



Clinical Yogatherapy & Integrative Alchemy

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Benefits of treatment

- ▶ Brain / Behavioral strategies (YT/IA) promote:
 - ▶ ANS Balancing
 - ▶ Inflammation lowering
 - ▶ Hormone Balancing
 - ▶ Optimization of body & psychospiritual alignment
- ▶ These effects have measurable benefit on the gut microbiome, leading to short-term clinical benefits
 - ▶ “I feel great after yoga!”
 - ▶ Optimizes digestion by increasing production of enzymes, massaging internal organs, reduces stress and inflammation, boosts the immune system and improves emotional processing.
 - ▶ Can be used to treat a multitude of conditions that stem from microbiome imbalances including various disorders we will discuss today.

Features of Effective Therapy

- ▶ Perpetuation of the practices and augmentation of level and quality of practice leads to lasting physiologic transformation
 - ▶ Leads to a state of “I am Healed”
 - ▶ Developing a daily yoga practice and a healthy mindful lifestyle, leads to long term clinical benefits.
 - ▶ Inclusion of Alignment Based Actions, Goal Oriented, Develop Simple Objectives to Reach
 - ▶ Fundamentals of Yoga: Incorporation of five yogic principles: Proper relaxation, proper exercise, proper breathing, proper diet, positive thinking and meditation.
 - ▶ Meet the patient where they are at. Then take them where you want them to go.
 - ▶ Ayurveda Approach sensitive-considerate of body types, qualities and elements of therapies.

Features of Effective Therapy

- ▶ Perpetuation of the practices and augmentation of level and quality of practice leads to lasting physiologic transformation. Key features of effective teaching require creation of customized techniques to your student, integrating aspects of each of the following:
 - ▶ **VISUAL / AUDITORY / HANDS-ON WAYS OF LEARNING**
 - ▶ **REPETITION OF THAT EXPERIENCE TO CREATE MUSCLE MEMORY -> SEEDED IN THE SUBCONSCIOUS**
 - ▶ **Engineer type** person wants to know WHY (because process is important)
 - ▶ **Athlete type** person wants to know HOW (so they can take it farther)
 - ▶ Build on Skills-Spiral learning each experience adds to the next, Chunking and Building to benefit the patient, Accommodating the patient to perform an action, modifying an activity for a patient so they can experience the benefits of the practice.
 - ▶ Effectiveness depends on Style of Practice, Types of Exercises, Rigor of Exercise, Area of focus, types of meditations, mudras, breathing exercises, techniques, sensitivity to essential oils and other therapies.
 - ▶ Yogatherapy is like a prescription we must recommend the:
 - ▶ Level of Practice, Duration of Practice, How often
 - ▶ Process of Scaffolding: Mode of Instruction: I show you, I guide you, You do yourself, You guide me...Patients graduate and become teachers in their own right

YOGA: The definitive inner science

- ▶ Techniques were developed thousands of years ago by the Ancient Vedic civilization that led to reproducible results in adherents.
 - ▶ Mind / thought “Manas”
 - ▶ Intention & attitude “Dharma”
 - ▶ Body / posture “Asana”
 - ▶ Breath “Prana”
 - ▶ Meditation “Dhyana”
 - ▶ Ethics “Yamas / Niyamas”
 - ▶ Hand gestures with physical and emotional effects “Mudra”

YOGA: The definitive inner science

- ▶ Techniques were developed thousands of years ago by the Ancient Vedic civilization that led to reproducible results in adherents.
- ▶ The science is taught directly **from teacher to student**, and reified by past erudition (Vedas) and tradition (Sampradaya)

Integrative Alchemy

- ▶ Customized holistic practice designed for each patient
- ▶ Diagnostics:
 - ▶ Biopsychosocial profile assessment
 - ▶ Emotional health assessment: Memory & processing
 - ▶ Language & lifestyle inventory
 - ▶ Aspects of Self/Relationships Assessment
 - ▶ Assessment of misalignments (Desires-Intention-Action-Goal-Are your goals aligned with your true desires and skillset)
 - ▶ Self efficacy/Identity and perception of self
- ▶ Therapeutics:
 - ▶ Practice is Goal-oriented based on what patient desires and Personalized based on needs assessed.
 - ▶ Integrates various techniques such as pranaroma, essential oils, seed cycling, moon bathing, mudras, yogatherapy, Asana, practicing daily cleanses, creating rituals visualization, sound therapy, chanting and humming, journaling, perception reframing, language refinement, healing the inner child, becoming one with self/ and understanding desires-Who Am I , Meditation-using counting, observing the breath, connecting with the observer, affirmations.

My story: endometriosis

- ▶ Developed endometriosis symptoms upon menarche: *severe depression, hair loss, severe generalized pain and fatigue.*
- ▶ Dysmenorrhea / Menorrhagia (painful heavy menstrual bleeding), IBS (bloating / diarrhea), ovarian cysts, severe sugar cravings
- ▶ s/p Laparoscopic ovarian cystectomy x 2
- ▶ **Numerous OB GYNS attempted to trial me on at least 10 different types of birth control ->**
 - ▶ Led to weight gain, mood swings, edema, menometrorrhagia (Bleeding between cycles)
- ▶ My mom tried everything for me. Natural herbal therapies that we read about, evening primrose capsules, castor oil treatments, hot compresses. These somewhat relieved my symptoms however they did not “cure” my consistent pain.
 - ▶ Mom -> signed me up for a yoga class for me to try. Some of the postures that I learned really helped to alleviate my pain and I found myself utilizing these basic yoga practices and breathing exercises that I learned to alleviate my acute pain and symptoms. My mother also attempted to find me the “right doctor”. **She took me to a couple different pediatricians, different Ob gyns and tried to have me seen by endocrinologists but they kept bouncing her back to our pediatrician. Blood testing, healthy thyroid, no diagnosis. They said “hormones”**
- ▶ ...YEARS of unsuccessful medical interventions -> I am let down by the system
 - ▶ -> I decided it was time to take matters into my own hands.

Endometriosis

- ▶ Seed cycling-hormonal assistance to align your cycles with the 28 day cycle of the moon, connecting with the moon/moonlight bathing, began using more candles, natural light, spend more time outside at night, and minimize activity during my menses
- ▶ Daily Meditation: Shakti Mudra and guided visual meditation of reproductive organs. RELEASE anger and frustration
- ▶ Daily Sadhana: Gentle Hatha Yoga, gentle twists, pelvic openers, forward bends. Close to my menses. More rigorous detox and strength building yoga during ovulation.
- ▶ Pranayama-4 part breath for pain and abdominal breathing reducing inflammation. Special Breathing Technique: Nauli-You rotate the central abdominal muscle in a churning motion. This is an involuntary muscle. You achieve a smooth wave like motion, most invigorating for the internal organs. Tones the stomach, intestines and liver, relives menstrual problems, increases flow of prana. Before I learned this I took belly dance for the purpose of healing my pelvic area. I experienced similar benefits from the fluid belly dance movements massaging the internal organs as well.
- ▶ Anti-Inflammatory Diet: Vegetarian / MORE FIBER / eliminated bread/alcohol/caffeine/meat/sugar

Endometriosis

- ▶ Metacognition/: Affirmations and Positive Mindfulness to improve the state of my Internal Voice-Worked on developing compassion to the way I reacted to things, spoke to myself etc.
- ▶ Belly Dance Classes-Fluid Belly Movements that I began incorporating into my yoga practice and I now include as a part of my yogic pelvic healing sessions.
- ▶ Daily abdominal and belly massage, daily cleanses and regular detoxification practices.
- ▶ Daily Use of Essential Oils-Clary Sage, Roman Chamomile, Lavender, Rosemary, Cypress, Helichrysum.
- ▶ Vaginal Suppositories with cannabis/essential oil therapies.
- ▶ Journaling and Communicating My Truth more to myself and to others in harmonious ways.
- ▶ Understand my identity vs. Who I am

Prostate Cancer- Stage 1

- ▶ 65 yo M physicist with Stage 1 Prostate CA Gleason Stage 6, low oncotype score
- ▶ Pranayama: Diaphragmatic breathing...learning to incorporate and then align breath with movements
- ▶ Mula Bhanda...strengthens muscles of pelvic floor, reduces inflammation in pelvic area and reproductive organs,
- ▶ Asana: Lounges, Pelvic openers, Straddle poses, Squats, Seated Twists for Asana (important to have balance but these are the focus)
- ▶ Visual Meditation Healing Practice-Learning how to observe the body, sensations, to understand them on the level of the witness...as they are not with interpretation or subjectivity of what they are. Also guided visual meditation such as: Color healing therapy, visualize prostate shrinking, cancer disappearing.
- ▶ Sitting in alignment...sitz bones touch the seat of the floor, pelvis tilted at angle, tailbone reaching down
- ▶ Qui Gong for daily stress management
- ▶ Develop a Healthy perception of relationships
- ▶ How to Release Anger: Meditation for Releasing and Resolving Anger Within
- ▶ Essential Oils: Frankincense-Prostate Cancer, Cypress-Frequency of Urination, Helichrysum and Arborvitae-Prostate health and Inflammation, Thyme and Cypress-Prostate Inflammation, Citrus Bliss-Invigorating/Uplifting Endorphins Blend
- ▶ Rectal Suppositories: Frankincense and Cannabis...kills cancer, cell regeneration,

SIBO / IBS

- ▶ 62 yo F with recurrent MDR GNB SIBO
- ▶ This is common in people with endometriosis, PCOS, chronic pelvic pain. There will be some overlap in yogatherapy treatment.
- ▶ Yogatherapy effectively treats SIBO: With moderate yoga exercise, you can increase your diversity of bacteria and boost the immune system. (Greater presence of Akkermansia-linked to reducing the risk of inflammation and even a reduced risk of obesity).
- ▶ Twists and Core strengtheners are fundamental to yoga. Twisting the core into strengthening yoga poses compresses organs such as the liver and kidneys. This encourages liver and kidneys to flush out toxins and enhance your digestion.
- ▶ Yoga Sequence for SIBO: Apanasana is a supine wind relieving pose (relieves gas, build up of air/wind). Standing Forward Bend (massage abdominal muscles, relieve wind and bloating). Revolved crescent lounge (compresses the colon and twists detoxify by stimulating movements of toxins and elimination constipation). Camel pose (stretches stomach and intestines-alleviates constipation). Child's Pose-Relieves stomach pain flare ups, compresses abdomen, massages internal organs. Savasana (corpse pose) is recommended to complete every yoga session. Lie still allow stress to melt away, Blood starts to flow away from extremities and towards your digestive organs. IT is recommended to use a blanket as the body will significantly cool down during this pose. This creates an ideal environment for digestion.

SIBO / IBS

- ▶ 62 yo F with recurrent MDR GNB SIBO
- ▶ Pranayama: Diaphragmatic Breathing and, other deep breathing techniques ease spasms and relax tension of the intestines and the gut. Yoga detoxifies. Specifically through pranayama digesting toxins in tissues that otherwise would only happen through fasting or rigorous exercise. Breath of fire (for example increases digestive fire by pumping the stomach with a strong exhale. This stimulates digestion, increases metabolism and detoxifies the body.) Detox is a key factor to improving digestion in people with SIBO.
- ▶ Breathing technique: Agni Sara, useful for digestion. Type of stomach pumping using respiratory movements. Practicing Agni Sara will help one to achieve Nauli, Which is very therapeutic for IBS. Nauli- Was discussed before for treatment of menstrual problems. It tones the stomach, intestines and liver, relieves menstrual problems, increases flow of prana.
- ▶ Mudra: Pushan Mudra-mudra of nourishment, wind relieving mudra, digestion mudra.
- ▶ Essential Oils: Digest Zen Essential Oil all digestive aids. Ginger digests excess mucous in the stomach. Lavender and fennel oil ease postprandial pain and spasms. Internal and topical application.
- ▶ Cannabis Therapies: Capsules for direct intestinal delivery. Oil tincture, or Oil concentrate sublingual.

Chronic Headache

- ▶ Yogatherapy: Gentle yoga-tension and stress relieving, Twists-Detoxify the body and mind, Inversions- (upside down positions where the head is under the heart) Most effective for relieving chronic headaches. Total Spinal stretch, Body stretch, increased fresh circulation of blood circulation, especially blood flow to the head, neck and upper back where headache tension builds, reverses the flow of gravity on the body and the head and allows more oxygen to flow to the head. Anyone can do an inversion. Sitting in a chair allows for a mild inversion, Forward bend, downward dog, Downward dog using a chair, handstand, headstand, forearm stand. The more inverted the pose, the more advanced the inversion.
- ▶ Frequency and Duration of attacks will reduce significantly after adopting a daily practice.
- ▶ Facial Yoga with Body Asana Poses-Lion Pose, Quack like a duck, Say various open and closed vowel sounds that stretch the face muscles.
- ▶ Pranayama: Breathing Techniques: Anu Viloma-(Alternate Nostril Breathing) Effective for chronic headaches., Kalabhakti Breath of fire-Rigorous forms of breathing that detoxify tissue of the body.

Chronic Headache

- ▶ Meditation and Mudra together: Mahasirs mudra (large head) Useful for migraine, relieves your eyes from straining, reduces the mucous congestion from the frontal sinus cavity, , relieves from back pain, balances neurotransmitters, balances energy, quiets the senses and calms the emotions. Brahmacharya (Bee) mudra-relieves sinus inflammation/pressure and therefore sinus headaches. You can do a buzzing meditation sound along with this mudra. It vibrates the front of the skull and relieves sinus tension. Typically have patients do a reflexology massage followed by basic abhyanga facial/sinus massage and application of essential oil.
- ▶ Essential Oils-Frankincense, Lavender, Peppermint, Copaiba, Sandalwood, marjoram for spasms. Apply on forehead, temples, areas of tension. Also take blend internally include lemongrass.
- ▶ Cannabis Oils for headaches usually provide immediate relief of severe pain.
- ▶ Daily steam inhalation in shower or towel herbal steam with feverfew
- ▶ Mantra Chanting of Sounds to vibrate skull in certain ways. Ooh eeh ah, Aum,
- ▶ Healthy sleep-wake cycle

Depression / Anxiety

- ▶ There are main differences between treating Anxiety and Depression. With every physical practice (yoga/meditation) my philosophy is to meet the patient where they are at. A yoga practice for depression starts with a low energy practice and then slowly increases energy. For anxiety it is recommended to start with a high-energy activity and then decrease movement reducing energy levels to soothe the nervous system.
Sometimes what works for depression will overstimulate anxiety and vice versa. i.e. Color therapy is helpful to use for depression but for anxiety it may be too stimulating and cause one to become more anxious.
- ▶ Yogatherapy: Life force yoga is a particular style of yoga that is extremely effective for both anxiety and depression. It incorporates mudras with full body movements, sound therapy, affirmations, understanding sensations in the body reflection book memory or trauma and how to let go of those experiences, chakra balancing meditations for both. Life force yoga is sensitive to the fact that different approaches are necessary when treating anxiety vs. depression. Anxiety benefits from forward folds. Folding into the self for comfort, poses that put pressure on parts of the body to make the body feel supported and balancing poses. Depression benefits from deep breathing during yoga, a lot of self touch, self massage during yoga practice, balancing and strengthening poses.
- ▶ Pranayama for Anxiety: Breathing While Counting with a 4 part breath to quiet the mind. Exhale longer than the inhale. It reduces external stimuli and other triggers that cause anxiety. Pranayama for Depression: Step Mountain Breath. Inhale in little puffs until you fill your lungs with air and then slowly exhale. Inhale longer than the exhale.
- ▶ Meditation: Connecting with the observer that does not judge or interpret. Seeing things for what they are not what we think they are. Observing how we talk to ourselves, observing what worries, concerns, fears we are enabling and empowering simply through our thoughts and developing strategies to pay attention to things that make us feel strong and confident.

Depression / Anxiety

- ▶ Chakra balance meditation using Mudra's that have a soothing or energizing effect depending on treatment of anxiety or depression while creating syllables sounds that have a physiological effect, giving special attention to each chakra center that manages a different emotion or system of processing.
- ▶ Mudras have calming and energizing effects. Anxiety benefits from soothing mudras. Each finger represents an element.
 - ▶ The little finger connects with water and manages fear. You also use it to manage anxiety. Squeeze the finger that links to the emotion you think needs managing with the tip of your thumb. Vaayu mudra is effective for anxiety. To do this mudra, put the tip of your index finger at the base of your thumb. Press the tip of your thumb, middle finger and ring finger together, and extend your little finger. Depression benefits from energizing or activating mudras. The index finger joins with the air element and manages depression. This finger also controls the respiratory system so it helps to manage breathing difficulties as well. Chin or jnana mudra are good for depression. You press the tip of the index finger to the tip of your thumb-palm facing down/palm facing up.
- ▶ Essential Oils similar treatments: Anxiety: Lavender-Internal, Topical, Aromatic, Rose, Vetiver, Ylang Ylang, thyme, Roman Chamomile, Frankincense, Depression: Bergamot, Citrus, Lavender, basil, roman Chamomile.

Conclusion

- ▶ What is Right for Who?
- ▶ It is important to look at yoga from an Ayurvedic perspective-body types and how elements and qualities of things help to balance an imbalance. There is no one size fits all.
 - ▶ Gentle Hatha yoga is great for digestion.
 - ▶ Hot yoga is not recommended for IBS.
 - ▶ Body types have different physical needs for balancing and healing. One person may need greater exertion, while another benefits from longer breaks and shorter holds for poses. Doing the wrong yoga practice is detrimental just like any other improper exercise. It can cause extra stress on the body, which is negative for increasing gut diversity.
- ▶ **Asanas** work on the tissues of the body, the movements squeeze and remove all of the stale waste bearing fluids, and then stretch the tissues to allow fresh nutrients and energy to circulate every cell.
- ▶ **Meditation** does the same with tissues of the brain. It improves cognitive function and optimizes neurotransmitter production.
- ▶ **Pranayama** and abdominal breathing improve all respiratory functions, increasing vital capacity(air intake) and developing strong muscles and elastic tissues, while pranayama teaches breath control and keeps air passages clear.
- ▶ **Mudras** calm the mind, restore physical health, and optimize energy. Since each part of our hand corresponds with a particular area of our brain and body. Mudras stimulate our glands, nerves, organs. By using specific hand positions on a consistent basis, we can communicate with and manipulate our body and mind.
- ▶ **Integrative Alchemy** typically creates an individualized formula using these types of therapies for each patient to explore their body and reach desired goals.

Conclusion

- ▶ What is Right for Who?
- ▶ **Essential Oils** have proved to be a valuable element of our Integrative Alchemy Programs. The plant word is versatile and there is a plant based treatment for every problem. They are used topically, internally, aromatic. When used in combination with these other therapies they elevate the effects of benefit to the hormonal system, endocrine system, gut microbiome health and brain health. They have beneficial effects when taken internally, applied topically or used aromatically.
- ▶ **Perception reframing/Mindfulness/Positive thinking/Affirmations** should not be treated as the sugar coating on the cake. Mindful elements of metacognition should be gently infused into every intention of the day. The more we focus on positive, the more we will make choices for positivity to happen in our life, whether it is healing from a condition, having patience for something that seems to take a very long time, or simply the act of letting go what or who does not serve us.

References

- ▶ The Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Mahabharata
- ▶ Yoga Sutras
- ▶ Collected works of:
 - ▶ Swami Vivekananda, Sivananda, Ramana Maharishi, Aurobindo, Paramahansa Yogananda, Shankaracharya