class and how I can help everyone get there. Directing the diverse minds, bodies and nervous systems of our students is a substantial responsibility. Students do not all start at the same place or need the same practice.

## WHY RESTORATIVE YOGA?

Restorative yoga focuses on a shift in the autonomic nervous system to address overload, tension and stress. The teacher aims to create conditions for the student in which they move from sympathetic fight/flight to parasympathetic rest and digest. Students learn to move from danger to safety, discord to harmony and edgy to balanced – supporting the body's dedication to find homeostasis.

We all get stressed and tense in our lives and when the brain registers that perceived danger has passed and the stress hormones have been metabolised by the liver and other organs, physical tension can melt away on its own. Pain can dissolve as the body returns back to balance, home to safety – which can take time. But if we get stuck in the stress response and can't switch it off, and if we are seeking ways to help ourselves, we can look for healthy ways back to safety – and restorative yoga is the perfect way to let go.

It is of vital importance to understand that 'letting go' and releasing tension is not always appropriate, available or desirable. In the freeze/disassociated state, it can be dangerous to let go completely, to retain the breath or release on the exhale, to lie spread out on the back and take up space, to stand tall and open the heart – too much, too vulnerable, too scary. And this is where an understanding of

the polyvagal theory can help teachers to plan according to nervous system state.

In restorative yoga, our primary objective is to create safety – safe enough for students to let go of all that is getting in the way of their ability to trust and to open up to loving relationships and lead a more joyful life.

If our students leave the space feeling more balanced, light-hearted, mentally stronger and softer around the edges, we know we have met their needs.

## POLYVAGAL-INFORMED RESTORATIVE YOGA – BWY SHORT COURSE

On my course titled 'Polyvagal-informed Restorative Yoga', we'll explore how polyvagal theory applies to restorative practice in supporting regulation.



Photograph: Yan Krutkov/Pexels

In polyvagal theory, the parasympathetic nervous system is split into two pathways so there are three autonomic nervous system states to consider:

1. Sympathetic arousal – an accumulation of stress and disturbance, the body stuck in readiness to fight for survival or run for your life.
2. Parasympathetic – Ventral pathway (front body and organs)
3. Parasympathetic – Dorsal pathway (back body and spine)

In its simplest terms, I have mapped these states into restorative applications.

Dorsal and ventral are anatomical terms indicating position – dorsal is the posterior or back of the body and relates to the backside of the body and spine.

Ventral is the anterior or front of the body and relates to the belly side and organs.

#### THINK ABOUT HOW WE RESPOND TO DANGER

- When we are scared, we tense, brace, clench, hunch and curl into a protected foetal position to protect the organs – brain, heart and soft belly side of the body. As we curl up to make ourselves smaller, our back dorsal shell protects us –

like many other sea and land animals.

- When we feel safe, we open up the front body, exposing the vulnerable soft breastbone and belly side of the body – we engage openly with others and co-regulate, signal safety and friendliness through facial expression, welcoming, smiling, drawing others in to our ventral side for a hug, cuddle, heart to heart.

#### WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

Through technical demonstrations, and directly experiencing the guided practices, you will reinforce what you already know, and learn new skills to meet different nervous system states.

#### THIS TRAINING COVERS:

- Understanding the polyvagal theory and pathways to restoration
- Learning how trauma is held in the body and apply trauma-sensitive cues
- Recognising the body's expression of nervous system states
- Exploring the philosophical concepts of pain and suffering
- Gaining trauma-sensitive skills in language and cues for intentional restorative postures
- Building a toolkit of foundational restorative sequences using appropriate props
- Discussing fear of holding space for dysregulated nervous systems
- Identifying and assessing hyper stress overload and hypo survival mode, held states of mobilisation and immobilisation
- Reading bodies for assessment, and application of appropriate practices for re-patterning

Hope to see you there, love Judy Hirsh Sampath.

● *Training is in person in London 10-11 October 2026. Register via the BWY website. The case study submission can be done in your own time. Find all courses and our professional diploma in yoga therapy here: [www.yogaunited.com/education](http://www.yogaunited.com/education)*

*Email: [education@yogaunited.com](mailto:education@yogaunited.com)*

*Judy Hirsh Sampath is a yoga teacher, therapist and yoga therapy trainer with more than 20 years' experience. She runs classes, workshops and programmes, CPD courses, retreat holidays in India, and a highly esteemed 600-hour diploma in yoga therapy.*

*For further information on polyvagal theory, look up Stephen Porges' work on polyvagal theory.*





# ACROSS DISTANCE

*Diploma Course Tutor **Kari Knight** explains how Flexible Blended Learning courses can open up the world of yoga – wherever you live*

**I**NVERNESS is commonly described as the ‘Gateway to the Highlands’. It’s the largest city in the Scottish Highlands and a major transport hub. It has a yoga network. On leaving Inverness you pass through Highland scenery with small towns, castles, coastline and rugged terrain. The yogic community here in Sutherland, a county with the lowest population density in western Europe, is scattered and finding training inevitably means a course online. When I arrived here in 2023, I called the then Highlands regional officer Christie Wood

Photograph: Kari Knight

whose comment “yoga hasn’t happened in the Highlands and there are only two yoga studios here” left me wide-eyed.

At first living here, I worried about the storms and whether I could teach online – sometimes we have winds at nearly 100mph! The locals have an expression “we just get on with it” or “nae bother”... I love their ‘go to’ attitude. I’ve now successfully taught two courses 100% online with no power or windy issues. But a Certificate would be impossible because it is 50% online/in person and that would



Kari practising yoga at her home in Sutherland

# AND MOUNTAINS

mean huge distances to make weekend study days – impossible if you’ve got to catch a ferry, coach and bus.

As an organisation, we pride ourselves on our training standards through the Awarding Body BWYQ. Set up back in 2010, this organisation maintains industry standards and is a flagship to other yoga training bodies in the UK. How could I teach a course through Q? I consulted our distance learning officer, Felicity, and we chatted about how in the ‘old BWY days’ distance learning trainee teachers attended BWY Teachers Training Week, run from Monday afternoon to Friday lunchtime. Cut to post-Covid and the yogic training landscape has undergone enormous transformation with online learning, e-learning, learning management systems, podcasts,

video conference software, better connectivity and AI driven personalisation. We are now in a network-enabled teaching and learning environment which allows learners to have great interaction with content, educators and other learners. Do we need a new approach as an organisation?

Flexible Blended Learning (FBL) is an approach piloted with prior approval from BWYQ, after consultation with the BWY Training Committee and the CEO Peter Tyldesley. It is 80% online and 20% live in person and being taught in modules or units instead of one long, continuous course. FBL is a way of combining these various ways of learning for a group of learners where distance is a barrier if we still want to maintain some contact – particularly important for the teaching of asana. Many teaching



Kari gives a class at her studio

Photograph: Kari Knight

organisations adopt this modular approach.

Let's be clear about units. The Ofqual/Qualifications and Credit Framework system equates approximately one credit per 10 hours with the 500-hour BWYQ Diploma course carrying a total of 50 credits and the 290-hour Certificate 29 credits at Level 4 attainment. FBL works with the stipulations of BWYQ and no pre-recorded content, accounts for Guided Learning Hours (GLH). The Total Qualification Hours is the difference between GLH and the time a student works independently at home. Let's call it Student Home Study (SHS). For the Certificate we have 160 hours GLH with 130 hours SHS; the Diploma 255 hours GLH and 245 SHS. I am defining this not to make your brain hurt but largely to indicate that teaching by unit can be more flexible in terms of SHS. And teaching in modules can be a more straightforward teaching model.

Here's how it works across the course.

## **PRACTICE: UNIT A – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A YOGA TEACHER**

Unit A is a foundational knowledge unit taking in the professional roles and responsibilities, basic breathing and relaxation and the preparation of asana. This is a large body of work taking in A1 (20 hours GLH), A2 (20 hours GLH) and A3 (30 hours GLH). At the end of A1, I allocate the Summative Assignment S.1. At the end of completing the A2 hours, we have S.2 and at the end of A3 it is S.3. This seems so straightforward and avoids too many streams of learning overlapping and overwhelming students. In this unit I have interweaved philosophy and 'families' of asana in preparation for Unit B with good asana linkage to help planning for Unit C.

## **PRACTICE: UNIT B – APPROACHING ASANA, BASIC BREATHING CONTROL AND RELAXATION**

Unit B is 60 hours and is a tough one. In terms of SHS (Student Home Study in case this slipped your mind)

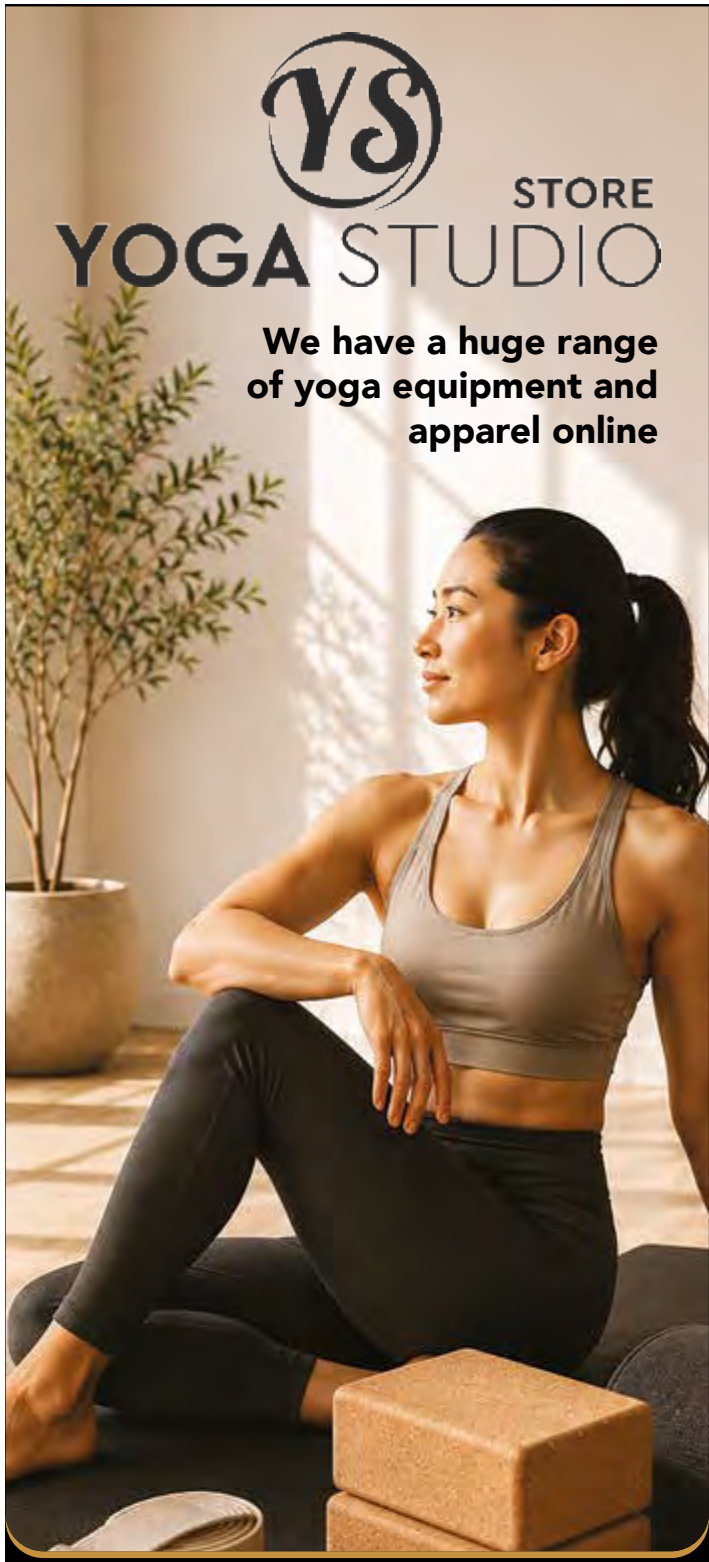
the BWYT Student Induction Book suggests that a student spends four hours a week studying at home. During this Unit, I would say that this is needed and having the softer start of Unit A, students really need to roll up their shirt sleeves here. This unit requires a great deal of commitment since at this stage, students may be teaching to family or friends or even in the community. It is within this unit that I have chosen to run a residential in the Highlands because the 20% needs to include live teaching of asana to ensure this is covered accurately, effectively and safely.

## **PRACTICE: UNIT C – EFFECTIVE PLANNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Many of my students have struggled with this unit and I've organised the Certificate with a great gap between the end of it and Units D & E, should they decide to go for a Diploma option. We also have the ACT (Assessed Class Teaching) at the end of this unit which is a biggie. Unit C contains 30 hours of GLH and the number of SHS hours could easily escalate to more than four hours per week. Giving more time before carrying on with units D & E, helps students to catch up or stay ahead.

Back to the Highlands and remote living. I am a long way from anywhere at the crofting township of Nedd near Drumbeg with a supermarket 38 miles away. But I'm not living separately from what I'm trying to achieve and nor should a student. Let's make our excellent courses available to anyone wherever they may be and whatever their current circumstances whether living remotely, caring for loved ones or simply too busy to make the distance.

● *Kari Knight is a senior DCT for the BWY based in the Highlands of Scotland. Specialisms include Restorative yoga, Yin yoga, Yoga Nidra and the therapeutic application of mindfulness and self-compassion for those living with cancer. See [www.kariknightyoga.com](http://www.kariknightyoga.com)*



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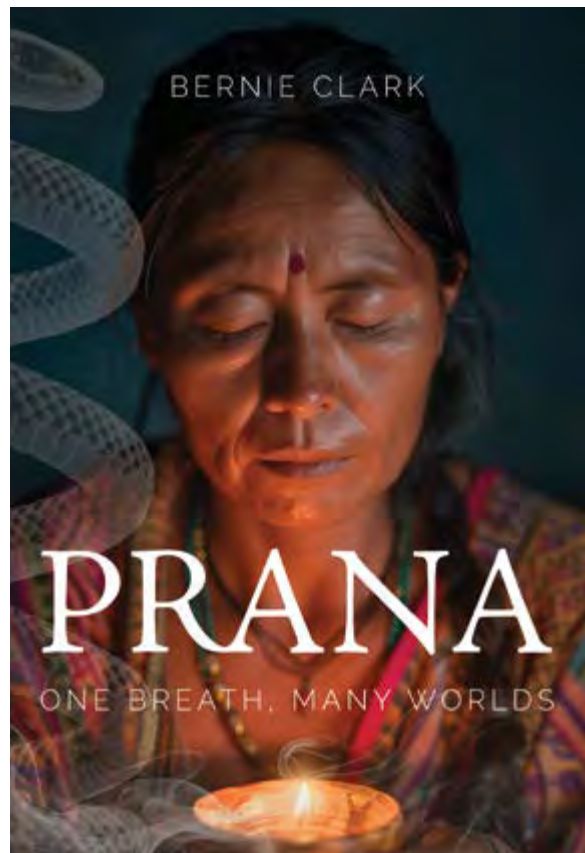
## The energy within

**Prana: One Breath, Many Worlds** by *Bernie Clark* (Wild Strawberry Productions, 2026)

Bernie Clark's latest book presents itself as a study of prana, yet it reads, at times, like a memoir. This is no drawback. Rather, Clark uses the elasticity of the subject to move fluidly between personal anecdote, myth and cultural history, drawing together seemingly disparate threads with an ease that belies the ambition of the project. Along the way he pauses, almost casually, to introduce the reader to selected prana practices.

On paper, such a structure risks feeling unwieldy. In practice, it proves to be a winning formula. Clark offers a persuasive framework for understanding prana, a concept that often hovers somewhere between the abstract and the ineffable. For yoga teachers finding themselves describing to students the differences between pranayama and 'breathwork', for example, this book is a resource treasure trove.

But Clark's work will appeal as much to the curious practitioner as to the seasoned instructor. He invites the reader into formative moments of his own journey: training with his teacher, Shakti; early travels in India; even a detour into his career in sales with a company focused on satellite-powered, map-making technology. These episodes are rendered with a storyteller's eye, lending texture and colour. Particularly striking and unusual are fictional scenes that act as case studies.



Each chapter unfolds with a sense of unpredictability. One is never entirely certain where Clark will lead you next, but the effect is less disorienting than wondrous. A reminder, perhaps, that study in yoga is rarely linear.

**Deana Morris**

## Getting airborne

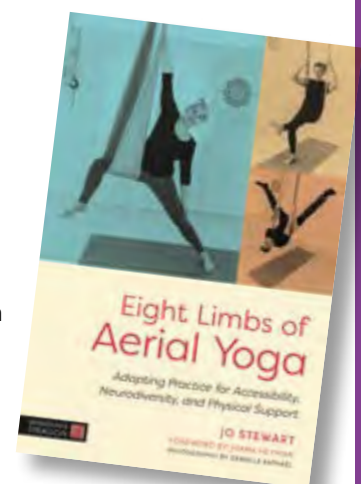
**Eight Limbs of Aerial Yoga** by *Jo Stewart* (Singing Dragon, 2026)

I found this book very interesting, as aerial yoga is something I know little about. It is obviously a real thing in Australia, where the author of this book is known for being one of the most experienced yoga teachers. The contributors to the book are all Australian too. I learned a lot in reading the text about the history and the possibilities of aerial yoga: it is an accessible form of yoga and supports those in chronic pain, with hypermobility and mental health issues such as anxiety and eating disorders, it can also be compared to chair yoga in that is good for those who might struggle with movement in regular classes. This text would be suitable for teachers wanting to start teaching Aerial Yoga, as it provides a lot of detail

about the equipment and several chapters covering different postures, these contain visual photographs, an explanation of the pose plus adaptations.

The book is framed around the eight limbs of yoga; my favourite is the Niyama, one which offers useful templates for mindful activities. So, for those interested in trauma informed, accessible forms of yoga this is great read.

**Kate Lemon**



## Eastern

First aid and belt work

### 101 Ways to use a yoga belt with Heather Boon

12 September

Norfolk NR5 0RW

Props are an important component of our asana practice – “they are guides for self-learning.” So said BKS Iyengar. Any aid for our practice is a wonderful help on our path. This workshop is a modest attempt to show how we can deepen our practice using one simple yet useful prop – the yoga belt/strap. The aim of this workshop is to ignite your curiosity and imagination by showing how it can be used in a variety of ways, allowing for a new approach to some asana, allowing for many hours of joyful experimentation and exploration and hopefully offering increased awareness, support and the possibility of some therapeutic uses for our everyday yoga belt.

### Emergency First Aid at Work with Colin Fordham

19 September

Cambridgeshire PE28 9AH

### Emergency First Aid at Work with Colin Fordham

7 November

Essex CM3 3JD

## London

First aid and Om

### Emergency First Aid for Yoga Teachers with Keri Hartwright

20 September

St Mary at Hill EC3R 8DU

### Om, Consciousness and Daily Life with Rajesh David

7 November

London EC3R 8DU

Modern technology has enabled scientists to look deep into space. Advancements in scanning techniques have opened a whole new world into the inner workings of the brain. This has renewed our interest, as conscious beings, in consciousness studies. Scientists in a variety of fields are working towards deepening our understanding of consciousness. Yet the earliest references to consciousness are to be found in the ancient Vedic texts – the Upanishads. Their wisdom laid the foundation for Indian, and yoga philosophy.

In this course, we will deepen our understanding of AUM, and consciousness, by studying select verses from the Mandukya Upanishad. We will explore AUM within the threefold context of koshas, chakras and consciousness. During the day, we will work with asanas, pranayama, Nada Yoga practices, and Yoga Nidra. Through discussion, reflection and practice we will explore the relevance of this study to our daily lives.

## Midlands

Yang and Yin, Qi Gong and asana

### A Yang and Yin Yoga Experience with Tony Wilmot and Maria Widdows

26 July

Sutton Coldfield, WS9 0SQ

Yang: Surya Namaskar in yoga is a dynamic sequence of twelve powerful poses performed in a graceful flow, synchronized with the breath. Rooted in ancient yogic tradition, it is a holistic practice



Photograph: Pixels

that energizes the body, calms the mind, and awakens spiritual awareness. Surya Namaskar, could be described as Yang yoga. It is an active, dynamic, and heat-building practice targeting muscles to improve strength, stamina, and flexibility. It acts as the energetic counterpart to passive, deep-tissue Yin yoga.

Yin Yoga: This heart-opening Yin Yoga class is inspired by the energy of summer and the Heart meridian in Traditional Chinese Medicine. Through gentle, longer-held poses, we'll open the shoulders and chest, creating space around the heart. As the fire element reaches its peak in summer, it invites warmth, vitality, and connection in our lives and relationships. Yin offers a soothing counterbalance to the season's outward energy - inviting us to slow down, turn inward, and restore our inner light.

### A Staged Approach to Asana with Zoe Knott

10 October

Moseley B13 8AB

In this workshop, participants will explore the use of the Posture Profile – a key tool in modern teacher training – to approach asana with a focus on anatomy, physiology, and movement principles. The aim is to move beyond simply replicating postures, instead considering



limiting factors, vulnerable areas and how to use stages as preparation and modifications.

**Introduction to Qi Gong and Integrating into Yoga Practice with Jennifer Hunt**  
11 October

Nottinghamshire NG15 8FB  
Qigong is the root practise from which all the Chinese martial arts came forth. It connects us to the flow of energy – Qi (pronounced chee) – in the body and mind and enables the cultivation, strengthening and harmonising of our energies.

**BWY Midlands Festival of Yoga**  
7 November  
Shropshire TF3 4HS  
BWY Midlands Sangha gathering to celebrate our community and all things yoga!

We'll have seven teachers from our region offering a variety of styles and practices throughout the day, with registration from 9.30am.

This whole event will be suitable for anyone with an interest in yoga from new to experienced practitioners, and we want to welcome old friends and new to our community, so please consider bringing along your family, friends, students and anyone else who wants to join us. We have a town centre location for this event in a

lovely, pedestrianised area, with opportunities to walk or sit in nature close by for break times.

**North**  
Festival and hips

**BWY North Sangha Festival 2026**  
12 July

Woodland Road DH7 7DW  
Whether you have never been to our Sangha Festival before or are a regular attender, we look forward to seeing you this year.

**HEADLINE TEACHER**  
Sue Harding-Smith has recruited a wonderful headline teacher for us, Judy Hirsh Sampath, who specialises in yoga therapy. She has written an article on the subject, which you can find on page 14 of this magazine.

During a disturbing time in her life, Judy searched for ways to make sense of what was happening. Through yoga therapy and experimenting with many healing arts, Judy came to a realisation that her body loved her unconditionally and all she had to do was love it back. It shifted her understanding of yoga, her relationships with others as well as herself. The research and embodied practices she discovered were the starting points for sharing her work with other 'seekers'.

Judy's passion is education – to empower health seekers in becoming experts in themselves and celebrate wholeness by breaking free from the self-harm of 'should' and the tyranny of 'trying too hard'. She blends movement and breath, embodied mindfulness, and many other practices with theory and philosophical discussion. She has worked in schools, mental health and fertility settings with people of

all ages, sizes and abilities.  
There are 30 early bird tickets at a cost of £55 for BWY members only.

Once these have been booked, the price for the day for BWY members will be £65.

The price for non-members (free accounts) will be £75. There will be no early bird tickets for non-members.

**Yoga and Hip Replacement**  
**Bridget Thornborrow**

6 September  
Northumberland NE47 7DW  
The day will be experiential with practical embodied movement work and some illustrated background exploration of anatomy and physiology of osteoarthritis in the hips – what it is, how it manifests in yoga practice and how to rehabilitate using a combination of dynamic physiotherapy exercises and more subtle, specific yoga practice. Attendees will learn how to build strength and resilience in themselves and in their students, through patient and consistent restoration of practice. There will be some pranayama to demonstrate how breath work can alleviate anxiety and pain.

**North West**  
First aid

**Emergency First Aid at Work**  
**with Andrea Bonacker**

13 September  
Lancashire FY8 5JY

## South

Healing and hormones

### **Towards Personal Healing with Rosie Wright**

4 October

Old Stratford Community Hall  
MK19 6NL

Many of us have experienced the benefits of a good yoga practice. This day is designed to deepen our understanding of this transformation towards physical healing and our ability to harness this process. We shall do this by investigating Nyasa, the practice of moving our consciousness into areas of the body. This is done in conjunction with asana, pranayama and visualisation.

### **Yoga, Hormones and Health: Supporting the body and mind through the challenges of menopause, midlife and beyond.**

**Sarah Leroux**

7 November

Oxfordshire, OX2 9QF

This day offers a rich, holistic exploration of menopause, perimenopause and post menopause. We'll focus on common symptoms, such as hot flushes, insomnia, joint pain, anxiety and low mood, and explore evidence-based strategies for relief, including diet, lifestyle and yoga. We'll also explore the Blue Zones and their longevity enhancing habits and the Japanese concept of Ikigai guiding you to create your own personalised purpose diagram. The session includes therapeutic asana, breathwork and a closing meditation. With time for discussion and Q&A, this day offers education, connection and practical tools for long-term wellbeing and balance.

## South East

Midlife, skin and hips

### **Yoga for Midlife Health: Hormones, Health, Wellbeing**

18 July

Sussex RH20 3PG

This day offers a rich, holistic exploration of menopause, perimenopause and post menopause. We'll focus on common symptoms, such as hot flushes, insomnia, joint pain, anxiety and low mood, and explore evidence-based strategies for relief, including diet, lifestyle and yoga. We'll also explore the Blue Zones and their longevity enhancing habits and the Japanese concept of Ikigai guiding you to create your own personalised purpose diagram. The session includes therapeutic asana, breathwork and a closing meditation. With time for discussion and Q&A, this day offers education, connection and practical tools for long-term wellbeing and balance.

### **The Skin Suit: Somatic Awareness with Sabine Smith**

27 September (two sessions)

Kent TN14 7TB

As yoga practitioners we often spend time diving below the body's surface considering muscles, joints, connective tissue and even our organs. But how often do we consider the surface of the body?

Come along and learn how paying attention to the skinsuit, dermatones, nerve pathways and the sensory motor cortex deepen our practice and teaching. We will explore why the surface is as important as the depth. We will practise movements from

Tias Little's Somatic Awareness Training for Yoga Attunement method which draws on the work of Thomas Hanna, Moshe Feldenkrais and other somatic movement modalities.

### **Yoga in the Trees – Yoga and Mindfulness in Bedgebury Forest with Lisa Whitehouse**

10 October

Kent TN17 2SJ

This is an opportunity to experience the power and beauty of nature when combined with the benefits of practicing Yoga and Mindfulness.

We will spend time amongst the sanctuary of 12,000 trees at Bedgebury National Pinetum near Goudhurst in Kent. Practising outdoors, in green space, helps to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, reduce cortisol and cholesterol, while improving general wellbeing – whatever the weather, all year round!

This session will also include some practical tips on how to set up a regular outdoor class, a Q&A

Photograph: Cliff Booth/Pexels



session/sharing of ideas from anyone who is already teaching outdoors.

**The Hips: the power of the psoas and piriformis with Roberta Jesson**

17 October

Sussex RH20 3PG

Hip stability and flexibility are integral to the health of the whole body. An issue with the hips can move up or down the physical body (the kinematic chain) affecting backs, knees, ankles, shoulders, the hips themselves and even the ability to take a deep breath causing anxiety and even panic attacks. Learning how to build strength in this area helps create a more elastic muscle that will be more willing to stretch. In this workshop, we will explore two of the main muscles of the hips – the psoas (hip flexor) and the piriformis (hip abductor and lateral rotator). When strong and healthy the psoas and piriformis can improve back, hip and knee stability, the psoas being a key element of the core muscles of the

body, can even promote deeper breathing. But do you really know how to activate them? Should you try and stretch them? Or is it all about strength?

**South West**  
Breath, chanting, Rolwing

**Moving with the Breath with Bill Wood**

28 June

Wiltshire SN10 3PU

As strong and grounded yoga poses start to relax and release, the natural tidal movements of our breath can start to re-emerge and guide us in our practice.

Exploring this idea – through anatomical explanation and experiential understanding – this workshop will be posture based, with periods of relaxation, breathing practices and meditation woven in.

**Asana, Chanting and Meditation. Connecting these essential elements in your yoga teaching with Sharon Ramdassing – Dow**

26 July

Devon EX1 1QP

This session is suitable for people with experience and understanding of Hatha and Raja Yoga and for yoga teachers.

This is an opportunity to discuss and share teaching plans where chanting and meditation in your weekly classes are naturally built in as an integral part of the teaching yoga as a whole practice.

**Out of Our Heads: a yoga workshop from a Rolwing perspective with Tara Fraser**

1 November

Devon, EX16 6SU

A yoga workshop exploring the role of the head, neck, jaw and tongue in classic yoga asanas,

pranayama and meditation with additional insights from the world of Rolwing (structural integration). A little attention paid to the head and how we organise it can be a total revelation! All too often it is just assumed it will put itself in the right position, but this is not always the case. Learn ways to reduce stress in the neck and jaw, free the fascia that wraps the head and neck and relate the head to the spine and the torso more comfortably and intuitively. This workshop is accessible for all, it is not athletically demanding but it is detailed and full of interesting material for everyone from beginners to seasoned yogis.

**Emergency First Aid at Work Refresher**

1 November

Devon EX9 7ED

**Emergency First Aid at Work**

7 November

Bristol BS39 7RF

BWY considers it best practice that all BWY teachers and student teachers hold a current Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) certificate and update this every three years. This applies for yoga taught online, in-person, live and recorded on any platform. 6 CPD points.

**Mental Health Conditions: how to manage with yoga with Nikki Jackson**

7 November

Gloucestershire, GL52 9EP

This workshop is for yoga teachers and experienced practitioners keen to gain further knowledge and understanding of symptoms of a variety of mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression, trauma, eating disorders, OCD, bi-polar, addictions, psychosis, and personality disorders. It will help teachers to be more adept in



choosing appropriate yoga therapy and mindfulness practices to help a person manage their mental health throughout daily life.

## Wales

### Day of Sangha

#### Day of Sangha – śauca: caring for the body we're in

27 June

Pontypool NP4 8AT

Join us for a Day of Sangha – a shared day of practice, reflection, and connection, guided by four expert facilitators – three yoga teachers and a breathwork facilitator.

The theme for the day is śauca, one of the Niyamas in yoga philosophy. Often translated as cleanliness or purity, śauca can be understood in practical terms as caring for the body we inhabit – tending to it with awareness, respect, and good sense.

#### Integrating the Practices of the Hatha Yoga Pradipika into Yoga Classes

##### with Wendy Teasdale

8 November

Rudry CF83 3DF

This will be a broad-spectrum day which aims to enhance the practice and understanding of both practitioners and teachers. The practices of the Hatha Yoga Pradipika are surprisingly accessible and a practical understanding need not be beyond anyone's capabilities: we all need to increase our space, both inner and outer; we all seek peace; and we can all benefit from the physical and metaphysical gifts of yoga as outlined in the Hatha Yoga Pradipika.

#### The Living Breath with Ranju Roy

29 November

Swansea SA1 5PQ

In this workshop, we will learn to chant the opening verse from the Taittiriya Upaniṣad (one of the most important and earliest of the Upaniṣads), which also extols the virtues of the breath.

We will also deconstruct its meaning and then utilise these ideas in the practice of both asana, pranayama and meditation.

## Yorkshire

### Festival, meditation

#### Yorkshire Festival of Yoga 2026

3 July

Cloughton YO13 0AR

After the spectacular success of our 2025 Yorkshire Sangha, we're planning to do it all again in 2026. Same venue, same format, same excellent variety of tutors.

A chance to experience a wide range of yoga styles and traditions, meet new people and old friends. A residential weekend with the option of either full board in your own single room for the whole weekend or day tickets.

#### Tutors:

Emma Conally-Barklem: Accessible Ashtanga

Jayadhara (Jane Cluley): Yin Yoga and Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy

Kate Goodwin: Iyengar

Louise Wray: Kundalini Yoga and Celestial Communications

Nestor Portnoy: The Silent

Approach and Yoga, Fun & Psychodrama

Swami Gyan Dharma: Kirtan

and Early Morning Chanting and Meditation

#### Sequencing Towards Meditation

##### Carol Trevor

12 September

Farsley LS28 5LY

This day benefits students and teachers alike and serves as a loving reminder of our true essence and the original intention of yoga as meditation and oneness.

Learn somatic tension release, key asana families with the integration of meditative elements, receptive pranayama, yogic wisdom and options for profound savasana.

#### Emergency First Aid at Work with Stephen Smith

19 September

Cottingham HU16 4AZ

BWY considers it best practice that all BWY teachers and student teachers hold a current Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) certificate and update every three years. This applies for yoga taught online, in-person, live and recorded on any platform.

For more information see First Aid guidance on your profile menu (under your name).

#### The Hips – the power of the psoas and piriformis

##### with Roberta Jesson

31 October

Felliscliffe HG3 2LN

See South East entry for information

## Online

#### Pranayama as a Gateway to Meditation

##### Krishna Premananda

8 November

Online

We will be looking at the subtleties of pranayama practice and how it can be used as a gateway to meditation, in a clear and accessible way. There will be

plenty of time to experience your own practice and explore the profound benefits of these practices and inspire your ongoing yogic sadhana and understanding.

During this event, you will be given the opportunity to understand the practices on a deeper level and enhance your own practice. With the added benefit of yoga teachers then being able to share this with their own students.

### **Teachers' Discussion Group**

26 June

Online

This is a forum for anyone and everyone to bring to the table any aspect of their yoga teaching experience they would like to discuss and share with the knowledge that all opinions will be heard and respected. Yoga practitioners who are not teachers are also most welcome.

The event will be facilitated by the BWY Yorkshire committee members, Catherine Eastwood (Training Officer), Claire Hall (West Yorks Rep), Clare Walker (North Yorks Rep), Simone Shannon (East & South Yorks Rep) and Lucy Croucher (Yorkshire Regional Officer).

### **Teachers' Discussion Group**

4 September

Online

See 26 June for information

### **Pranayama in perspective:**

#### **The Five Phases of Progressive Practice (CPD) with Philip Xerri**

27 September

Online

There seems to be little logical, structured, developmental teaching or practice of Pranayama that covers the vast array of control, conditioning and attunement processes leading up to Classical Kumbhaka. And yet,

there does exist such a structure spread over five general phases:

1/ FOUNDATIONS: Control of the breath, maximizing the potential of the lungs, initial attunement of the subtle anatomy.

2/ DEVELOPMENTAL: Holistic development of body, emotions, mind and spirit with the introduction of rhythmical breathing.

3/ ALIGNMENT: Harmonisation of the Koshas.

4/ PURIFICATION: Cleansing of Surya and Chandra Nadis via rhythmical alternation of the breath through the nostrils and application of Bandhas.

5/ CLASSICAL: The eight Kumbhakas.

### **Chakras and the Principles of Energy**

#### **Lina Mookerjee**

10 October

Online

This event is suitable for everyone who wants to learn more about the chakras and how to replenish and use the energy they hold within the body.

Join Lina Mookerjee for this day on the chakras and get to know and understand the principles of energy and the chakra system so that you feel confident to apply your knowledge to your own practice and where relevant in your classes and teach in a safe and effective way.

### **Morning Workshop with Zoe Knott**

14 November

Online

Exploring Parsvottanasana  
An asana-based practice building towards Parsvottanasana, exploring the varied elements of the asana to deepen both our experience and understanding of the pose.

### **Teachers' Discussion Group**

20 November

Online

Our next free Teachers' Discussion Group will be on: Mental Health and Weekly Classes

Join us and a Mental Health Social Worker for an open and supportive conversation on how mental health conditions can affect students attending our weekly yoga classes – and how we as teachers can respond with compassion and awareness.

### **How to run Yoga Workshops, Days and Retreats**

#### **Lina Newstead**

22 November

Online

We will look at the current situation in the yoga scene and Lina will share her 20 years' experience of running these types of yoga events with teachers who may wish to branch out into this area. There will be some simple stretching and breathwork interspersed with lots of information and sharing on the chat and in breakout rooms.

### **A Healing Journey from Trauma to Gentle Reintegration**

#### **Sabine Dahn**

22 November

Online

We will explore how we can use yoga tools, with a focus on chanting, to create conditions for allowing trauma to come into awareness safely, for gradually releasing it and integrating back into a unified and authentic whole. There will be theory on shock trauma and developmental trauma, the significance of the Vagus Nerve in trauma response, and the approach to healing both types of trauma, which will be complemented by practice.

# Yoga as an art form

**Angela Stevens** explains why to her, yoga is a work of art

**A**RT IS often described as the expression of human emotion – a means of communicating inspiration, beauty or spirituality through the medium of painting, music, sculpture or dance, either through personal participation or through appreciation. In Marilyn Ferguson’s *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, she said that: “When life becomes fully conscious, art as we know it will vanish. Art is only a stopgap, an imperfect effort to wrest meaning from an environment where nearly everyone is sleepwalking.”

In my youth, although I had doors opened for me, I had little talent in any direction. I did, however, have an overpowering urge to express myself artistically. When I discovered yoga in my mid-30s, I experienced a sudden moment of recognition – this is how I can express myself – an immediate appreciation of the aesthetic experience of being personally involved in creating an art form, not on a canvas or a stage but within my own body.

## POETRY IN MOTION – DANCE

In a yoga practice, movement unfolds between asanas which are held postures, held with steadiness and controlled breathing; the transition from one posture to the next is done smoothly, beautifully and meaningfully, so creating a flow of the body. The result is poetry in motion.

In a sequence of yoga asanas the body is put through its full range of movement – forward bends, backward bends, lateral stretches and twists, and when those movements are woven together a dance is created. It is said that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but in the case of yoga practice it is not a performance – there is no outside beholder – the beauty is created by the internal sensation of balance, expansion and vitality. Feel beautiful... be beautiful. Although a yoga asana is ‘action in inaction’, while the body remains still it is moved internally by the inner dance of the breath. The inhalation and exhalation subtly refine the posture

to enhance the geometric shapes – the angles, the lines, the form.

## SCULPTURE

Within every block of marble is a shape which is revealed by the sculptor as he hones the stone to the shape desired. Michelangelo spoke of the sculptor’s role in setting free the form that is already inside the stone. While holding an asana, the desired shape can be visualised mentally, so ensuring concentration and focus. Through mindful breathing, subtle adjustments occur. While the body is held outwardly still, it is the movement of the breath, like the chisel of the sculptor, that moulds the body into shape, so body, mind and breath are all united in releasing that artistic expression that is freed from within.

## MUSIC

In a yoga class the different members of the group resemble members of an orchestra, each with their own instrument – their own body – playing their own part in their own way. The instruments are unified by the breath, the conductor of the orchestra; if the conductor falters, the result is disharmony. The musicians’ aim is to work in harmony which is the meaning of the word Yoga. As BKS Iyengar once said: “Yoga is like music. The rhythm of the body, the melody of the mind and the harmony of the soul create the symphony of life.”

Music moves through us. So does breath. So does yoga. If music can alter emotional states and yoga can unite body, mind, breath and spirit, then yoga becomes art in its most intimate form, and if consciousness expands – will we no longer be sleepwalking?

● *Angela Stevens began her yoga teaching career in 1972 and retired in 2025. She taught in Sussex and Kent and alongside general classes, specialised in Yoga for people with physical disabilities and Yoga for ME/CFS.*

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- Ask questions in real time and receive immediate, personalised feedback
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