



Yin Yoga Training for Yoga Teachers & Healthcare Professionals by Mary-Louise Aitken

Curriculum



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- Session 1: Saturday **10 Jan**: 1-6pm
- Session 2: Sunday **11 Jan**: 1-6pm
- Session 3: Saturday **24 Jan**: 1-6pm
- Session 4: Sunday **25 Jan**: 1-6pm
- Session 5: Saturday **31 Jan**: 1-6pm
- Session 6: Saturday **7 Feb**: 1-6pm
- Session 7: Sunday **8 Feb**: 1-6pm

Pre-training Assignments | **Please complete parts 1, 2, & 3.**

Par1:

Please watch this short video by Dr. Daniel Keown:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTPE9vZdBw4>

And... turn away if you don't like seeing under the *actual* skin. Otherwise, please watch this video, *Strolling under the Skin* by Dr. Jean-Claude Guimberteau:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ky0BmGP5nbU>

Part 2:

EITHER

Give a brief definition of Daoism, Hinduism, and Buddhism and say how you think these different traditions each have something to offer the yin yoga practitioner. If possible, give one example of how each of these traditions has been taught in a yoga class and what this has offered you as a practitioner or teacher. Has there been an occasion where there is a coming together of more than one of these traditions in your own practice?

Approx. 1,000 words.

OR

Write a review of one of the following books:

The Spirit of the Organs, John Hamwee

The Way of The Five Seasons, John Kirwood

The Way of The Five Elements, John Kirwood

The Spark in the Machine, Dr Daniel Keown

Insight Yoga, Sarah Powers

The Complete Guide to Yin Yoga, Bernie Clark

Approx. 1,000 words.

Part 3:

Please attend two Yin Yoga classes either in person or online and write what you liked about the classes and what you would do differently.

Approx. 500 words in total.

Please complete these assignments by Friday 12 December and submit them in Pdf. or Word format to: marylouiseaitken129@gmail.com

Please do get in touch if you have any questions.

Session 1	Continuous Session with 10 min Breaks
Saturday ~ 1-6pm	
1pm	<p>Opening Meditation: R.A.I.N. Meditation: – A guided meditation to fully arrive. We will take time to <i>Recognise, Allow, Investigate</i>, and <i>Nourish</i> before setting our personal intention for the training over the time we have together.</p>
1.20pm	<p>Introduction & Creating a Safe Learning Space: – We'll discuss the importance of creating healthy boundaries so that each participant can feel at ease throughout this learning experience. Guidelines for our time together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arriving on time or at least 10 minutes before the session is scheduled to start; • Electronic devices off/ silenced please. Buzzing can jolt the nervous system. However, if there is someone you need to be in contact with on any given day, please do have a chat at the beginning of the day about this and a reassuring arrangement can be made; • Listen to one person talk at a time (use this as an opportunity to feel into the energy in the room as this is something that will serve you well as a teacher overall, especially in yin); • Resist the temptation to offer advice or to intervene with 'helpful' suggestions (sometimes the best learning takes place inside a holding of liminal/ undefined space and the 'yet to be understood' can open the door to deeper learning); • Consult yourself about what feels safe and trust that guidance. This might relate to a pose or any practice/ content for that matter. Yin can be deeply revealing of our true Nature and whilst this has the potential to be healing and uplifting, it also has the potential to feel challenging at times. Know that it is perfectly alright to step outside and have a moment or to find a pose that allows you to ground and reset. <p>There'll be plenty of opportunities to share feedback and reflections as the course progresses so that you will hopefully feel that there has been the chance to integrate your learning. There's also going to be several opportunities to practice teaching alongside the taught content of the training. Above all, I hope you enjoy the course as we take a deep breath and dive with (y)in...</p>

1.50pm	<p>Props, Poise, Pose: – Intention is everything when it comes to our practice. Having the means to create an inner conversation with our deeper nature is crucial. Props are a way to customise the shapes and to experience the sensations available in each pose as well as to supply support and safety where needed. There is no one way to come into any Yin posture. Intention and attention are powerful tools. It is wise to consider how the pose feels rather than how it looks.</p> <p>The intention might be very fluid and become focused during a hold of a pose. It may be that there's a theme that resonates and the energy channels connected to a particular season calls to you and therefore working with poses that stimulate energy lines connected to creating harmony with Nature at this time. Perhaps the intention is purely physical, or it might be emotional, or spiritual or perhaps it is not possible to separate these aspects. Presence in practice offers a sense of purpose or poise. There is a grace to this which creates a sense of reverence towards the intelligence held in the body. By deeply listening to the layers of self, offering the support and intention as scaffolding can deepen a practice that, otherwise might stay stuck at the surface level.</p> <p>Talk about the family of Bees: Bolster, Block, Brick, Blanket, Belt: some uses for each. We'll look at sandbags & eye masks also <i>Discussion</i> Please visit Bernie Clark's www.yinyoga.com to see an informative video about using props in a yin yoga setting: https://yinyoga.com/yinsights/yin-yoga-asanas/</p>
2.35pm	SHORT BREAK
2.45pm	<p>The Facia: What is it and why is it important to know about it?</p> <p>Dr. Robert Schleip's work is worth looking into. He is connected to the <i>Fascia Research Project</i> and his approach is rooted in <i>Rolfing</i> (a pain control technique) as well as <i>The Feldenkrais Method</i>: an approach which underlines that, as we become more aware of how we move our body, we are better placed to positively impact our physical and mental well-being. Dr. Robert Schleip's book, <i>Fascial Fitness</i> is widely available, and his research continues into this fascinating field.</p> <p>[Followed by more teaching on how an understanding of the fascia benefits the practitioner/ healthcare professional.</p> <p>Discussion/ reflection/ questions</p>
3.30pm	SHORT BREAK
3.50pm	90 minute guided practice ~ Flow of The Spine

	As you practice, consider how the theme supports unity of mind and body. Think about the element of water and how this might link to a sense of fluidity in the spine. How does this influence the mind/ body connection?
5.20pm	SHORT BREAK
5.30pm	Closing discussion/ feedback/ reflections: There'll be time to journal Closing short meditation
6pm	END

Session 2	Continuous Session with 10 min Breaks
1pm	Opening Meditation/ Breath Work: – Sarah Powers' 9 Cleansing Breaths [have tissues handy for the nose]
1.20pm	Welcome back and discussion from previous session
1.35pm	Yin Yoga: A Brief Historical Overview & Why Yin Yoga is an Art rather than a science/ Direct teaching from written materials.
2.15pm	Yin & Yang from various perspectives and traditional viewpoints and how they link to the practice of Yin Yoga. This is an overview only.
2.30pm	SHORT BREAK
2.40pm	Exploring The Poses: A practice session, looking at some of the most common poses in Yin Yoga. We'll look at what Bernie Clark teaches as the foundations of a practice as well as the 'Archetype' poses. By the end of this session, you will have an overview of the functional aspect of Yin Yoga. Links and resources are given for home study and teaching assignments set for Session 3 [Divide the 'spine' poses already covered between small groups for 10 presentation each group next time].
3.40pm	SHORT BREAK
3.50pm	The Poses Part 1 'Spine' Poses: A closer look at some of the poses that bring particular focus to the six planes of spinal movement (and following on from the 90-minute practice in Session 1). We'll discuss modifications/ options/ props for each of these. The manual shows many of these options so note-taking will hopefully be reduced with more time to 'feel' into the practice/ where the body is targeted in different iterations of a pose. Remember, sometimes a subtle change in a shape is going to provide a different experience. Listening deeply to the wisdom of the body will inform what the pose can offer the body rather than the practitioner being fixated on the 'shape' of the pose. We will work through these seven poses together and discuss options/ modifications for each and how to consider tailoring the practice for: those with hypermobility/ pregnancy/ sciatic pain/ someone

	recovering from surgery. Ultimately, the guidance will be for each practitioner to take responsibility for their own safety and to learn discernment in their practice.
5.20pm	SHORT BREAK
5.30pm	Closing discussion/ feedback/ reflections: There'll be time to journal Closing short meditation
6pm	END

Session 3	Continuous Session with 10 min Breaks
1pm	Opening Meditation/ Breath Work – Coherent Breath
1.20pm	The Poses Part 2 'Spine' Poses: Again, we will work through these poses together and discuss options/ modifications for each and how to consider tailoring the practice for: those with hypermobility/ pregnancy/ sciatic pain/ someone recovering from surgery. Ultimately, the guidance will be for each practitioner to take responsibility for their own safety and to learn discernment in their practice.
2.50pm	SHORT BREAK
3pm	Teaching Practice The Spine: In your groups, present a 10-minute presentation as discussed in Session 2. Feedback and support will be given. This is a time to ask questions and gain a deeper understanding of the poses that mobilise the spine rather than it being any sort of 'test'.
4.30pm	SHORT BREAK
4.40pm	The Chinese Organs, Meridians & Their Seasons Part 1: In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), the names of the organs are usually capitalised. Note that this is different from how we talk about them in the West. Therefore, Liver, Heart, Kidney, Lung etc. in TCM refer to a concept of the organ, which includes their meridian pathways, energetic functions, interconnectedness to other organs, as well as their <i>psychospiritual superpowers</i> . In TCM, when the organs are discussed in terms of their anatomical functions, they will be written with lower case letters. This section will also include an introduction to the Yin & Yang Pairs of organs, how they relate to the five elements, five seasons, and their corresponding poses as well as psychospiritual aspects.
5.30pm	SHORT BREAK
5.40pm	Closing discussion/ feedback/ reflections: There'll be time to journal/ Invitation to offer a 10-minute 'Spine' practice in Session 4 (perhaps building on what has been offered so far). Closing short meditation
6pm	END

Session 4	Continuous Session with 10 min Breaks
1pm	Opening Meditation/ discussion from Session 3
1.20pm	Compression vs Stress: We will explore how different skeletal structures allow or prevent access to the 'shapes' of Yin Yoga and why some poses are just not appropriate for some bodies.
1.50pm	SHORT BREAK
2pm	90-minute Wall Yin Yoga Practice
3.30pm	SHORT BREAK
3.40pm	Teaching Practice: 10 mins per person (adjust as needed) as per the assignment set in Session 3 with feedback and support
5.10pm	An introduction to tapping through the Chinese Medicine energy lines in the body.
5.40pm	SHORT BREAK
5.30pm	Closing discussion/ feedback/ reflections: There'll be time to journal/ Invitation to offer a 10-minute practice in Session 5 themed on one of the Chinese Seasons. Closing short meditation
6pm	END

Session 5	Continuous Session with 10 min Breaks
1pm	Vipassana Meditation/ Reflections from last session
1.20pm	The Poses Part 3 Hips & More: We will explore poses that will bridge 'spine' poses with an emphasis on poses that target the hips, ankles, wrists, & other joints/ zones of the body and introduce some more restorative poses.
2.50pm	SHORT BREAK
3pm	This section will a deeper dive into the meridian lines in the body. We will work with light pressing/ tapping/ stroking techniques for stimulating powerful acupressure points along the energy channels as well as detail the '5 Forbidden Points' which practitioners need to know about. We will take some time to explore how to work through the body systematically to familiarise ourselves with the five Yin and Yang Pairs before working with some useful points.
3.40pm	SHORT BREAK
3.50pm	Teaching Practice: 10 mins per person (adjust as needed) as per the assignment set in Session 4 with feedback and support
5.20pm	SHORT BREAK
5.30pm	Closing discussion/ feedback/ reflections: There'll be time to journal/ Invitation to offer a 10-minute practice in Session 6 themed on the hips. Closing short meditation
6pm	END

Session 6	Continuous Session with 10 min Breaks
1pm	Meditation/ Breathwork: <i>Tibetan Circular Breath</i> Reflections from last session
1.20pm	The Chinese Organs, Meridians & Their Seasons Part 2: As well as the Yin Yang pairs, there's the Conception Vessel (Ren Mai) and Governing Vessel (Du Mai) which are also a Yin-Yang pair. The Conception Vessel governs the front of the body, and the Governing Vessel governs the back body. You can think of this as a circuit and can be focused on in the <i>Tibetan Circular Breath</i> .
1.40pm	SHORT BREAK
1.50pm	Harmonising Qi: The Song of The Heart 90-minute Themed Practice
3.20pm	SHORT BREAK
3.30pm	Creating a Safe Space: We will look at how to create and hold a safe space for practitioners in a Yin Yoga setting, including a studio, online, and 1:1 setting. Points addressed will include 'assists' (or not), offering props/ options/ tuning in (watching how someone is breathing for eg.) as well as bells, smells, time-keeping, and late arrivals.
3.50pm	Teaching Practice: 10 mins per person (adjust as needed) as per the assignment set in Session 5 with feedback and support
5.20pm	SHORT BREAK
5.30pm	Closing discussion/ feedback/ reflections: There'll be time to journal/ Invitation to offer a 20-minute practice in Session 6 themed on a chosen theme. Closing short meditation
6pm	END

Session 7	Continuous Session with 10 min Breaks
1pm	Meditation/ Breathwork:
1.20pm	Teaching Practice Part 1: 20-minute practice per student as discussed in Session 6, on a chosen theme.
2.50pm	SHORT BREAK
3pm	Teaching Practice & Final Assessment Part 2: 20-minute practice per student as discussed in Session 6, on a chosen theme.
3.30pm	SHORT BREAK
3.40pm	Extended Practice on the Seven Chakras
5.20pm	SHORT BREAK
5.30pm	Presentation of Certificates/ closing meditation
6pm	END