


**UPMC | WESTERN PSYCHIATRIC  
HOSPITAL**

# Managing Big Emotions and Building Resilience: Yoga Practices for Kids



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# Welcome and now we begin.....

Thank you for taking our survey!



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# Community Agreements

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- Be curious, open and respectful. Hold space for multiple truths and perspectives, while being aware of assumptions and biases.
- When sharing, take a breath before responding. Notice information from your body. Speak from your own experience. Use “I” statements.
- All practices are optional. Honor where your mind and body are today and what you need. Feel free to make the practices your own or take time to rest at any point in the session.
- We invite you to turn your camera on during the yoga practices to foster social engagement, connection and community building.

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# Learning Objectives

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At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Identify at least one mindful awareness practice to be used with their patient population
2. Describe the benefit of practicing discomfort to build resilience
3. Meaningfully connect with other professionals to develop supportive practice community while learning

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## Our Hopes for your Experience

# 01

Can you disconnect?  
What would make this possible for you?

# 02

Please notice what comes up for you. Can you also consider how these things might come up for your patients/students?

# 03

Have something nearby to jot down notes, questions, answers

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## Workshop Agenda

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- Resilience and Yoga
- Personal Experience and Empirical Support
- Teaching Frameworks
- Considerations

\*\*\*Plus Yoga Practices Throughout\*\*\*

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Our  
practices  
today...

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Orienting

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Grounding

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Centering

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Body Awareness

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Breathing

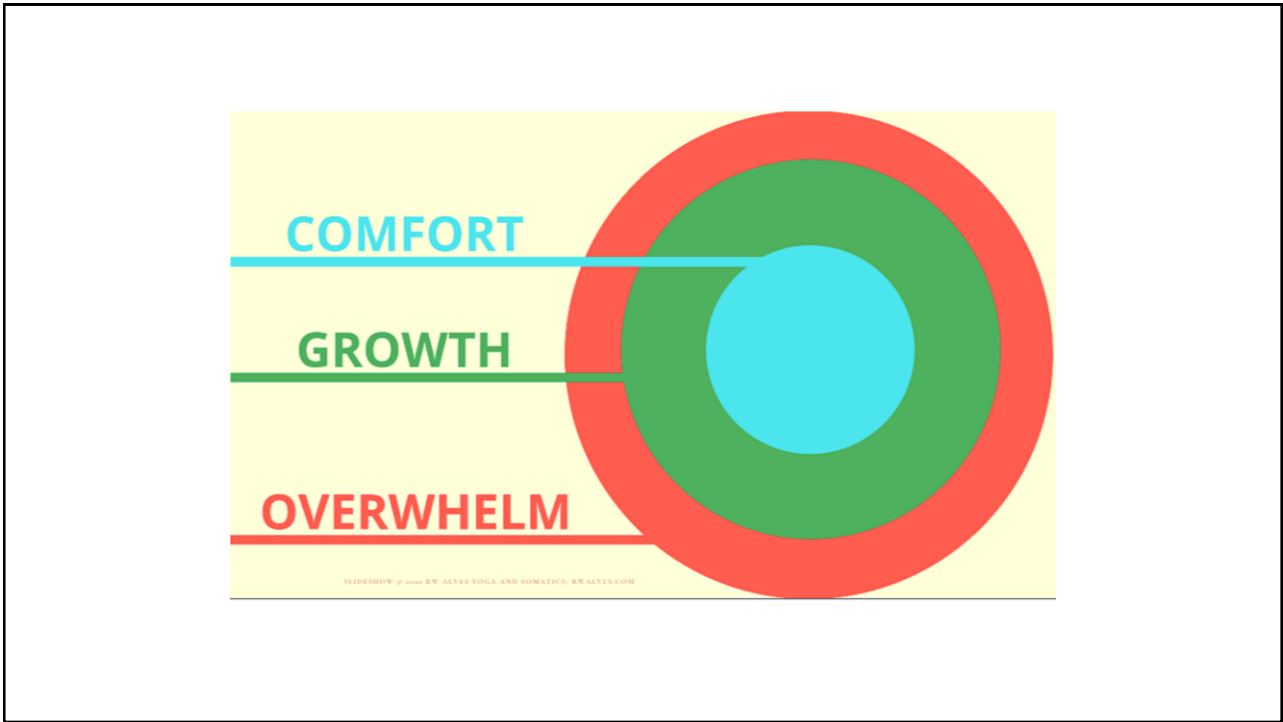
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Relaxation

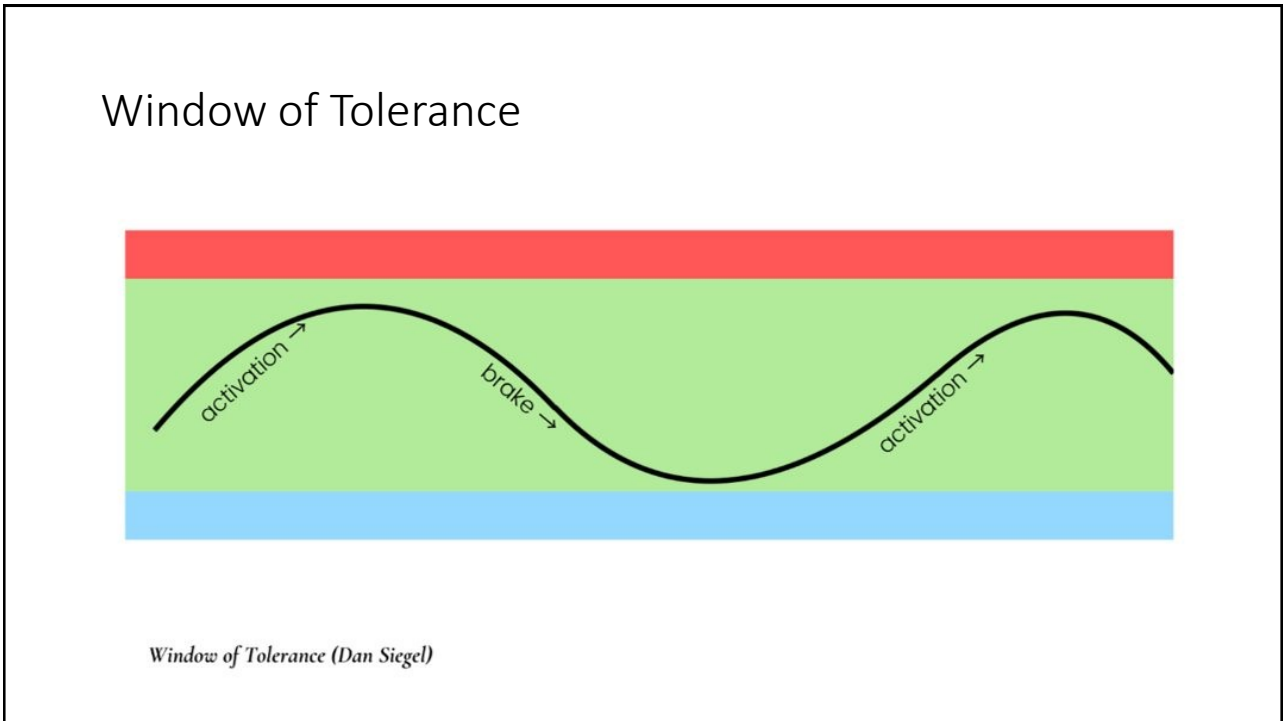
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# Orienting to Space

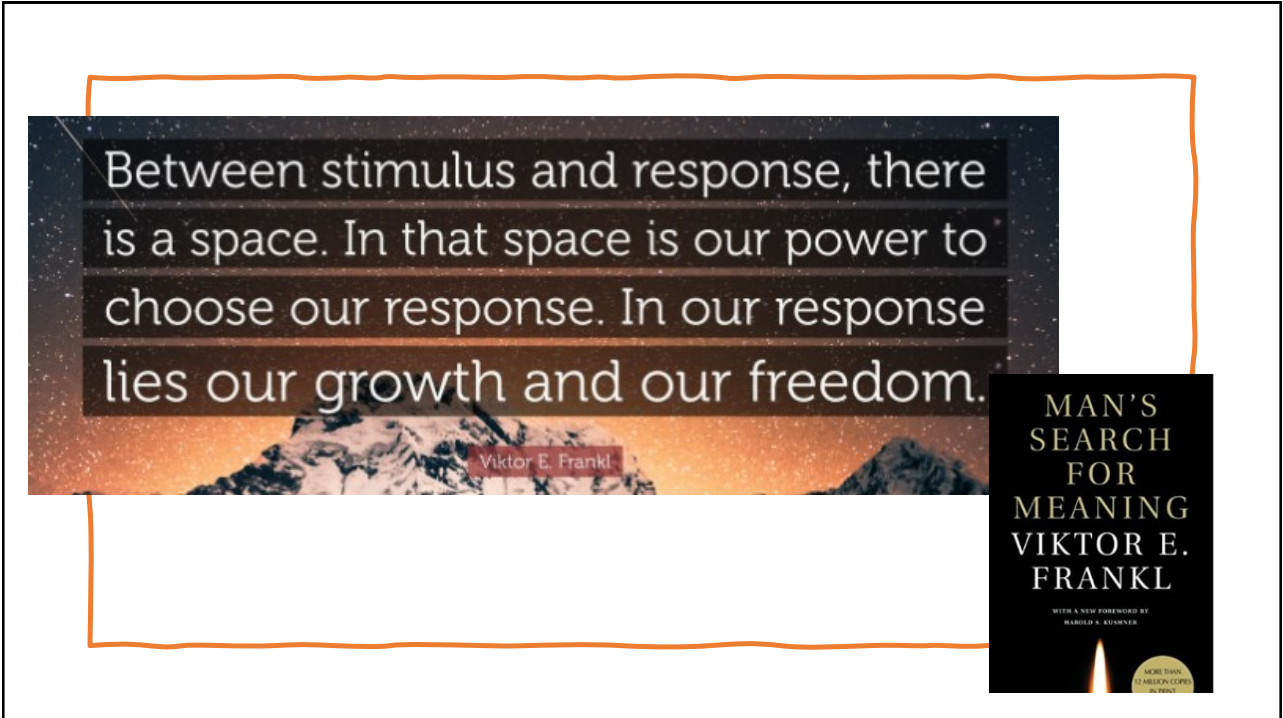
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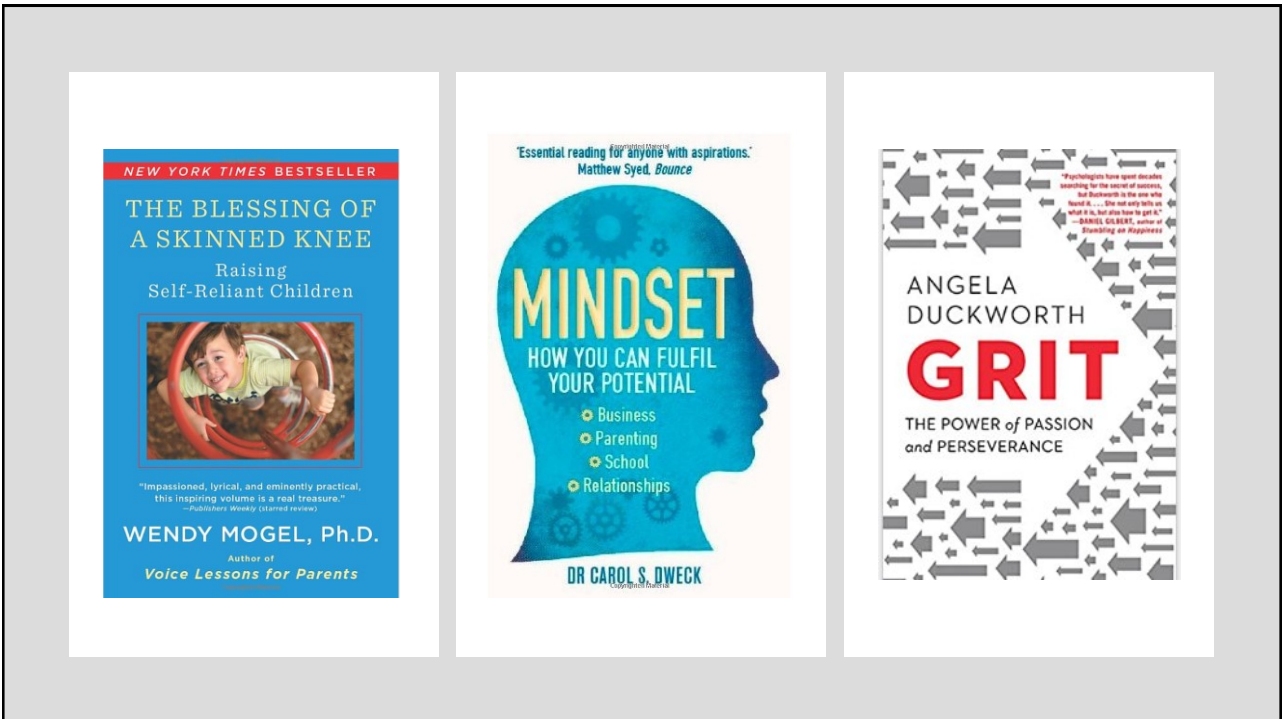
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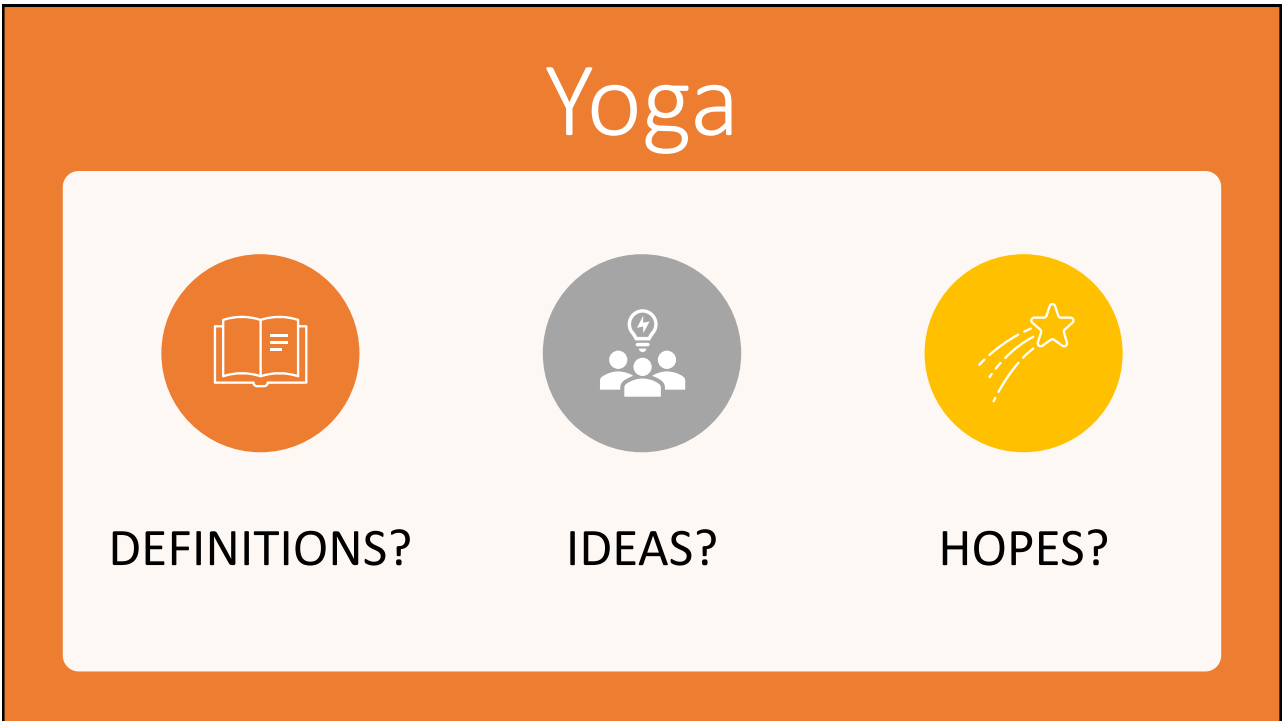
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# Eight Limbs

Traditional (Sanskrit)	Modern	Child-Focused
Yamas (abstinences)	Moral Disciplines	Values
Niyamas (observances)	Positive Duties	Actions
Asana (posture)	Yoga Poses	Movement
Pranayama (breathing)	Breathwork	Breathing
Pratyahara (withdrawal)	Sense Withdrawal	Awareness
Dharana (concentration)	Mindfulness	Easing
Dhyana (mediation)	Mediation	Effort
Samadhi (absorption)	Enlightenment	Balance

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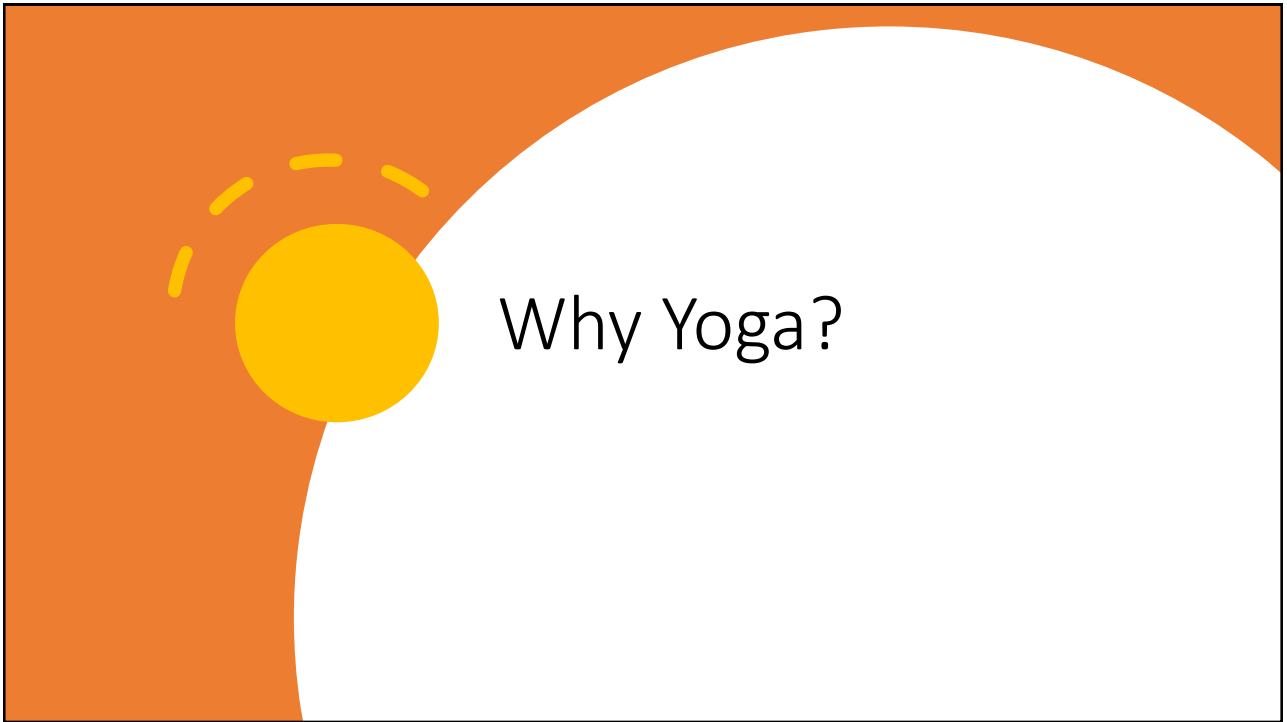
## Mindfulness

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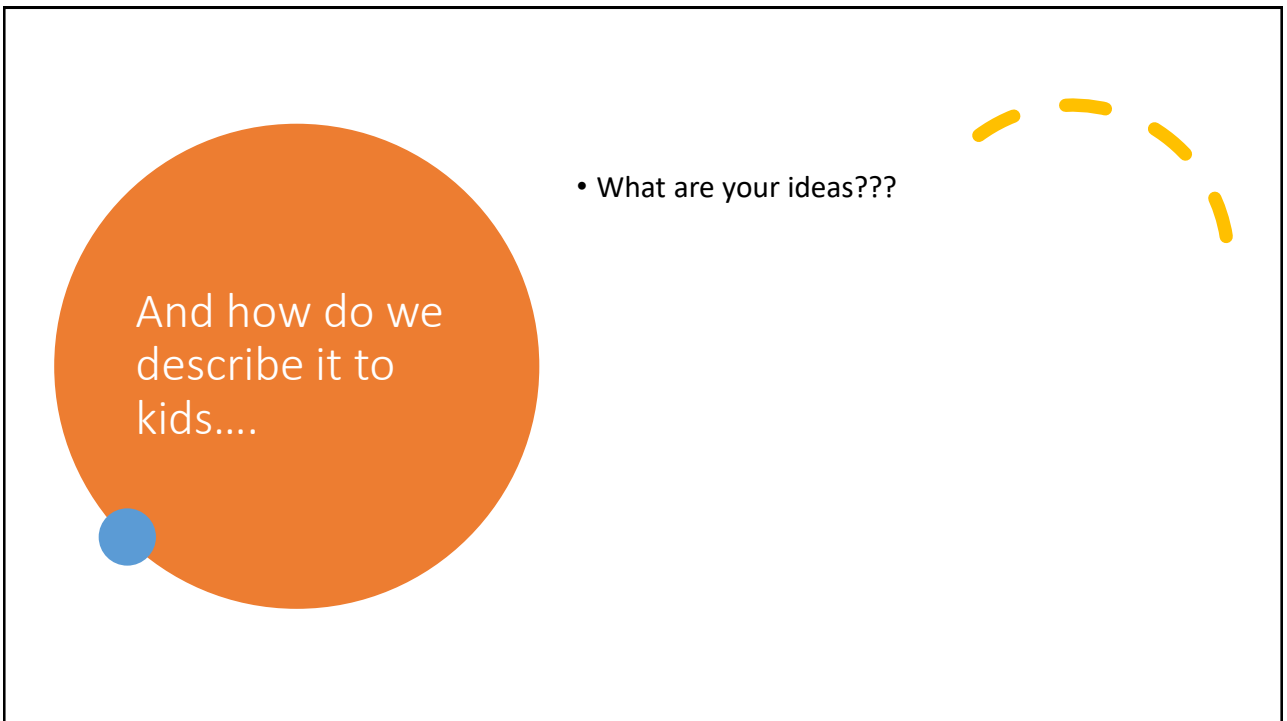


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# Centering and Movement

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A Google Scholar search  
"Yoga, Children, 2022"  
produced approximately  
17,000 citations

Relevant  
Research

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# The effects of yoga on mental health in school-aged children: A Systematic Review and Narrative Synthesis of Randomised Control Trials

- 2,271 records from online search – used only 21 studies
- Small sample sizes with little to no diversity reported
- Little statistical significance between yoga and PE
  - In fact, more dissatisfaction when PE was withheld

## Recommendations????

- Longer classes (45-60 minutes!)
- More classes – 6-12 months of classes 3 times a week
- More methodological rigidity.....

Khunti K, Boniface S, Norris E, De Oliveira CM, Nicola Shelton. The effects of yoga on mental health in school-aged children: A Systematic Review and Narrative Synthesis of Randomised Control Trials. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 2022;0(0)

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

### Development of a Psychiatric Inpatient Pediatric Yoga Therapy Group (YTG) to Increase Self-Efficacy and Reduce Seclusion and Restraint

A. Popivchak, L. Chiapetta, D. Buchanan, D. Lindsay, A.M. Mitchell  
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), Western Psychiatric Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA

Background	Methods	YOGA TOOLS GROUP
<p><b>Physical restraint and seclusion can lead to increased distress, fear, and re-traumatization for children who are inpatients in a psychiatric hospital.</b></p> <p>Coping skills, like yoga, and social/emotional (SEL) education may help children to be able to self-regulate and improve self-efficacy in high stress situations. Yoga therapy may be beneficial in assisting children and adolescents in coping with daily stressors.</p> <div style="background-color: #ffc107; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>SEL &amp; Yoga Therapy Increases</b> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-Efficacy</li> <li>Coping Skills</li> <li>Self Awareness</li> <li>ANS Regulation</li> </ul>	<p>Patients were invited to participate in the Yoga Therapy Group (YTG). They completed pre and post group surveys to assess self-efficacy, engagement, and satisfaction. Both the children and adolescent YTG participants were provided with a number of specific yoga therapy tools and were provided with the opportunity to practice each.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #4a4a8a; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; background-color: #c6c6ff;">PROMIS Self-Efficacy Short Form</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #4a4a8a; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; background-color: #c6c6ff;">Patient Satisfaction Grade</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #4a4a8a; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; background-color: #c6c6ff;">Show What You Know Quiz</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #4a4a8a; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; background-color: #c6c6ff;">Seclusion &amp; Restraint Data</div> </div>	
<p><b>Results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 17% of the children and 18% of the adolescents participated in more than one yoga therapy group, due to either length of admission or multiple admissions during the project.</li> <li>• For both children and adolescents, of those who attended more than one YTG, 60% reported utilizing at least one yoga tool between group sessions.</li> <li>• None of the patients required seclusion or restraint within one hour after the Yoga Therapy Group.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grade Data by Unit</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">The majority of patients were satisfied with the YTG by indicating a grade of A or B. On average 80% of patients gave an A or a B, for children 76% and for adolescents 85%.</p>	<p><b>Conclusions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in the YTG increased self-efficacy for a small number of patients.</li> <li>• Participation in the YTG increased engagement and satisfaction for most of the patients.</li> <li>• Patients were able to utilize yoga therapy tools to cope with negative emotions.</li> <li>• Yoga Therapy is a low-cost intervention that may assist in decreasing seclusion/restraint use.</li> </ul>

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## What The Kids Had To Say...

One thing I liked best about the group:

*It brings good energy \* Mountain Breath \* I was anxious at the start and feel better \* Legs Up\* Relaxing \* The yoga part. \* Learning more coping skills \* I feel calm. I haven't felt calm in months. I could cry right now.\* Child's Pose \* I found ways to deal with situations. \* I learn new calm down skills \* The poses. \* was resting \* Sleeping llama hands \* I got all of my emotions out. \* I can use tools to calm myself. \* helped release stress 10/10 \* I can feel less anxious \* The best one was reaching out/reaching in \* I feel calm. \* Hand poses! \* The calm vibe. \* Learning the tools. \**

How was the group helpful to you?:

*It gave different coping skills to help me when I am worked up \* It helped me release my energy and have better ways to calm down \* It was helpful, made me feel comfortable. \* It showed me different way to take/have control over my emotions. \* It made me happy. \* It taught me flower breath which will calm me down. \* I feel much better, calm, and relaxed. \* Yes, I got to explain things and it made me feel heard. \* Teach me things to do when stressed or angry. \* I learned some new breathing techniques that could be helpful to me in the future. \* It helped me to calm down when I started to have a panic attack in the middle. \* It showed me new ways to deep breath. \* I can know some stuff that can help me. \**

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# + • Body Awareness Practice



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## Our Framework for Successful Practice – Inpatient Setting

Structure + Agency + Safety = Engaged Participation

- Introductions and Group Expectations (5-10 min)
- Coming into practice together (10 mins)
  - Meditation Chime exercise
  - Connection to the breath
- Setting a theme or intention (5 minutes)
  - Quotes, Coping Skills, Joy/Playfulness
- Getting into the Body (10-15 minutes)
  - Moving the joints
  - Movement Dice
- Yoga Poses (15-20 min)
  - Connection to the theme
  - Yugo, the yoga game
- Story time (10 min)
  - Shifts energy to prepare for relaxation time
  - See resource list for book ideas
- Relaxation (5-10 min)
  - Blankets, Eye Pillows, Dim Lights – Preparing Self and Space
  - Use of Music (Kira Willey’s “Colors” or “Just Be”)



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## Framework for Group and Individual Settings – Outpatient Mental Health/School/Community



### Community Building

connecting to the people you will share the practice with, empathy building, communication skills



### Breathwork

guided, simple, noticing breath first then building to breath manipulation



### Anatomy lessons

using the body’s cues to understand our experience, how systems affect outcomes



### Yoga Poses

movement is medicine, move the body before being still



### Relaxation

purposeful rest as a means of healing (NSDR)



### Mindfulness

attention to current moment, outside first and then inside



### Reflection


reframe to cement learning, sharing, writing, and thinking

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A slide with a gradient background from orange on the left to blue on the right. The title 'Breathing practice' is written in white. There are small white symbols: a plus sign, a circle, and a dot in the upper left, and a plus sign, a circle, and a dot in the lower right. A thin white vertical line is on the left side.

# Breathing practice

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A slide with a white background. On the left, there is a large orange semi-circle containing the text 'Considerations: Start by asking yourself these questions before deciding to try yoga with children'. To the right of the semi-circle is a bulleted list of three questions. In the bottom right corner, there are several yellow curved dashes.

Considerations:  
Start by asking  
yourself these  
questions  
before deciding  
to try yoga with  
children

- What is your motivation and how will it impact your delivery?
- Is your delivery accessible to all?
- Is your delivery trauma informed?

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What is the reason  
you want to do yoga  
with your  
patients/students?

• **Yoga will fix .....**“Memory,  
**Concentration, Self-esteem, Academic  
performance”**

• Kids will be happier, better-  
behaved, more compliant...they will  
be different...

• There's a posture to fix anything and  
everything...

• Yoga for better sports, attention,  
mood.....you name it

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Motivations

• Don't assume what the  
individual is experiencing.

• Hold space for where they are,  
not where you want them to be

• Teachers/guides as guides not  
experts, embodiment is key

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# Making Yoga Accessible to All

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## Consider Different Abilities

- Inclusive/Invitational Language – Invitational language and choice throughout the group/session.
- Providing clear, age-appropriate instruction. Short engaging activities.
- Offering variations, options and opting-out when able
- Encourage attention to own experience to avoid comparison in group settings
- Dedicated space and time - “Making Space”- to practice
- Consider using props, chairs, small or guided movements

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# Clear Communication

- Inclusive/Invitational Language – Invitational language and choice throughout the group/session.
- Prosody or Emotional tones that are supportive, clear, grounding
- Prompts to consider “I invite you to notice...” “When you are ready...”
- Clear, secular language with everyone

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## Trauma-Informed Yoga


*“It offers a lens of support that makes space for any potential ways someone could feel or respond to triggers, trying to prevent re-traumatization in every possible way”*

Joanne Spence

How can yoga be triggering or re-traumatize an individual?



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## What this looks like in practice...

- Being sure to put the individual's emotional and psychological safety first.
- Trauma-Informed Yoga is people-informed yoga. This is a perspective that recognizes the humanity of our students and asks us to consider all that has shaped them.
- No hand-on adjustments or critical language
- **Slower pace** creating space for awareness, intentional *pauses*
- Focus on **invitational language** that creates **choice**

*Goal = Less Harm*

*Mistakes will happen. Apologize, do better, and move on.*

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# Final relaxation



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# Questions for us

How can we support you?

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## Our Favorites

- Ali's Yoga Game: Yugo [Home](#) | [Yugo: A Yoga Game \(theyugogame.com\)](#) (also available on Amazon)
- Empower Go Noodle Videos [GoNoodle Empower Tools](#)
- Little Flower Yoga <https://www.littlefloweryoga.com/>
- Collective Resilience, Trauma Informed Yoga and Somatics [Collective Resilience \(collectiveresilienceyoga.com\)](#)
- Accessible Yoga
- Book List – building resilience and using mindfulness for kids/teens:
  - Anh's Anger by Gail Silver
  - Moody Cow by Kerry Lee MacLean
  - Cloud's Best Worst Day Ever by Amy Novesky
  - The Hermit and the Well by Thich Nhat Hanh
  - "How To" Series, Thich Nhat Hanh
  - "The Three Questions" Jon J Muth
  - Zen Shorts Series Jon J Muth (Stillwater the Panda) Books and AppleTV Series
- Have a chime/bell in your space, a yoga mat, ways to experience the different senses.

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- Vidyarathi A, et al. (March 19, 2021) World Health Organization. *Agency and Resilience – foundational elements of adolescent well-being*.

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Contact us!

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Thank you!!



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