

The Love in the Room

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**Integrating Yoga into Mental Health Care
2017 National Conference**

yogafordepression.com

Agenda

- ✦ Yoga Skills – Self-Care for you/help your client calm, focus & access feelings
- ✦ Explain & practice various components including:
 - ✦ self-empowered imagery
 - ✦ Breathing Practices
 - ✦ Hand Gestures
 - ✦ Using Mantra
 - ✦ Meditative intention setting
- Benefits

Centering Meditation

- ✦ Welcoming the Breath
- ✦ Candle Gazing (Tratak)
- ✦ Toning (Nada Yoga)
- ✦ Ocean-Sounding Victory (Ujjayi)
- ✦ Intention (Sankalpa)
- ✦ Smile Yoga

***The Love in the Room =
the 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)

***Therapeutic Bond
Rituals & Practices***

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

How Yoga Practices Enhance the Love

As you introduce a simple practice, you are empowering your client while caring for yourself.

- ✦ 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
- ✦ 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 Skills: Beginning a Session

- ✦ Client's image
- ✦ Breath Awareness
- ✦ Breathing Practice
 - ✦ Stair-step (anxiety or depression)
 - ✦ 3-Part (anxiety or depression, only if accessible)
 - ✦ 4:4 (depression); 4:6 (anxiety); 4:4:6 (if accessible)
- ✦ Power Hara
- ✦ Pulling Prana
- ✦ Breath of Joy
- Hand gesture (mudra)
- Tone (mantra)

Chanting 'Om' Shown to Deactivate the Limbic System

Researchers compared 15 seconds of 'OM' (5 – O; 10 – m) to 15 seconds of the sound "Ssssss..." and to 15 seconds of rest. Significant deactivation in the amygdala as well as other emotional areas only during 'OM' chanting.

Bangalore G Kalyani, et al., "Neurohemodynamic correlates of 'OM' chanting: A pilot functional magnetic resonance imaging study" *International Journal of Yoga*. 2011 Jan-Jun; 4(1): 3-6.

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)
- ✦ Deactivation of the limbic brain through vagal nerve stimulation

Pranayama Breathing Practice Basics

Breath count for Anxiety: extend the exhalation.
Inhale for 4; Exhale for 6.

Breath count for Depression: extend the inhalation.
Inhale for 6; Exhale for 4.

Meeting the Mood

- ✦ Beginning by watching the breath or trying to slow it down may not be the most efficacious way of calming your client's anxiety.
- ✦ Meet the anxiety, normalizing it with a slightly more rapid breath.

Stair Step Breath

(Anuloma Krama) Meets Anxiety

- ✦ Take little steps through the nostrils, as though climbing a mountain (usually 4 to 8)
- ✦ Pause (as is accessible) at the top of the mountain. A soothing visual image may be cued here.
- ✦ Now slide down the mountain. (Trolley, escalator)
- ✦ Practice two or three times.

Stair Step Breath

(Viloma Krama) Meets Depression

- ✧ Take an elevator ride through the nostrils up the mountain.
- ✧ Pause (as is accessible) at the top of the mountain. A visual image may be cued here.
- ✧ Take little steps down the mountain through the nostrils.
- ✧ Practice two or three times.

***Stair Step Breath
Complete Practice***

- ✧ Little Steps up to capacity.
- ✧ Sustain with visual image. (brief retention)
- ✧ Little steps down until empty.
- ✧ Return to Analoma Krama, i.e. ending with a slide down the mountain.

***General Centering
with Imagery, Sound & Breath***

- ✧ Soothing Image
- ✧ Hand gesture
- ✧ Inhale through the nostrils for 4 counts
- ✧ Sustain the breath with the image for 4 counts or as is accessible.
- ✧ Exhale with the mantra “so-ham” & Eagle Mudra
- ✧ Yogic Three-Part Breath (as is accessible)
- ✧ “Intention for our work together arises” or “gift you are offering yourself to support your recovery goals.”

Bellows Breath – Inhale

one breath per second



Bellows Breath - Exhale



Cue to Direct Sensation—Why?

Why we must be specific and direct, not global

- ✦ Many clients are living from the neck up.
- ✦ For them and for those who have a history of trauma, it may not be “safe” to feel the body.
- ✦ “Feel the sensations in your body” “Notice the sensations in your body,” can provoke anxiety, even trigger panic.
- ✦ Cues must be to specific body parts, particularly those parts with a lot of nerve endings or sensation evoked by the practice you’ve led, i.e. palms, fingertips, face

Pulling Prana (standing)

1. Through the nostrils inhale arms up; exhale down (5 – 10x)
2. Inhale arms out in front of chest; exhale back (5 – 10x)
3. Alternate arms, inhale out, exhale in;
4. Arms out with fists, sustain breath to comfort level as arms are pumped toward chest.

Alternate Nostril Breathing in a clinical setting



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

Alternate Nostril Breathing



Vishnu Mudra
Hand Position for Alternate Nostril



Yoga Practices in a Clinical Setting



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

Mudras

- ✦ Nerve endings in fingers speak directly to the brain
- ✦ We're programmed for effort-driven rewards, using our hands. "Did we lose something vital to our mental health when we began pushing buttons and stopped plowing fields?" Kelly Lambert, PhD, *Lifting Depression: A Neuroscientist's Hands-On Approach to Activating Your Brain's Healing Power*
- ✦ **Experiment**

Shanmukhi Mudra 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.

Bee Breath: Calming

✦ **Bee Breath (Brahmari) – exhale only**

- ✦ Chin slightly tucked
- ✦ Lips Closed
- ✦ 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



LifeForce Yoga® Resources

- ✦ *Yoga for Depression* (Broadway Books)
- ✦ *Yoga Skills for Therapists* (W.W. Norton)
- ✦ Trainings & Retreats
- ✦ Newsletter - research & news on yoga & mental health
- ✦ Award-winning Yoga practice DVDs and CDs
- ✦ Professional training for mental health professionals - CEU's


