



BWY

AT  
THE  
HEART  
OF YOGA

IN THE MIDLANDS

# IN THE LOOP

Spring Newsletter 2024

[www.bwy.org.uk/midlands](http://www.bwy.org.uk/midlands)

**Newsletter Editor**

VACANCY

**Regional Treasurer**

Perry Lewis  
midlands.treasurer@regions.org.uk

**Regional Training Officer**

Dave West  
midlands.training@bwyregions.org.uk

**Secretary**

Meryl Winby (West Midlands)

**Website Admin**

Simon Kane  
midlands.web@bwyregions.org.uk

**Derbyshire shire Area Representative**

Becky Soong-Towell  
midlands.derbyshirerep@bwyregions.org.uk

**Leicestershire Area Representative**

Katy Powell  
midlands.leicestershirerep@bwyregions.org.uk

**Lincolnshire Area Representative**

Felicity Rodziewicz  
midlands.lincolnshirerep@bwyregions.org.uk

**Nottinghamshire Area Representative**

Sally Kennedy  
midlands.nottinghamshirerep@bwyregions.org.uk

**Posts vacant**

Northamptonshire, Hereford and Worcester, Warwickshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire and Birmingham and Black Country area reps. Regional Officer.

**Central Office**

01529 306851

**PUBLISHING POLICY**

Please send adverts to the Newsletter Editor and make payments as per the instructions on the invoice. If you wish to take advantage of members' rates, you will need to provide your BWY membership number. If you are part of a registered charity VAT will be deducted.

**Advertising Rates  
(including VAT)**

Half Page 5.2 x 9.03cm  
Full Page 10.8 x 18.46cm  
Back Page 10.8 x 18.46

**BWY / Accredited Price**

£15.00  
£25.00  
£40.00

**Full Price**

£30.00  
£35.00  
£75.00

**Issue**

Summer 2024  
Autumn 2024

**Date Sent Out**

10 June 2024  
14 October 2024

**Copy Deadline**

16 April 2024  
23 August 2024

Please note goods or services advertised are not necessarily BWY accredited. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor or the committee. Advertisements are accepted at the discretion of the committee, and are included on a first-come, first-served basis as space allows. Advertising of courses that offer 'yoga teacher training' will only be accepted if the course is BWY or accredited to the BWY.

The British Wheel of Yoga is the Sports England recognised National Governing Body for Yoga.

## MIDLANDS NEWS

Hello from Yorkshire!

Please don't be alarmed, Yorkshire hasn't annexed the Midlands or vice versa. Sadly, your long-standing regional editor, Lindsey, has stepped down. Please join me in thanking her for her hard work and dedication over many years. And a huge welcome to Becky who is intending to step into this role for the next issue.

I'm Lucy, the Yorkshire editor and I'm just helping out on this issue to make sure you, the members, receive your newsletter. If you are interested in volunteering with the BWY and think that any of the vacancies listed on the inside front cover might be right for you please do get in contact with one of the Midlands committee members (their contact details can be found on the inside front cover).

Thanks Lucy

CONTACTS	02
REGIONAL REPORTS	04
BOOKING PROCEDURE	06
CONGRATULATIONS / HAIKU	07
BWY CPD EVENTS	08
WORKSHOPS & EVENTS	12
ARTICLES	20
ACCOUNTS	31

**Follow us on social media for regular updates!**



[www.facebook.com/bwymidlandsregion](https://www.facebook.com/bwymidlandsregion)

[www.instagram.com/bwy\\_midlands](https://www.instagram.com/bwy_midlands)



## NOTTINGHAM AREA REPRESENTATIVE

SALLY KENNEDY

Namaste,



Things have been really busy for me over the last few months as I am in the final year of study for BSc Acupuncture and the academic end of year seems to be fast approaching! This newsletter contribution might therefore be a tad shorter than usual or than I'd like.

We've had a busy few months in Nottinghamshire too, hosting the Regional Sangha event in Oct 2023, and we've got a programme of workshops and other events coming up throughout 2024 that I'm hoping will be

popular with members and non-members alike and well attended. As ever, if there's a topic, tutor, venue or anything else you'd like to suggest, please do get in touch with me at [midlands.nottinghamshirerep@bwyregions.org.uk](mailto:midlands.nottinghamshirerep@bwyregions.org.uk)

By the time you read this, the new BWY website will be up and functioning (after the expected, and some unexpected teething issues) so please do go and take a look at the new regional pages. There's a whole host of events there, and you can get in touch, book your sessions and get involved with BWY! You can also update and edit your own profile including promote your classes, record Continuing Professional Development and more....

The world is often a challenging place and when things get busy, it sometimes seems difficult to prioritise and keep things in perspective, so that's one of the things I've been working on personally, and in my yoga classes over recent weeks. I hope you can find some perspective and balance your lives in whatever way feels meaningful for you through 2024 and beyond.

With Metta, Sally 😊

## DERBYSHIRE AREA REPRESENTATIVE

### BECKY SOONG-TOWELL



I'm very aware that I haven't really introduced myself even though I was officially voted into post in May 2023 and I've been volunteering behind the scenes since 2020. So here I go!

I live in Derby with my husband and our 2 children (aged 10 and 4). I completed my 500 hour teacher training at the glorious Jasmine Trust in Retford with Carolyn and Gillian. I currently teach 5 classes locally, in addition to offering cover to local studios and working on the Front Desk at a Physiotherapy clinic.

I have been practising yoga for 20 years and love being part of the yoga community. My passion is to support anyone that has an interest in yoga and I'm particularly interested in supporting local yoga teachers. If you have any ideas, requests or would like to deliver any local sessions please do contact me directly on [Midlands.derbyshirerep@bwyregions.org.uk](mailto:Midlands.derbyshirerep@bwyregions.org.uk)

## **BOOKING PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION**

### **EVENT BOOKINGS CAN BE MADE ON THE WEBSITE**

**[www.bwy.org.uk](http://www.bwy.org.uk)**

The easiest way to events as a BWY Member is as follows:

- Login using the Member Login button on the homepage
- Hover over the Events tab and enter your postcode
- A table of events from all regions close to you will appear
- Browse events, click on each one for more details and to book

#### **TO BOOK AN EVENT:**

- Click on the title of the event
- Scroll to the bottom of the page to Ticket Types
- If you are logged in, but can't see any ticket types it means you are not eligible to book onto this event; i.e., teacher-only events
- Select type & number of tickets you want & complete the form
- Click submit

Please email queries to the organizer of that particular event as listed opposite or contact head office for technical issues.

#### **REFUND AND TRANSFER OPTIONS:**

1. Cancellation prior to 30 days from due date of event – full refund. The amount can be used to off-set against the cost of another event subject to availability and at the discretion of the event organisers.
2. Cancellation within 15 to 29 days of event date – 50% refund. This amount can be used to offset against the cost of another event subject to availability and at the discretion of the event organisers.
3. Cancellation within 14 to 0 days of the event date – no refund or transfer.

## CONGRATULATIONS

To our Midlands members who completed the following courses:

- ॐ Karen Baker & Emma Bennett: Level 4 Teacher Training with Gillian Gee
- ॐ Hayley Henderson: Level 4 Teacher Training with Eliane Codiroli
- ॐ Karen McNamara: Level 4 Teacher Training with Michelle Griffiths
- ॐ Rachel Meller: Teacher Training with Intelligent Yoga
- ॐ Jill Harrison & Sa Thi Kim Huynh: Teacher Training with Yoga Campus

## HAIKU

by Peter Spencer

Blue sky white clouds  
-a photograph of Summer  
Now no more.



## AYURVEDIC DIET & LIFESTYLE CPD

### TARIK DERVISH

10<sup>th</sup> February 2024, 10.00 – 16.00

The Landmark, Pleasley, Nottinghamshire NG19 7SP



This workshop is suitable for all levels; non-members and non-yoga teachers all welcome.

There will be a basic introduction on Ayurveda, and the emphasis will quickly move to the recommendations related to Diet and Lifestyle. Ayurveda generally recommends balance in all things, but what might bring balance to one may cause imbalance for another.

Lifestyle and Food are a very tricky business and, ultimately, it is important to build a very personal relationship with what you eat and do. This workshop aims to ultimately raise your awareness of what you do and whether it is working for you or not.

Tarik is a qualified and experienced Yoga Teacher/Trainer for the British Wheel of Yoga and Ayurvedic practitioner.

<https://www.bwy.org.uk/midlands> for full details and to book.

## AN EXPLORATION OF MUDRA SWAMI KRISHNAPREMANANDA

20<sup>th</sup> April 2024, 10.00 – 16.00

Calow Community Centre, Allpits Road, Chesterfield S44 5AT

A day to provide the opportunity to learn and experience different classical mudras that can subsequently enhance your own personal practice under the experienced input of Swami Krishnapremananda.



The morning session:

Sitting practice utilising pranayama mudras. Asana practice incorporating aspects of breathing and mudra. Selected practice of mudra, including hand and body mudras, interspersed with periods of stillness, inner reflection, and relaxation.

Conclusion of the morning, including practice of prana mudra.

The afternoon session:

Discussion / Q&A arising from the morning's input. Yoga Nidra practice including mudra. Practice session including ashwini mudra, brahmari pranayama, and shanmukhi mudra leading to spaciousness and akarma mudra. Prana mudra. Conclusion and Peace prayer (Shanti Path).

Swami Krishnapremananda is currently Assistant Director of Mandala Yoga Ashram, playing a key role helping to support and care for the Ashram's spiritual and practical wellbeing.

<https://www.bwy.org.uk/midlands> for full details and to book.

## THE BANDHAS – CORE PRACTICES OF YOGA SWAMI KRISHNAPREMANANDA

21st April 2024, 10.00 – 16.00

Papplewick Village Hall, Linby Lane, Nottinghamshire NG15 8FB

A day to provide the opportunity to explore the practice of the 3 bandhas under the skillful and accessible guidance of Swami Krishnapremananda. The 3 bandhas can add so much to our yoga practice, stimulating energy and spaciousness, and are thereby an excellent preparation for meditation.



The day will aim to introduce the purpose, value, and practice of Bandha within the Hatha Yoga tradition. To guide the practice of the 3 bandhas in a clear and accessible way. To inspire participants to continue their practice following the day. To inspire participants in their ongoing yogic sadhana and understanding.

Participants will have understood the value, purpose, and appropriate place of bandha in their personal practice and teaching. They will have experienced the practice of all 3 bandhas, and how they link with pranayama and meditation. They will have a greater appreciation of the effect of bandha on their body and mind. They will feel a renewed inspiration for their yogic practice and lifestyle. They will have experienced a quiet, simply enjoyable, and re-energising day.

Swami Krishnapremananda is currently Assistant Director of Mandala Yoga Ashram, playing a key role helping to support and care for the Ashram's spiritual and practical wellbeing.

<https://www.bwy.org.uk/midlands> for full details and to book.

## PRANAYAMA – THE HEALING DIMENSION

PHILIP XERRI

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2024, 10.00 – 16.00

Papplewick Village Hall, Linby Lane, Nottinghamshire NG15 8FB



This workshop will explore this vast subject from a variety of approaches. **DIRECTIONAL HEALING:** this approach is based on Swami Gitananda's classic practice of the Pranava AUM.

The basic practice combines sectional breathing, the Prana Mudras and healing mantras to infuse the whole body with a powerful therapeutic force.

Sectional Breathing is the physical component. This practice can deliver benefits to the intestinal tract, the abdominal organs, & heart and lungs through increased blood supply, movement and massage.

The sectional abdominal breath can also release tension in the solar plexus area and thus be profoundly relaxing. Visit the website for more information.

Philip began practicing Yoga in the 70's with Philip Jones in Cardiff. He 'fell in love' with Pranayama and went to India to study with Dr. Swami Gitananda. He studied Comparative Religions at Lancaster University and in 1984 founded Yoga Quests. To date Philip travels extensively teaching on all aspects of Pranayama.

<https://www.bwy.org.uk/midlands> for full details and to book.

# KARMA YOGA

*Those who act without thought of personal  
Profit and lead a well-disciplined life  
Discover in course of time the divine  
Principle that all forms of life are one.  
Shvetashvatatara Upanishad 4:3*

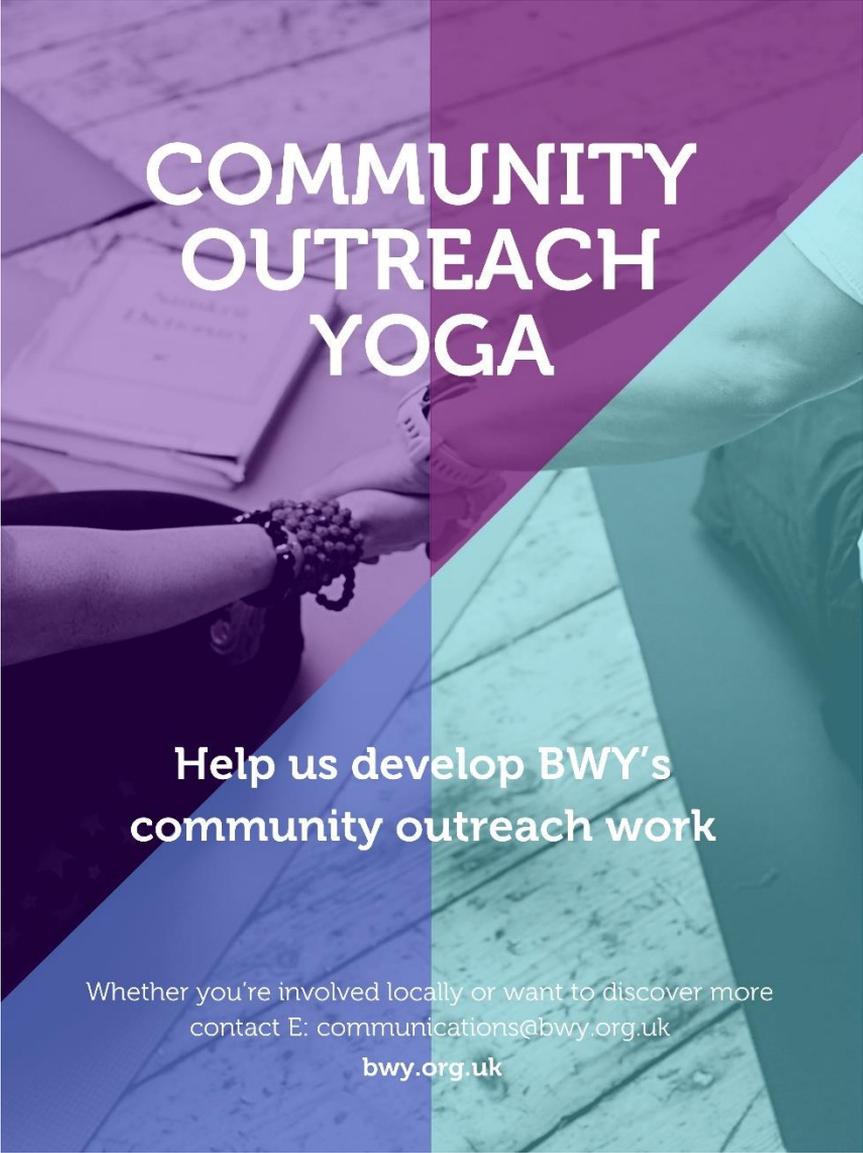
Are you really passionate about something (apart from yoga on the mat)? Like tree planting or litter collection or organising a book swapping library or a creative crafting club.

Something you would like to share with others  
Something which could bring together like-minded people.

Something which might inspire others to join in  
Something which could create a community.

Why not organise a Karma Yoga event?  
It can be something you organise yourself or something you do in collaboration with a charity or other organisation.

If you would like help promoting your event, please contact your BWY Regional Officer.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH YOGA

Help us develop BWY's  
community outreach work

Whether you're involved locally or want to discover more  
contact E: [communications@bwy.org.uk](mailto:communications@bwy.org.uk)

[bwy.org.uk](http://bwy.org.uk)

**50-HOURS  
YIN YOGA TEACHER  
TRAINING**

**LEVEL 1 –  
FUNCTIONAL  
ANATOMY  
LOWER BODY**

**A HIGHLY  
EXPERIENCED YIN  
YOGA TEACHER WITH  
OVER 1,500 HOURS  
TRAINING WITH PAUL  
& SUZEE GRILLEY AND  
SARAH & TY POWERS**

**INTAKE 9**



[gilliancawte@hotmail.com](mailto:gilliancawte@hotmail.com)  
07968 154525  
[www.gilliancawteyoga.co.uk](http://www.gilliancawteyoga.co.uk)

**BONES, MUSCLES,  
POSES, MERIDIANS  
AND MINDFULNESS  
MEDITATION**

**Comprehensive  
Colour Manual,  
Meridian Doll,  
British Wheel  
of Yoga and  
Yoga Alliance  
Certification**

**Total cost: £695  
Early Bird Discount  
Available**

**2024  
6 Saturdays  
14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>  
September, 5<sup>th</sup>, 12  
and 26<sup>th</sup> October  
2<sup>nd</sup> November**

**ONLINE VIA ZOOM**



## YOGA THERAPY FOUNDATION COURSE

**BWY Six Month 50hr On Line/In person Module**

*with*

**Nikki Jackson & Vicky Arundel**

*Professional Yoga Therapists and National Yoga Therapy Trainers*

**Leading to 500hr Stage 2 course to become a Professional Yoga Therapist  
with retreats held at The Mandala Ashram, South Wales**



*"We are all the leaves of one tree"*

*(Thich Nhat Hanh)*

**Starting Saturday 23rd March 2024, 9.15am – 4.15pm**

**West Oxfordshire and On line**

*5 further monthly training days and 6 monthly on line anatomy, physiology and medicine seminars*

**Emphasis on Self-compassionate based practises & Nature connections.**

**For qualified yoga teachers to:**

- *improve confidence and understanding of the principles behind yoga therapy*
- *create a variety of safe yoga therapy practises & tools specific to individual's particular health needs*
- *develop knowledge of a variety of physical and mental health conditions*
- *increase confidence in assessing, implementing and evaluating case studies through a 'person centred' approach*

E: [admin@yogafocus.co.uk](mailto:admin@yogafocus.co.uk)

W: [yogafocus.co.uk](http://yogafocus.co.uk)

M: 07816786656





## **Preparing for Urdhva Mukha Svanasana**



**20 April, 9.30am – 12.30pm via Zoom**

**with Zoe Knott £25**

An asana-based practice building towards Upward Facing Dog, with a safe, accessible approach, while exploring the varied elements of asana to deepen both experience and understanding of the pose.

## **Dovedale – Peak District, Just be Yoga Weekend**

**16 – 19 August**

A long weekend, Friday – Monday at Peveril of the Peak, 3\* hotel in the stunning location of Thorpe. Set in 11 acres of gardens with the towering backdrop of Thorpe Cloud hill, footpaths lead directly from the house.

Ensuite rooms, full board with fabulous food using local produce. Traditional hatha yoga, Yin, fascial yoga, pranayama, Yoga Nidra and guided meditation. High quality for an inexpensive price, from £370pp.

## **Cober Hill - Just be Yoga Weekend**

**4 - 6 October**

Relax, refresh, restore, take time for yourself in the beautiful surroundings of the North Yorkshire coast, just a short walk to the sea. Combine exploring a wide variety yoga practices, pranayama, mudras, Yin Yoga, guided meditation and Yoga Nidra with just being in the moment. All ensuite rooms. From £370pp.

[moonriseyoga.co.uk](http://moonriseyoga.co.uk)

[janecluley@gmail.com](mailto:janecluley@gmail.com)

07906 652669



# PRANAYAMA



## INTENSIVE RETREAT

with *PHILIP XERRI*

Holland House, Crophorne JUNE 10-14, 2024

A specialised retreat on the progressive practice of Pranayama. My approach is 'integrated', which means that although the focus is always Pranayama, integrated throughout the sessions are related Asana, Mudra, Bandha and Kriya practices.

After the great success of last year's Course. I have decided to run it again at this beautiful location. As well as my usual progressive teaching of Rhythms and Classical Pranayamas there will be a focus on some of the more 'advanced' practices that I have decided not to teach online and, for me, the truly exciting prospect of exploring some of the 'creative' adaptations of Pranayama practices, both general and Classical, that have surfaced in my own practice over the last few years.

The Course is intended for Yoga students/Teachers with a minimum of 5 years experience, but please get in touch if you are unsure of your eligibility to discuss options as prior instruction can be undertaken.

Philip has been practicing/teaching Pranayama for over 40 years. Originally trained with Swami Gitananda in India, he has also worked within many other disciplines and Schools of Yoga. His first inspiration was Philip Jones – the 'Welsh Wizard of Pranayama' whose understanding of the connections between the Breath and Prana was profound.

It is these connections and their relevance to the deeper aspects of Yoga practice that we will be exploring on this Course.



**Further details/Booking** [pax\\_yoga@yahoo.com](mailto:pax_yoga@yahoo.com) 'Early Bird' offers available.  
Web [www.yogaquests.co.uk](http://www.yogaquests.co.uk) and [www.controlyourbreath.co.uk](http://www.controlyourbreath.co.uk)  
Mobile 07710185827

*"Prana is the sum total of all the energy in the Universe" Swami Sivananda*

## BWYT RESTORATIVE YOGA MODULE TEACHER TRAINING SEP-NOV 2024



30-Hour Online CPD  
Open to all qualified yoga teachers

An invitation to explore this practice for our time, nourish yourself and enhance your teaching skills in a supportive group

BWY Certification and Yoga Alliance CEUs

With Carol Trevor  
Experienced teacher training and CPD tutor  
BWY Dip., E-RYT500, YACEP, MA

For details and to apply:

[carol@yogacarol.co.uk](mailto:carol@yogacarol.co.uk)

07949 743 942

[www.yogacarol.co.uk](http://www.yogacarol.co.uk)

# Journey through the Chakras



**with Helena Turner**

7 sessions March – September 2024  
Sheffield Yoga School, S6 3TA  
£175 / 145

Central to this course is developing an understanding of the connection between energy, sound, vibration & form.

Sessions include drawing a Yantra for each chakra, meditation, harmonium, Hatha Yoga & Mantra.

There will be a Chakra specific Crystal Bowl sound bath in every session.

[www.sheffieldyogaschool.co.uk](http://www.sheffieldyogaschool.co.uk)



## Conscious Body Open Heart

Retreat with Rajesh David & Marye Wyvill

Open Pathway Retreat Centre, Queen Camel, Somerset



26-28 July 2024

Become conscious of your mental & movement habits that block transformation, working with the yogic concepts of Anahata Chakra, Bhakti & the Koshas, and the Movement Intelligence practices of Bones for Life, Walk for Life & Mindful Eating.

For more information about our teaching sessions, see

[www.rajeshdavid.com/consciousbodyopenheart/](http://www.rajeshdavid.com/consciousbodyopenheart/)

Bookings: [findyourway@openpathwaycentre.org](mailto:findyourway@openpathwaycentre.org) T:01935 850266

Cost: £425 for tuition, meals and single room.



## YOGA PRACTICE: GETTING YOUR MIND IN THE RIGHT PLACE

By Perry Lewis

*“By lessening the natural tendency for restlessness and by meditating on the infinite, posture is mastered.” – Yoga Sutras, Chapter 2, Sutra 47*

Where is your mind during your yoga practice? Are you missing out on the wonderful feeling you can enjoy by becoming totally absorbed in your practice? Where your practice becomes a moving meditation...integrating asana, movement and mindfulness into a truly harmonious experience.

One of the defining principles of yoga practice is the union of our breath, body and mind. However, many of us tend to compartmentalise our yoga practice into separate elements devoted to asana, breath and meditation. Certainly, in our breath and meditation practices, our mind has a clear point of focus.

But given much of our yoga practice is devoted to asana, focussing your mind whilst transitioning from Adho Mukha Svanasana

(Downward-Facing Dog) to Virabhadrasana 1 (Warrior 1), is not so easy. Indeed, I observe so often when teaching a class, students watching other students with the mindset “Am I doing this right?” or “Why can’t I do that?” or “I’m going to get there at all costs” written on their face. When I first started attending classes it was not uncommon for me to be thinking about “What’s next” or even “What’s for dinner when I get home”.

Of course in class we can be forgiven for having such a thoughts. In my view, classes are about learning, making learning interesting and enjoyable, and providing us with the tools for developing a personal yoga practice. And it is at home where our practice can provide us with the truly harmonious experience many of us crave. It is my personal home practice that provides me with my own ‘yoga nourishment’.

Here, through my asana practice I seek to absorb my mind in the sensation of an integrated sequence of asana, breath and the transitions that link the asana together. Put simply, the practice becomes a moving meditation.

So how do we go about developing our moving meditation?

Some suggestions:

1. Decide how much time you wish to devote to the practice and plan a sequence of asana that you feel are within your capabilities.

Keep it short – no more than 15-20 minutes. Keep it simple with easy transitions, Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation) is a good start.

2. Choose a place in your home that is quiet (if possible) and warm, with little chance of disturbance. It is good to have mantra playing in the background.
3. Start from a comfortable posture e.g. Tadasana (Mountain Pose) or Balasana (Child’s Pose) and take a few moments to deepen the breath and settle the mind, before you begin the sequence.
4. The first few times you commence your practice, pause at each asana and be mindful of the sensations it brings to you. Make the transitions as smooth and as simple as possible.

5. I find it also help to anchor the mind by incorporating ujjayi breathing into the practice.
6. You will be aiming for the sequence to become so familiar that you give little thought to the upcoming asanas and transitions and you will be able to always keep you mind in the present. This will enable you to absorb you mind on the performance of the practice and the 'feel-good' it brings to you.
7. At the conclusion of the practice, you can meditate on the breath for say 10-15 minutes.

In effect the practice will become a mindfulness meditation. Over a period of time you can develop further sequences. I have put together a series of 18 sequences – three for each day taking some 45 minutes, having one-day's rest.

You will of course, develop a practice to suit your own needs. The performance of asana can be so much more than bringing strength, mobility and flexibility to our body.  
Can you get your mind in the right place?

*Interested in teaching yoga? Perry's BWY Diploma/Certificate teacher training course commences in April 2024. Book a place on the free introductory day on 13 January 2024 at Walcote Memorial Hall, Lutterworth, Leicestershire. It will give you a chance to meet the course leaders, Perry and Dawn Wesselby, and learn more about the course.*



<https://www.yoganectar.co.uk/teacher-training/>

## SELF-ACCEPTANCE AND LOVING KINDNESS

By Swami Krishnapremananda, Mandala Yoga Ashram

*The more you nurture a feeling of loving kindness, the happier and calmer you will be.*

Sounds simple, and indeed the above quotation from the Dalai Lama is spot on. Yet why is it such a challenge for many of us?

We are born, 'trailing clouds of glory' in the words of William Wordsworth, yet as we grow through childhood, we often enter the territory of self-doubt and self-judgement despite the best efforts of caregivers. Pervasive narratives of being unworthy, or unloved, or broken, gather credence, further conditioned by religious, family, and educational influences. Such narratives, alongside other experiences of suffering, undermine our sense of ease and well-being.

Hence, as mature adults, there is such value in cultivating a consistent sense of self-acceptance; one that allows us to mitigate the inner demons or conflicts that try to keep us in old habitual ways of being. None of us are perfect in these manifest human forms. We all have our idiosyncrasies but nevertheless we can open to the recognition that we too, like all other beings, deserve the healing gifts of acceptance and loving kindness. No doubt, this recognition can feel tenuous and fragile at times, and hence needs ongoing sustenance and patience.

Sustained yoga practice is invaluable in this regard. Again and again, coming back to the yoga mat or cushion, finding a sense of refuge there, and offering ourselves into our practice. Engaging in asana, pranayama, yoga nidra or meditation practice with a kindness and respect to self, even when the old narratives seek to undermine our self-esteem once again. Such ongoing practice can give us a little space from these habitual narratives and help to foster the inner springs of kindness and appreciation for self.

The Buddhist practice of metta, or loving kindness, is one such practice – *May I/you be filled with loving kindness, may I/you be well, may I/you be peaceful and at ease*. There are other versions of the metta lines that can be just as valid, conveying the spirit of loving kindness both for ourselves and for others equally.

Self-acceptance however does not mean giving up on our aspirations to grow into a fuller version of who we can be. Self-acceptance pertains to the present, being more at peace rather than in conflict with our present moment experience. Aspirations may start in the present but extend into the future. We can keep cultivating

these aspirations while at the same time, guard against the self-undermining narratives in the present.

It is also important to state that self-acceptance is not about fighting or trying to 'fix' these narratives, but about patiently turning towards them with kindness, and trying to understand them more clearly. The journey towards loving kindness for self is one that willingly turns towards our suffering, endeavouring to learn from it, and open to ways of accepting, healing, or resolving it. In the words of Naomi Shihab Nye, from her poem *Kindness*:

*Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,*

*You must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.*

*You must wake up with sorrow.*

*You must speak it till your voice,*

*Catches the thread of all sorrows,*

*And you see the size of the cloth.*

All of us, as humans, are bound to experience sorrow, loss, grief, and suffering in our lives. Often the tendency is to turn away from these aspects of our humanity, to find distractions or to close down in self-pity. Yet there is always a more compassionate option patiently awaiting us. With appropriate levels of support, we can learn to meet and even welcome our suffering, in the recognition that all living beings also experience suffering. We are not alone, and the more we can accept the whole of our personal story, the more a fertile soil is cultivated in which our self-kindness can grow.

The more we can enrich this inner soil of loving kindness through sustained practice, the more the following words of the Buddha can resonate within us:

*You can search throughout the entire universe for someone who is more deserving of your love and affection than you are yourself, and that person is not to be found anywhere. You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.*



## DEVELOPING STRENGTH WITH SINGLE LEG POSES

by Zoe Knott, BWY DCT



I have taught yoga for a long while now. During this time I have learnt that in order to protect the joints, we should bring strength to our practice. This has been the underpinning nature of my teaching throughout my career. Many of you have joined me at the 'Strength in Asana' CPD Workshop.

Through breaking my leg at the age of 65, (I include 'age 65', as I was shocked at the views of so many as to this being the end of the road for me at this age; downhill from now on), I became aware of how practicing single leg yoga poses develop strength even more powerfully. And this is what I would like to share with you at this CPD Day.

My aim is for yoga teaching to be accessible to all who come to class and work with a staged approach. So this session does not look at intricate, gymnastic, anatomically complex poses, but moves that are possible for all, that are very much a part of our yoga practice.

It will be obvious to yoga teachers and experienced practitioners that working with single leg poses will improve muscle strength through the standing leg and beyond. We can deepen the muscle loading in many ways, such as bending the standing leg in single leg poses. So simple yet so effective. Yoga is often a resistance practice, using different parts of our body as weights as we move into and out of gravity with control. Again the strength work intensifies in single leg poses.

What becomes really interesting is that we develop strength in many areas in addition to the standing leg as it necessary to recalibrate our balance. To do so, the brain has to engage to adjust to the unfamiliar setting of standing on one leg. The eyes, ears, muscles and joints send messages to the brain; the brain then responds. Thus strengthening the neural connections; keeping the brain on its toes.

Falls are a serious health issue and I was surprised to learn they are the second most common cause of accidental deaths. Every time we work in single leg positions, we develop the tools to prevent falling.

As with all strength work, if we keep at it, balance will improve surprisingly quickly.

So as we work through familiar sequences we will experience how we can intensify the strength work at various stages by taking the body weight through just one leg.

Even though we are working with single leg poses, you may think we will simply strengthen the legs, but actually I will sneak in a few of the other key areas that need strengthening too.

## POSTURAL ALIGNMENT & FALLS PREVENTION

By Anna Semlyen

As people age, risks of falling rise. Yoga can hugely contribute to helping to be stable, steady and keep upright. This is key for menopausal women especially with brittle bones from osteoporosis / osteopenia.

Possibly the best investment in later years' health is learning falls prevention. Falls are the most common cause of injury to 65+ year olds and have serious consequences - trauma, pain, impaired function, loss of confidence, loss of independence and autonomy and even death.

Anna has a Falls Prevention Awareness Cert. She focuses on the Otago Falls prevention physio programme - proven to lower incidence and severity of falls. Learn the deep tips for general classes and private lessons in postural stability. Handouts and hatha yoga postures, breathing and meditation and advice on reducing fear are included. Learn it for yourselves or your elderly loved ones!

Most people have sedentary lifestyles. 37% of British people never exercise. Yet, unless we engage in regular physical activity, we are vulnerable to fall. One in 9 ambulance call outs are to falls. Older women especially, with dipping oestrogen levels are at greater risk of falling and of complicated fractures with lengthy recovery and rehabilitation.

Falls are hugely costly, especially if they trigger care needs. On average UK residential care costs were £34,944 a year or £48,720 a year for nursing care homes in 2020 and rising as fuel costs escalate.

Anna is a Yoga teacher-trainer, author of Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs, who has trained in Falls Prevention and stability, flexibility, and strength. Learn how prevalent and disabling falls are, the proven Otago falls prevention system, how it aligns with asana and breathing techniques; practice and evaluate the Otago method for yourselves. It will revolutionise your ability to stay stable and to help others to as well. Stability is core to yoga! Asana or posture are sthira (stable) and sukha (relaxed).

### About Anna

Est 1996. Gentle, effective, evidence based yoga classes & private lessons to help you feel healthy & whole. Beginners are welcome. I offer posture yoga classes, breathing, meditation, relaxation, back care, laughter yoga, workplace & private lessons. Will come to you.

BWY Specialist Advisor on Back Care and Therapeutic Research. [www.yogainyork.co.uk](http://www.yogainyork.co.uk), Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs book and relaxations CD author based on an RCT with the University of York - [www.yogaforbacks.co.uk](http://www.yogaforbacks.co.uk). Teacher training tutor on private yoga lessons, back care, improving concentration, mental health gunas, Ayurvedic Doshas (constitution), falls awareness.

## THE PRISON PHOENIX TRUST

By Jane Beaufoy



The work of an award-winning charity brings the freedom of yoga and meditation to the thousands of people who are confined in Britain's prisons.

The Prison Phoenix Trust (The PPT) is a small, Oxford-based charity that is reaching out to offer support and

rehabilitation to the 'hidden' community of 107,000 people behind bars in the UK and Northern Ireland.

With a consistent, non-judgemental approach to introducing yoga and meditation to this marginalised group, The PPT has brought about real change to people's lives. This was recently recognised at the 2023 Om Yoga Show at Alexandra Palace when it was voted the winner of the Favourite Yoga Charity award.

The PPT's director Selina Sasse expressed her delight as she received the award at Europe's biggest yoga event. She said: "This is for the those in the yoga community who are hidden away, all those people who are practising day in, day out, with a book or a CD, getting out their mats in times of difficulty.

'Lots of people who practise or teach yoga know from their own experiences how it helps them cope with life's challenges. Yoga and meditation allow what's within each and every one of us to shine.'

Practising yoga and meditation can bring about remarkable change in a person's mental and physical health. In a prison environment, where a huge majority of people have experienced violence, childhood abuse and trauma, this could not be more relevant, with greater physical awareness and control leading to a calmer, more balanced state of mind.

The charity's work has a strong rehabilitative emphasis. The evidence for transformation is in the hundreds of letters from prisoners they receive, telling stories of how yoga and meditation has changed their lives. Like Richard's story:

Richard grew up in care and at aged 18 found himself on the streets, left alone to survive. "I had one aim," he recalls, "to get to the top of the criminal justice system because I didn't like society and I wanted to pay it back for what it had done to me."

Over the following decades a criminal career led to a number of sentences served in prisons in England and Wales. Richard first saw a sign for yoga classes while he was serving a sentence in HMP Belmarsh. "I thought, anything to get out of my cell," he recalls. "But when I went along I found it was quite difficult. I thought I was fit but it wasn't about fitness."

As well as group yoga classes, Richard also got support one-to-one from a mentor from The PPT. They wrote to him in prison, supporting and advising on his yoga and meditation practice. He wrote back and they listened, without judgement, as he put his experiences down on paper.

"I started passing on what I was learning to other inmates and seeing them change. Not only could I see the change in myself, but I was seeing change in other people too," he said. "The PPT was a beacon of light that got me through some very difficult inner battles with myself. But it stayed with me wherever I went and still does to this very day."

As well as providing books, newsletters, CDs and DVDs specifically designed for use in a prison cell, The PPT runs a training programme for yoga teachers to equip them for teaching inside. The module focuses on trauma-responsive, mindful yoga and meditation and is accredited by The British Wheel of Yoga. Established back in 2001, the course has given more than 120 yoga teachers the unique set of skills required to teach in secure settings.

Jason is a PE Officer at a prison in the south of England who has been through the training. When their regular yoga teacher in the prison left he decided to take up the challenge. He was in his 50s when he qualified, and he then deepened his studies by taking The PPT's module. Now he teaches once a week and has a dedicated group of students.

Jason works with older prisoners with co-morbidity – people with combined lifestyle and age-related conditions such as diabetes and heart disease – and he witnesses how it supports their health and

well-being. When teaching a drug and alcohol rehabilitation group, he saw at first-hand how yoga can help access deeply held emotions and act like a release valve.

‘We were doing crane pose and having fun with the balance, when one of the prisoners became completely overwhelmed,’ said Jason. ‘He had to lie down and recover. He said it was the first time he had breathed without holding tension in his body.’

Pete was formerly a gym instructor at a young offenders’ institution where he worked with some of the most difficult and dangerous young prisoners in the region. There was a high degree of violence and self-harm. He witnessed first-hand the effect yoga can have when some prisoners who were kept in segregation attended a yoga class regularly.

‘After being introduced to yoga they wanted to come to class and we gradually saw a change in mentality. It is a cliché to say some found inner peace, but it is as if we could actually see them removing the burden on their shoulders. It was very fragile, but it was definitely there in those moments.

‘It was a change that went outside the yoga class, too. Others commented that they were calmer, more reflective and more at one with themselves.’



Now that Pete works at Grendon he supports the teaching of yoga at the prison. He added: ‘It is not a clearly defined outcome for everybody. But what we see is that people find their own individual improvement.’

If you are interested in The PPT’s training module, please go to <https://www.theppt.org.uk/for-yoga-teachers/yoga-teacher-training>.

**British Wheel of Yoga - Midlands Region**  
**Income & Expenditure Account - year ended 31 October 2023**

	2022		2023	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Events</b>				
Takings		4,132		5,040
Less: Expenses				
Teacher Fees & Expenses	4,060		3,806	
Hall Hire	454		623	
Other Expenses	864		735	
		<u>5,378</u>		<u>5,164</u>
<b>Gross Profit</b>		<b>(1,246)</b>		<b>(124)</b>
<b>Sale of Goods</b>				
Sales	103		11	
Less: Cost of Sales	99		11	
<b>Gross Profit</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>(0)</b>
<b>Advertising Income</b>		<b>183</b>		<b>146</b>
<b>Interest Received</b>		<b>61</b>		<b>546</b>
		<u>(997)</u>		<u>568</u>
<b>Less: Overheads</b>				
Meetings & Administration Expenses		1,093		
Bank Charges			-	
			<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Net Surplus for Year</b>		<b>(2,090)</b>		<b>568</b>

**British Wheel of Yoga - Midlands Region**  
**Balance Sheet - as at 31 October 2023**

	31 October:	
	2022	2023
	£	£
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Stock	122	111
Debtors	-	11
Bank & Cash Balances	50,202	50,227
Prepayments	60	60
	<u>50,385</u>	<u>50,410</u>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Creditors	3,358	3,042
<b>Net Assets</b>	<u>47,027</u>	<u>47,367</u>
<b>Accumulated Surpluses</b>		
Brought Forward	49,116	47,027
Surplus (Loss) For Year	(2,090)	341
<b>Accumulated Surplus carried forward</b>	<u>47,027</u>	<u>47,367</u>

