

Benefits of a Yoga Program for Youth in Shelter

Presented by Jennifer Cousineau BS Psychology and E-RYT 200
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Yoga and Trauma Healing

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You don't have to be Hindu, or spiritual, to do Yoga, a Hindu spiritual practice that involves prescribed physical activities as well as breathing and mindfulness exercises. [Over 20 million](#) devotees practice Yoga – that's over 5% of the adult population – and nearly half of the remaining adults are thinking about trying it.

Yoga can have a positive impact on a variety of psychological and physiological conditions. Yoga cultivates mindfulness through breathing exercises, intentional relaxation, and body movement (West, Lang, & Spinazzola, 2017). In addition to helping certain medical conditions and somatic dissociation, yoga has also been shown to alleviate symptoms of anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, ADHD, and eating disorders (West, Lang, & Spinazzola, 2017).

Yoga can be especially beneficial for people with PTSD or other post-traumatic stress symptoms (West, Lang, & Spinazzola, 2017). Meditation and mindfulness have been found to help with PTSD recovery, but it can be challenging for some people to sit still and clear their minds to meditate. Yoga can also help people achieve a mindful state, and by keeping busy with the physical aspect, there is less potential for [intrusive](#) [looming](#) focus or re-experiencing a negative memory (Charet, Couture, Charcozina, Caragosa, Stathak, & Green, 2011). It can improve relaxation, self-confidence, and self-efficacy in clients who have experienced trauma (Bussing, Michalen, Khalsa, Teles, & Sherman, 2012). [Yoga](#) [also](#) [reduces](#) somatic symptoms associated with helplessness, stress, and fear (van der Kolk et al, 2014).

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November/December 2014 Issue

Trauma Sensitive Yoga
By Kate Jackson
Social Work Today
Vol. 14 No. 6 P. 8

It's no secret that yoga does wonders for the body and can calm the mind. And research continues to point to its power to help ameliorate various ailments such as hypertension, pain, and insomnia. Now, there's growing evidence that modified yoga, when taught by specially trained individuals and employed in a therapeutic context, can be a tool of healing and empowerment for people who have experienced trauma.

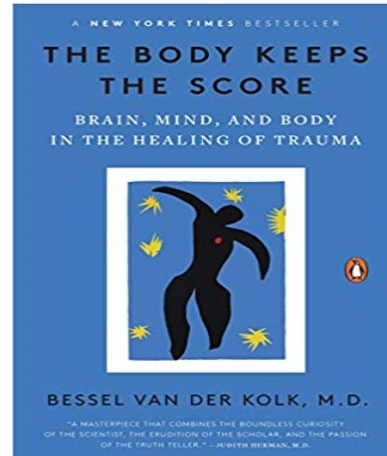
The term trauma-sensitive yoga was coined by David Emerson, E-RYT, founder and director of yoga services at the Trauma Center at the Justice Resources Institute in Brookline, MA, to describe the use of yoga as an adjunctive treatment within a clinical context. The practice, pioneered by experts such as Bessel van der Kolk, MD, and championed by others such as Richard Miller, PhD, CEO of the Integrative Restoration Institute and cofounder of the International Association of Yoga Therapy, aims to help clients regain comfort in their bodies.

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The Triune Brain Theory

Lizard Brain	Mammal Brain	Human Brain
Brain stem & cerebellum	Limbic System	Neocortex
Fight or Flight	Emotions, memories, habits	Language, abstract thought, imagination, consciousness
Autopilot	Decisions	Reasons, rationalizes



The Triune Brain in Evolution, Paul MacLean, 1960

Trauma

Something that overwhelms the nervous system. It leaves the person unable to fully process the event.



- Brain's response to trauma²
- Brain's response to repeated trauma

Trauma Trigger

A perceived threat or trauma, something that relates or reminds someone of the original trauma. It causes the mind and body to react like they are being traumatized even though they are not.

- How to help someone that is triggered now that we understand what happens during trauma in the body.

Mindfulness

Grounding- Access the SENSES



Power of the breath



Resiliency



Self Esteem and Self Worth



Positive Coping Skills



Self Control



Yoga Program

- Partner with a yoga studio, yoga teacher, or non-profit that offers this service already
 - Bring yoga to you
 - Bring your kids to yoga
 - Consider reaching out to a teacher training school
 - Complement with other services while appreciating power of non-verbal



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YOGA MEDITATION MINDFULNESS



Yoga Outreach Training

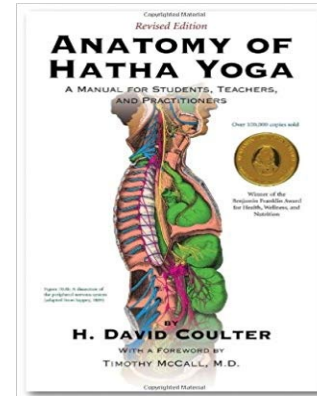
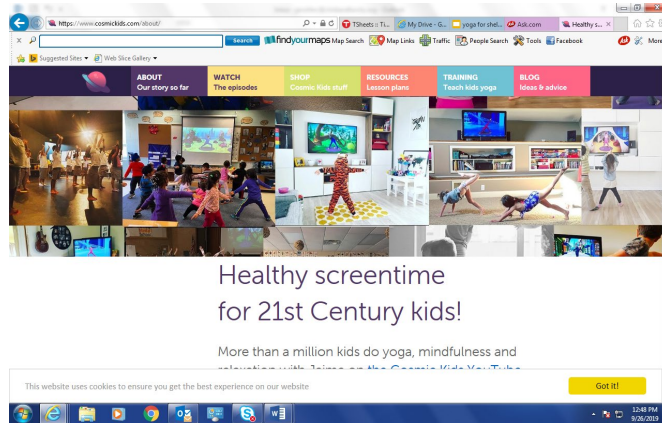
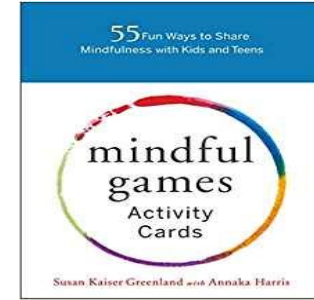
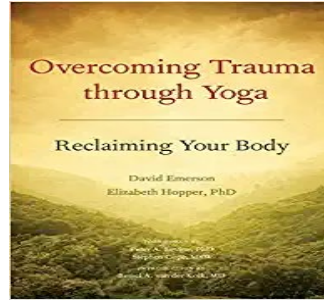
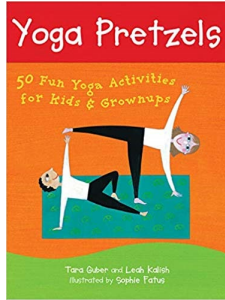
This trauma informed training is for yoga teachers and yoga lovers who want to connect with youth at schools, jails, shelters, rehab centers and more.

Learn special skills and approaches to connect with participants.

The Connection Coalition

<https://www.theconnectioncoalition.org/>

Additional Resources



Additional Resources

<https://www.drdansiegel.com/>



<https://besselvanderkolk.net/index.html>



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Citations

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4. “The Connection Coalition” <https://www.theconnectioncoalition.org/>
5. Dan Siegel “Dr. Dan Seigel” <https://www.drdansiegel.com/>
6. BA Van Der Kolk, “Bessel Van Der Kolk M.D.” <https://besselvanderkolk.net/index.html>