

Awakening Your Client's Inner Pharmacy

Part 1

Therapy Training Boston, 2012



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Psychotherapy*

www.yogafordepression.com

Agenda ~ Part 1

- ✦ The Safe Container
- ✦ Yogic View of Depression
- ✦ Meeting the Mood
- ✦ Yoga Tools
- ✦ The Evidence
- ✦ The Practice

Yoga and Psychotherapy

Self-Study (Svadyaya)

Compassion (Karuna)

*"The highest spiritual practice is self-
observation with compassion."*

~Krishnamurti

How Yoga Skills Enhance Therapy

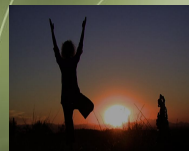
- ✦ Strengthens the Therapeutic Alliance
- ✦ Helps Client focus
- ✦ Helps Client access feeling states
- ✦ Provides tools for mood regulation
- ✦ Provides tools for self-care
- ✦ Helps in management of Bipolar Disorder & schizophrenia (Viscaglia, 2011)
- ✦ Increases self-efficacy
- ✦ Nondual Strategies for working with difficult emotions
- ✦ Provides tools and language to access a larger Self

*"You are more than your mood, more than
your beliefs about yourself and the world."*

Yoga Practices in a clinical setting



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



The Safe Container

*"Crying is one of the highest spiritual practices.
One who knows crying knows yoga."*

~Swami Kripalu

Centering with imagery, sound & breath

- ✦ Soothing Image
- ✦ Hand gesture
- ✦ Inhale through the nostrils for 4 counts
- ✦ Hold the breath with the image for 4 counts.
- ✦ Exhale with the mantra “so-hum”
- ✦ Yogic Three-Part Breath
- ✦ **Intention**

Therapeutic Bond – Rituals & Practices

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

Therapeutic Bond

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

Yoga and Psychotherapy

1. Safe Container
2. Permission
3. Move slowly
4. Cue to sensation
5. Grounding

Yoga in Psychotherapy ~ Safe Container

Psychotherapist and LifeForce Yoga® Mentor Joe Walter, LICSW, working with a client, in “Seated Mountain with Integrity.” Inhale: “I am” through the crown; exhale: “Here,” grounding through the feet.



11

- ✦ A client who returned said, "When I came before, you helped me understand and get where I wanted to go. Now you show me yoga practices I use to help myself understand and get where I want to go."

~Sherry Rubin, LCSW, BCD, LFYP,
Downingtown, PA

Yogic View of Depression



- ✧ Constricted Prana ~ constrictions in all Koshas
- ✧ Mistaken belief of Separation ~ *Avidya* (II:3-4)

Duhkha –

Suffering ~

literally means obstructed space



Sukha –

Happiness ~

literally means unobstructed space



There's a yoga appropriate for every body!



- ✧ *Rajasic*: In emotional terms, this would be anxiety, anxiety-based depression, mania, hypomania. Meet the rajasic state with vigor, then move to a more calming practice.



*Meeting the Mood/Constitution
~ Understanding the Gunas*

Alternate Nostril Breathing



Bellows Breath – Inhale

One Breath per second



Bellows Breath - Exhale



Alternate Nostril Breathing in a clinical setting



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

Vishnu Mudra – Hand Position for Alternate Nostril



Opening Occluded Nostrils for Alternate Nostril Breathing



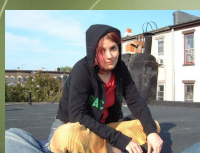
Calming Mudras Adhi Mudra



Calming Mudras
Chin Mudra



Calming Mudras
Dhyana Mudra



✦ *Tamasic*: In emotional terms, this would be dysthymia (mild, chronic depression), lethargy, major depression. Meet the tamasic state with a slow, restorative practice, then build to a more energizing practice.

Meeting the Mood/Constitution
~ Understanding the Gunas

Alternate Nostril Breathing



Energizing Mudras
Ganesha Mudra



Energizing Mudras
Brahma Mudra



Energizing Mudras Shiva Lingam Mudra



Balancing Mudra~ Happy Buddha



Basics of Asana & Pranayama as Treatment

- ✦ Postures are practiced with conscious *attention to the breath and the sensations* in the body.
- ✦ The following movements are included: forward bending, back bending, side stretching, twists, inversions.
- ✦ Yogic breathing exercises are practiced that deepen the breath, increasing lung capacity, energizing the solar plexus and the cerebral cortex, increasing HRV (a flow between sympathetic and parasympathetic)
- ✦ The practice is regular (minimum of 4-5 times a week.)

Yoga Strategies ~ Appropriate in Clinical Treatment

- ✦ Breathing Techniques (*Pranayama & kriya*)
- ✦ Creating Intention/Affirmation (*Sankalpa*)
- ✦ Using Visual Imagery (*Bhavana*)
- ✦ Hand Gestures (*Mudra*)
- ✦ Mantra Chanting (*Nada*)
- ✦ Nondual Strategies to balance the oppositesCommunity (*sangha*)

Yogic Strategies ~ Appropriate in Treatment

- ✦ *Yoga Nidra*
 - ✦ Intention/resolve (*sankalpa*)
 - ✦ Inner Sanctuary
 - ✦ Body Scan (*annamaya kosha*)
 - ✦ Breath Awareness (*pranamaya kosha*)
 - ✦ Feeling & Balancing the Opposites (*manomaya kosha & vijñanamaya kosha*)
 - ✦ Awareness of Self (*anandamaya kosha*)
 - ✦ Suggestion: Self-acceptance, Gratitude
 - ✦ Intention/resolve (*sankalpa*)

Overview of Biochemical & Physiological Changes

- ✦ Decrease in cortisol levels (stress hormone)
- ✦ Increase in GABA levels (primary inhibitory neurotransmitter)
- ✦ Increase in HRV (heart rate variability)
- ✦ Increase in BDNF (neuroplasticity, genetic expression)
- ✦ Demonstrated improvement in memory, cognitive functioning, perceptual motor skills, visual perception

36

Overview of Biochemical & Physiological Changes

- ✦ Relaxes chronic muscle tension
- ✦ Restores natural diaphragmatic breathing
- ✦ Improves oxygen absorption and carbon dioxide elimination
- ✦ Increases alpha and theta waves
- ✦ Regulates hypothalamus at an optimum level
- ✦ Certain techniques stimulate vagal nerve activity
- ✦ Bioavailability of oxygen and glucose, building blocks for the production of neurotransmitters
- ✦ Calms sympathetic nervous system while activating parasympathetic system

LifeForce Yoga® for Mood Disturbance Study

- ✦ Between times one (before the LifeForce Yoga® program) and two (two weeks after learning it), participants reported:
 - 64% decrease in total mood disturbance (POMS)
 - 53% decrease in average depression scores (BDI)
 - At two months, overall mood disturbance continued to drop.
- ✦ Bennett, S., Weintraub, A., Khalsa, S.B., "Initial evaluation of the LifeForce Yoga® program as a therapeutic intervention for depression," *Intern. Jour Yoga Therapy*, 2008.
- ✦ <http://www.yogafordepression.com/LIYT-2008-Bennett.pdf>

38

Yoga Outshines Walking for Mood

- ✦ In a randomized controlled MRS study, researchers at Boston University compared study participants who walked three times a week for exercise to a group assigned to three weekly Yoga classes over a period of twelve weeks.
- ✦ GABA levels were significantly elevated in the Yoga practitioners.
- ✦ More mood improvements in the Yoga group on standard psycho-social measurements.

Effects of Yoga Versus Walking on Mood, Anxiety, and Brain GABA Levels," *J. Complement Med.* 2010, Nov. 16 (11).

39

UCLA Iyengar Depression Study

- ✦ Of the 17 completers, all diagnosed with unipolar depression in partial remission, who took 20 Iyengar yoga classes, 11 were in complete remission after the intervention. Significant reductions were shown for depression, anger, anxiety, and neurotic symptoms.
- ✦ The authors state that the overall remission rate of 65% "compares favorably with other CAM interventions: 43% Sam-e; 20% Omega-3 fatty acids; 19% folic acid; 25% aerobic exercise."

Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine, 2007



Self-Efficacy in Battered Women

- ✦ In this first controlled study to examine the effects of pranayama breathing on self-efficacy the researchers found that the greatest effect on self-efficacy for the battered women in the study was derived from the combined Testimony/Breathing condition.

"Efficacy in Battered Women," *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, (16), 2006. sfranzblau@uncfsu.edu

41

Mood Improvement for Young Adults with Vinyasa Yoga

Young adults with depressive symptoms in a five-week Vinyasa yoga intervention showed significant improvements in both self-reported & observer-rated depressive symptoms, somatic symptoms & sleep quality.

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LifeForce Yoga & Mood Studies in Progress

- ✦ University of North Texas, Mandy Jordan, PhD
- ✦ University of Virginia, Patricia Kinszer, MA
- ✦ Brown University/Butler Hospital, Lisa Uebelacker, PhD (NIH)

Current yoga and mental research summaries available:
<http://yogafordepression.com/research-and-news/>

Yoga in Psychotherapy

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



44

Yoga in Psychotherapy

Working with Children:
Psychotherapist and LifeForce Yoga® Practitioner Laura Orth teaching an eight-year-old client with severe anxiety, who vomited in new situations, Yogic-Three-Part Breath, after trying numerous cognitive interventions without success.



45

Yoga in Psychotherapy

Meeting Negative Self-Talk

Psychotherapist and LifeForce Yoga® Practitioner Joe Walter working with a client, in Seated Mountain with Integrity, using mantra and Yogic breathing to counter tremendous negative self-talk and overwhelming anxiety.



46

Yoga Therapy for Mood

- ✦ **Using Client-Created Affirmation:** Yoga therapist and LifeForce Yoga® Practitioner Joy Bennett guiding a client with a history of childhood sexual abuse in Mountain Pose with the affirmation, “Unshakeable confidence and trust breathes through me now.”



47

Yoga Therapy for Mood

- ✦ **Meeting the Client’s Belief System:** Yoga therapist and LifeForce Yoga® Practitioner Joy Bennett guiding her client suffering from an anxiety-based depression and panic attacks to breathe the prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola through her open hands, aligning the Yoga practice with her strong belief system as a Roman Catholic.



48

Practice: Calming

- ✦ **Bee Breath (Brahmari)** – exhale only
- ✦ Lips Closed
- ✦ Chin slightly tucked
- ✦ Root of the tongue to back of throat

Mudra: Shanmuki

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



Shanmukhi Mudra in a Clinical Setting



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

Shanmukhi Mudra



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

LifeForce Yoga Chakra Clearing Meditation - Energizing



Chakra One - Muladhara
(Base of spine)
Tone: Lam
Color: red
Hasta Mudra 1
Link the two little fingers together close to the base of the spine and pull.

LifeForce Yoga Chakra Clearing Meditation - Energizing



Chakra Two – Svadhisthana
(Low Abdomen)
Tone: Vum
Color: orange
Hasta Mudra 2
Link the two ring fingers in front of the low abdomen and pull.

LifeForce Yoga Chakra Clearing Meditation - Energizing



Chakra Three – Manipura
(Solar Plexus)
Tone: Rum
Color: yellow
Hasta Mudra 3
Link the two middle fingers in front of the solar plexus and pull.

LifeForce Yoga Chakra Clearing Meditation - Energizing



Chakra Four – Anahata
(Heart)
Tone: Yum
Color: green
Kapota (Dove) Mudra
Palms together as in
prayer. Keep the base of
the palms and the tips of
the fingers together but cup
the palms.

LifeForce Yoga Chakra Clearing Meditation - Energizing



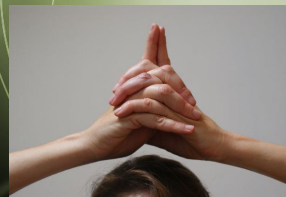
Chakra Five – Vishuddha
(Throat)
Tone: Hum
Color: blue
Padma (Lotus) Mudra
Bring the hands together as in
prayer. Keep the base of the
palms, the little fingers and the
thumbs together. Open all the
other fingers wide like petals.

LifeForce Yoga Chakra Clearing Meditation - Energizing



Chakra Six – Ajña
(Third Eye)
Tone: Om
Color: violet
Kali Mudra
Clasp your hands together with
hands cupped, hovering close
to forehead without touching,
and with your index finger
extended forward horizontally.
Elbows out to the sides.

LifeForce Yoga Chakra Clearing Meditation - Energizing



Chakra Seven – Sahasrara
(Crown)
Tone: Nnnng
Color: white
Kali Mudra
Clasp your hands together with
hands cupped, hovering close
to forehead without touching,
and with your index finger
extended forward horizontally.
Elbows out to the sides.

✧ A client who returned said, "When I came before, you helped me understand and get where I wanted to go. Now you show me yoga practices I use to help myself understand and get where I want to go."

✧ Sherry Rubin, LCSW, LFYP-2, Downingtown, PA

Resources

Books

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Naiman, Rubin, Healing Night: The Science of Sleeping, Dreaming and Awakening. Minneapolis, MN: Syren Books, 2006.

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Stegel, Daniel J., The Mindful Brain. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007.

Weintraub, Amy, Yoga for Depression. New York: Broadway Books, 2004.

Weintraub, Amy Yoga Skills for Therapists. New York: W.W. Norton, 2012.

Yoga Trainings and Classes for Mood Management

- ✦ LifeForce Yoga for Depression workshops and LifeForce Yoga Practitioner Trainings, 520 349-2644
- ✦ The Healing Breath Technique, (Sudarshan Kriya), The Art of Living Foundation, (800) 897-5913.
- ✦ Richard Miller's IRest Yoga Nidra workshops, retreats, books and tapes, Richard Miller's workshops, retreats, books and tapes
- ✦ Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy, (800)288-YOGA (9642).
- ✦ Breath~Body~Mind Workshop with Dr. Richard Brown & Dr. Patricia Gerbarg
- ✦ Trauma Sensitive Yoga with David Emerson