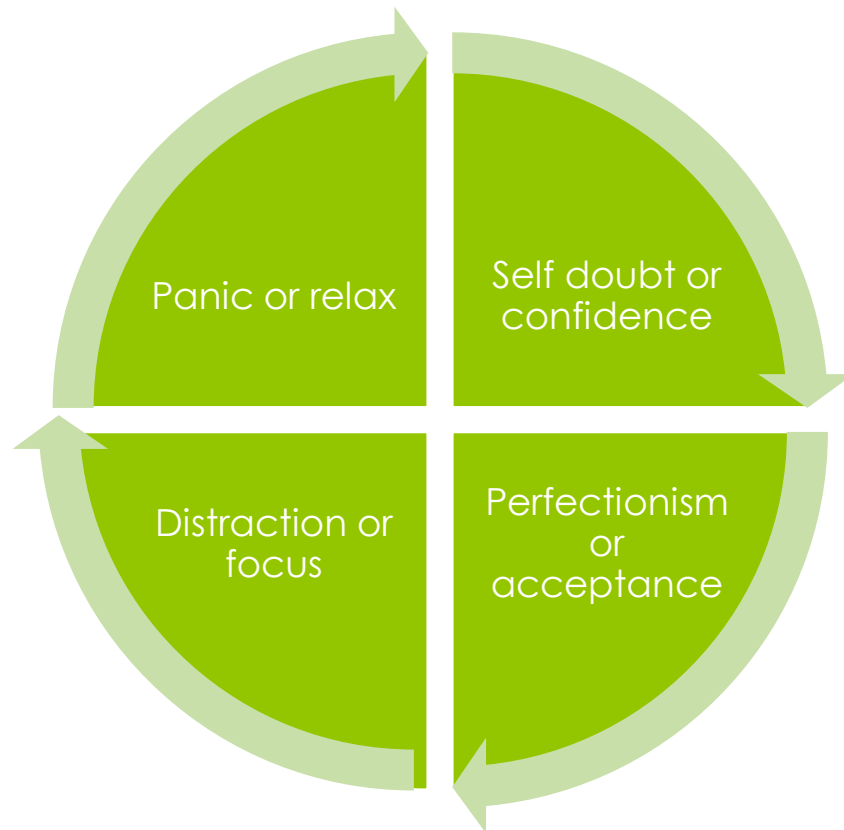


Yoga for Flow: Embracing the Body in Counseling

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Introduction...Breathe



Yoga

- Roots in India and Tibet circa 5,000 years
- The language of Sanskrit
- Yoga means “to unite”
 - breath & movement
 - physical & mental
- 6 branches of spiritual discipline



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The Philosophy of Yoga

6 Branches

Hatha

Breath and
Movement

Optimal
Physical
Wellbeing

Bhakti

Love and
Devotion

Close
Relationships

Karma

Selflessness

Gratitude

The Philosophy of Yoga

6 Branches

Jnana

Wisdom

Innate
intellectual
ability

Raja

Meditation
Mindfulness

Tantra

Ceremony and
Ritual
Spirituality

The Philosophy of Yoga

- Eightfold Path
 - Moral Guidance (Yamas and Niyamas)
 - Physical postures (Asana)
 - Breathing (Pranayama)
 - Sensing (Pratyahara)
 - Focus (Dharana)
 - Meditation (Dhyana)
 - Transcendence (Samadhi)



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Yoga Classes Today



Yoga Classes Today

- Hatha- general term denoting the physical practice of yoga.
- Iyengar- Emphasis on alignment, methodical.
- Ashtanga- Vigorous, regimented practice.
- Vinyasa- Flowing sequences of postures.
- Kundalini- Spiritual, chanting, energetic focus.
- Bikram- Hot (100 degrees +), regimented
- Restorative/Yin- Slow, deep.



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Yoga and Psychotherapy

- Creative process
- Works well with mindfulness based therapies
 - MBSR
 - MBCT
 - ACT
 - DBT
- Ideas heavily tied to Eastern philosophies
- Buddhism and Yoga

“Yoga Therapy”

- **Yoga instructors** trained to use yoga therapeutically. May address both mental and physical concerns.
- Individual teaching sessions or group classes
- May address anxiety and depression
- Other chronic conditions
- Amy Weintraub, Life Force Yoga
- Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy- Michael Lee
- Bo Forbes, PsyD



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Effects of Yoga (Ross & Thomas, 2010)

- Physical
 - Powers down the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) stress response which leads to disease
 - Decreases cortisol, blood sugar levels, heart rate, blood pressure, inflammation
 - Increases immunoglobulin A and immune response
 - Decreases sleep disturbance
 - Increases strength and flexibility
 - Depending on type, may not improve physical fitness

Effects of Yoga (Ross & Thomas, 2010)

- Emotional
 - Decreases symptoms of anxiety, depression, schizophrenia
 - Increases sense of well-being
 - Decreases fatigue and experience of physical pain
- Psychosocial
 - Increases social and occupational functioning
 - Increases quality of life

Body based approaches

- Bessel van der Kolk, David Emerson- Trauma Sensitive Yoga
- Peter Levine- Somatic Experiencing
- Pat Ogden- Sensorimotor Psychotherapy
- Richard Miller- iRest



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Yoga for Trauma (Van der Kolk, 2014)

- Talk therapy is limited because traumatized individuals usually can't put their experiences into words
- Yoga increases *HRV*- Heart Rate Variability, a sign of balance between sympathetic and parasympathetic systems
- Increases *interoception* (embodied feeling): the brain's ability to sense the body, impaired following traumatic experiences



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Yoga for Trauma (Van der Kolk, 2014)

- Regulation of breath is a key component
 - Out breath stimulates parasympathetic
 - In breath stimulates sympathetic
 - Balances HRV
- Physical poses give opportunity to befriend the body
- Can be overwhelming at first if not ready for interoception



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Trauma-Sensitive Yoga (Emerson)

- Secure and quiet room- limit distractions, noise
- Limit hip and pelvic opening poses and/or pay close attention to student's responses
- Instruction that is suggestive rather than authoritative, "invitatory language"
- Does not provide physical assists



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Breath and Trauma

- Study of 2004 South Asian tsunami survivors (Descilo et al, 2010)
- Yoga breathing effective with or without additional exposure therapy
- Significant decline in PTSD symptoms in both groups



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Somatic Experiencing

- Peter Levine, developer
- Developed for trauma, based on physiology of fight/flight/freeze response in all mammals
- Focuses on increasing tolerance of body sensations, dysregulation and re-regulation
- During trauma, there's a "survival necessity *to not feel*," after traumatic event has passed, emerges a "survival necessity *to feel*"

Sensorimotor Psychotherapy

- Pat Ogden, developer, co-founder Hakomi Institute
- Roots in interpersonal neurobiology
- Treats attachment and developmental disruptions, and trauma
- “Track” the client response in their body using “contact statements”
 - “It looks like shoulders are hunched”
 - “You seem to be holding your hands”



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Integrative Restoration

- Richard Miller, developer
- iRest
- Yoga Nidra-deep relaxation
- Emphasizes spiritual role in healing
- Used to improve overall wellbeing
- Similar to the “Body Scan”



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Yoga in session

- Breath and Postures
 - Seated
 - Standing
 - Mat or chair
- Enhances awareness of thoughts, feelings, patterns of responses
- Increases mindful present moment awareness
- Heightened experience of self in context of therapeutic relationship
- Tailored to individual participants in context of presenting problem

The Office and Studio







Modalities

- Therapy groups
 - Open or close a group discussion session to relax and relieve stress
 - Use as an experiential activity for group sharing
- Individual
 - Teaching tool to encourage relaxation, increase coping skills
 - Explore body image, perceived health
 - Re-set emotion center and fight/flight areas of brain
 - Increase interoception, “felt sense”



Experience Yoga



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Referrals to yoga classes

- Know the instructors' styles, know the types of classes available
- Explore issues of self-worth, inadequacy, judgment versus acceptance
- Build sensory awareness
- Connect with the community
- Anxiety about new place, etiquette, what to expect
- Check website or call ahead



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