

# ON YOGA

ONTARIO'S YOGA MAGAZINE

**8**  
Inspiring Others  
To Live Their  
Dreams Too.

**16**  
Andrea Olivera  
'Canadian Pioneer  
in Ayurveda  
beauty Rituals'.

## MEDITATION SPELLED OUT!

**Page 10**





## CELEBRATING YOUR "BACK TO SCHOOL" BODY

Summer seemed to fly by this year. This morning on my walk, I noticed that the leaves are starting to look both hot and tired, as they descent into Fall begins. Perhaps this summer gave you the opportunity to be more active, tow work on your body, to try new fitness programs. Or, perhaps you spent too much time drinking wine, eating barbecue and traveling. My summer was compromised by a tick bite that left me less than active for over three weeks, trying to frequently socialize (wine) amidst a lot of work-related travel, and generally work a lot more than I planned (sitting).

The good news about the weather getting cooler is that outdoor exercise is more pleasant and available. Think of running, walking or cycling on crisp Fall days; starting your day with hot yoga; ending your day with a restorative class. Back to school involves structure, and we can add that structure to our fitness program. Personally, I crave structure. I find when I have less time, I make MORE structured time for regular exercise. In May, I was at Harvard for a week. Our day started at 7:30 am, and I made sure most mornings I was at the gym as it opened at 6 am. In September, I will be returning for 3 weeks, and I am already anxious about sticking to my fitness program. When I don't do some form of a activity daily, I start to obsess about it and just don't feel complete in general.

With children back in school, Fall is also a wonderful time for you to think about your own education. Perhaps it's something as simple as learning a new activity or taking a specialty training, like one of YogaFit's new offerings (see [www.yogafit.com](http://www.yogafit.com) for more details). Improving ourselves on multiple levels is always possible, even if in small measure. I think Fall is a great time to ramp up your cardio in both time and intensity. As we move toward winter, our focus can turn more toward indoor activities like hot yoga and weight training.

There are few better ways to celebrate your "All Year Round Body" than exercise and movement--any type of movement. What a wonderful opportunity to retool your current program for the cooler weather. Fall into your best fitness routine every this year.

The YogaLean book also offers some great fall recipes, like Butternut Squash Soup and Winter Salads, as your dietary needs change and evolve just like the weather. Please reach out if you need some new ideas.

Visit [bethshaw.com](http://bethshaw.com) for more strategies for keeping your body healthy all year!

[www.yogafit.com](http://www.yogafit.com)

Beth Shaw, ERYT 500 and C-IAYT, is the owner and founder of YogaFit Training Systems Worldwide. She is the author of 3 books, YogaFit, YogaLean and YogaFit for Athletes. Beth has spent time in India and Asia studying yoga, and in addition to a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and Nutrition, she holds numerous certificates in mind-body disciplines



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# WHY YOGA LAW?

It was a yoga class that would change my life. I was just starting out as a lawyer and was excited to attend my favourite teacher's class. She was in between locations, waiting for her brand new studio to be complete. In the interim, we were cramped together in a residential conference room waiting to start practice. The space was unsafe for yoga practice, with concrete pillars and sharp-edged corners everywhere. No one signed a waiver, the instructor was not covered by insurance to practice outside of her studio and someone broke their wrist coming out of a headstand. In a flash, I saw all of my teacher's hopes and dreams of her new studio hang in the balance. When we spoke after class about what happened, I was shocked she didn't understand how she was putting her ambitions at risk. This was the incipient moment of Yoga Law.

Yoga Law offers legal services to yoga professionals. It is rooted with a resolve of service and helping our community. The reality is that yoga professionals – be it teachers, studio owners, retreat organizers, teacher training facilitators or online business managers – are typically unfamiliar with the law. Because the law seems intimidating and uncomfortable – even scary, we close our eyes and hope nothing bad happens.

While this may be comfortable in the short term, it puts our livelihood in jeopardy. All of the hard work building a business can quickly be nullified if you aren't operating professionally. If you are running a yoga business, you will inevitably

interact with the law. Why not become empowered and enjoy the experience? Yoga Law educates yogis to take control and pursue their entrepreneurial spirit at best legal practices.

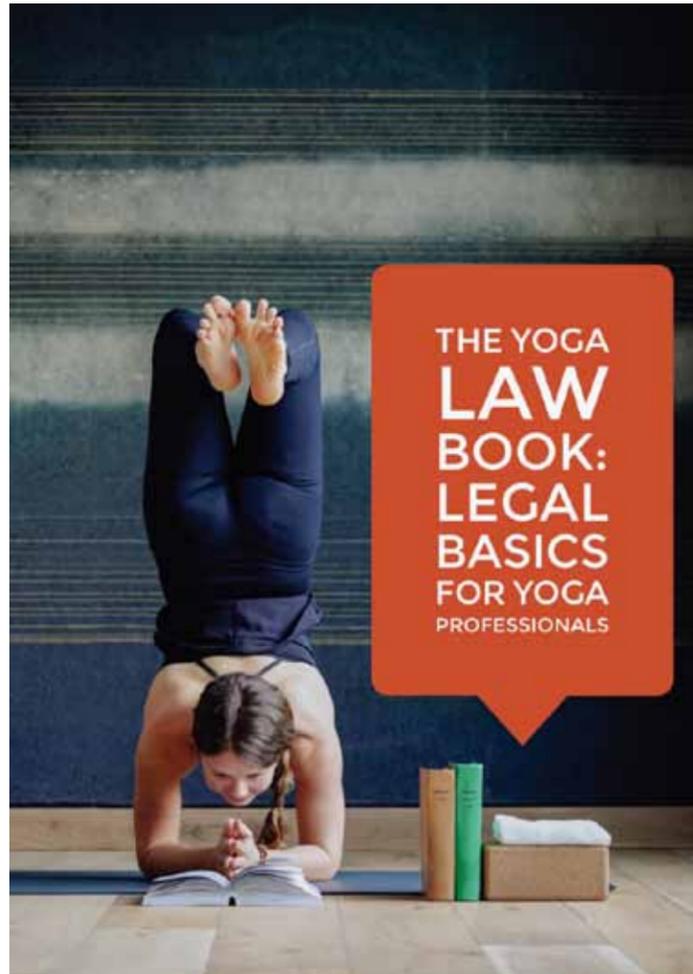
In serving yoga clients and businesses all over the world, I've heard the same questions repeatedly: When should I incorporate? How can I tighten up my waivers? Are my staff contractors or employees? Does my insurance cover everything? What happens if I lead retreats internationally? How can I trademark and license my brand?

By focusing on the yoga industry specifically, we understand these issues and have the simple solutions to sort them out. As a result, we get fulfilled by seeing our clients thrive and not lose any sleep over their legal issues. This is precisely why I've written a Yoga Law book – I share my stories and experiences of being a yoga lawyer to educate and inform yoga professionals about simple and practical steps they can apply to their businesses to operate efficiently. It is law at its best – unintimidating, approachable and fun.

My ask of you at the moment: start thinking about how your business interacts with the law. Where your attention goes, your intention flows. Once we realize that law can be leveraged as a friend to the yoga community, we gain control over our livelihood,

passion and service that provides immense societal benefits to our tribe. Please reach out to us with any questions, we're happy to support.

**instagram:** @consciouscounsel  
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**CONTENTS**



YogaFit.....	<b>2</b>
Yoga Service & Accessibility Canada .....	<b>3</b>
Why Yoga Law?.....	<b>4</b>
Yoga Faith.....	<b>5</b>
YogaFit.....	<b>6</b>
Yoga4U .....	<b>8</b>
PranaShanti.....	<b>10</b>
Toronto Yoga Conference.....	<b>14</b>
Into The Wild .....	<b>15</b>
Ayurveda Rituals .....	<b>16</b>
Canadian Diabetes .....	<b>20</b>
RR Escape .....	<b>21</b>
From Addiction To Connection: My Journey To Yoga ..	<b>22</b>
Strong to the core.....	<b>24</b>
Bluecony .....	<b>26</b>
PranaShanti AD .....	<b>28</b>





## GAYATRI PATHAK, OWNER OF YOGA4U IS LIVING HER DREAM AND INSPIRING OTHERS TO LIVE THEIR DREAMS TOO

Gayatri Pathak is finally living her dream. After spending 20 years working in the corporate world, she left the stressful and unfulfilling environment to open her own yoga studio this year. Yoga4U is a home based yoga and Reiki haven where students can go to escape from life's stresses and find peace and begin their journey of self-healing.

Gayatri was born and raised by a Hindu family in India. Her father was an avid yoga and Ayurveda enthusiastic who raised his children on a healthy yogic lifestyle. He was a role model to Gayatri; using his passion to teach her about yoga, Pranayama and the yogic principals. She start practising yoga at the tender age of four under her father's watchful eye and has maintained a lifestyle based on the yogic principals throughout her adult life.

As a university student, Gayatri dreamed of being a yoga teacher, but life doesn't always take you on the path you want to follow. At the time, she believed that following her desire to be a yoga instructor as a viable career was unrealistic. So, after completing her post secondary education, Gayatri worked as an accountant for two decades. But never feeling completely fulfilled, she decided late last year to go back to her roots. This past January, Gayatri started taking a yoga instructor training program. She graduated from the 200RYT with the International Yoga Alliance and opened her basement studio in April of this year. Although Yoga4U has only been open for a few months, it has developed a steady fan and client-base. The ambiance of the studio is very relaxing and tranquil. Gayatri uses lavender and sage scented essential

oils and relaxing music to create a soothing and spiritual atmosphere for students to practise in. She ends each class on a positive and refreshing note with a complimentary cup of detox tea.

Currently, Yoga4U offers hatha, flow, yin, restorative, and chakra yoga. Hatha yoga teaches the physical techniques and postures of each movement. The word "hatha" means force. It is one of the primary yoga styles taught to students during their instructor training programs. Hatha yoga helps students feel more relaxed, loose, and limber.

Flow, or Vinyasa yoga is a more contemporary style of yoga where each pose moves smoothly into the next. Each movement is synchronized with proper breathing techniques. Flow is a more fast-paced and popular style of yoga that provides both relaxation and fitness.

Yin yoga is a slower-paced, more meditative form of yoga. The movements are designed to bring more awareness to your inner silence and balance. During Yin classes students hold their poses, also known as asanas, for longer time periods. The poses are designed to apply moderate levels of stress to the body's connective tissues to increase circulation and improve flexibility.

Restorative yoga helps reduce stress; leaving students feeling more relaxed and rejuvenated. Yoga blocks, bolsters, and blankets are used in class to help students maintain passive yoga positions so they can get the maximum benefits of each pose without using a lot of exertion to achieve their goals.

Chakra means "wheel" or "circle" and means energy, or life force. It describes the pranic or life energy in your body. Chakra poses are used to unblock the areas in your body that are disrupting your natural energy flow so you feel more balanced and at peace.



Along with teaching yoga to her clients, Gayatri is also a certified Reiki master and is a member of the International Reiki Organization. Originating in Japan, Reiki reduces stress while promoting balance and relaxation. The technique uses a hands on therapeutic approach to promote healing and balance your life force energy. During her Reiki sessions, Gayatri provides a full body detox and chakra balancing treatment so her client's can focus on their specific needs for healing and balance.

Although Gayatri's studio has only been open a few months, she has already built a solid client base. Currently, she offers morning and afternoon classes that cater to the needs of her clientele. One of the many things she enjoys about having a home-based yoga studio is the flexibility it gives her to arrange her classes around her student's schedules. She can hold up to ten students per class. Along with her inhouse sessions, Gayatri also provides corporate yoga classes to large companies: Brown & Co. in Markham and Design TWG in Mississauga.

The most gratifying part of Gayatri's job now is being a powerful figure and role model to her students and her community. Not only does she teach yoga, but she openly practises the yogic principals. Seeing the change that it has had on her life, Gayatri is committed to bringing the yogic lifestyle to her community so every



### REIKI

- Promotes deep Relaxation
- Relief of stress & Anxiety
- Promotes Pain Relief
- Eases Muscle Tension
- Strengthens Immune System
- Peace of Mind & Body
- Increases Rate of Recovery from Injury
- Energizes & Balances the whole body

member can also be inspired by the light. She believes that today, more than ever, people need something to help bring peace and balance to their lives and wants to be an integral part of that change.

Gayatri discourages the use of videos and online yoga classes, especially for beginner students. She feels that it is important for students to learn the proper techniques and poses to get the maximum benefits from yoga. If students are doing online or DVD classes, they might not be doing the poses properly and, with no one there to guide them or correct their posture, they can do more harm than good to their bodies. Should students wish to use video recorded classes, Gayatri recommends that they be at an intermediate level first and incorporate video sessions with live classes into their routine.

Although her studio has only been open a short time, Gayatri has already made a significant impression on her community and she is only just beginning. She has big goals for her business. She plans to continue to bring yoga to the community

where she can help teach and promote balance and peace while reducing stress levels. In the next few years, she also hopes to open a commercial space where she can offer classes, workshops, and other training sessions. She eventually wants to add hot yoga to her list of class options. But at this time, she is happy with her home studio and the benefits it offers to her clientele. Along with her yoga and Reiki classes, Gayatri will also be hosting Reiki workshops this September and October.

During the first week of September, Yoga4U will be holding their first Member Appreciation Week. From September 1 to 7, 2018, current members can bring a guest to two classes for free. Spots are limited so anyone interested in the promotion or becoming a member should contact Gayatri at #647-628-8241 or email gpathak13@gmail.com as soon as possible.

Her upcoming classes, workshops, and promotional offerings are listed on her website and social media pages. Those interested can visit her website at: <https://yoga4u.blog/> or follow her social media pages at: <https://www.instagram.com/yoga4ublog/>, <https://twitter.com/yoga4ublog/>, and <https://www.facebook.com/Yoga4U-205346563599518/>.





# MEDITATION SPELLED OUT!

BY DEVINDER KAUR

**“Meditation is commonly described as a training of mental attention that awakens us beyond the conditioned mind and habitual thinking, and reveals the nature of reality.”**



**M**editation is one of the most natural and rewarding of all human activities. It brings balance, rest, and a growing inner peace. While its highest and original purpose is to help us awaken our inner, spiritual nature, the benefits to body and mind are well established by medical research.

Practiced on a daily basis, meditation produces profound results on all levels of your being—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. It connects you with your own inner powers of vitality, clarity, and peace.

Scientists used to believe that people had a set happiness index. Some people were born with a disposition towards happiness while others were more prone to embracing misery.

Recent studies show that with practice, people can elevate their baseline happiness level. We now know that the brain continues to develop and is capable of change—known as neuroplasticity. Because of this we all can elevate our baseline of happiness and one of the key ways to do

this is through meditation.

Mediation is a technique that involves learning how to be fully present and aware in the current moment, rather than thinking about the past or future. It is a skill that can be learned through regular practice. There is no one single way of meditating. Like with anything else, by all means immerse yourself in books, CDs and educational material, but remember that it is up to you to experiment and find what works.

Mediation involves a conscious intention or attempt to focus our attention without analyzing, judging or dwelling. The ‘conscious’ part means that it is a deliberate, active skill - so it’s different from resting or sleeping. It isn’t a relaxation technique, although practicing meditation often results in people becoming more relaxed.

The ‘intention or attempt’ part means that it’s not about striving or trying too hard, it’s about learning to be more aware. It’s really a process rather than a one off and you need to do it regularly to get the most benefits.



Here are five common challenges faced in meditation:

**a. Impatience:** Feeling the urge to be doing something else during a meditation session is probably the biggest meditation obstacle. Impatience causes us to end meditation sessions early, impedes our concentration and frequently makes us stop our practice altogether.

The key to counteracting impatience is to recognize the very existence of the feeling itself. If we feel the insatiable urge to do something else, it is important to acknowledge the feeling of impatience instead of giving into it. By acknowledging our impatience, we empower ourselves to effectively deal with it versus allowing it to rule us.

After acknowledging the feeling, we must remind ourselves that the benefits from meditation will help us be more effective in everything we do afterward, including those activities that are causing



our impatience. A calm, effective mind helps with decision making, anxiety and clear thinking.

Secondly, by identifying and isolating the feeling of impatience, we can then practice letting go of it, which gets to the essence of meditation—recognizing unproductive thoughts and letting go of them.

**b. Lack of Time:** So often we set intentions to meditate regularly, but our practice ends up getting tossed aside for “more important” things. We often feel like there are a million other things we need to do before we have time for our meditation practice.

The key here is prioritizing meditation by working on our perception of it. If we view meditation as a core part of our routine, like brushing our teeth or taking a shower, then missing meditation is no longer an option. We go through a routine to prepare our physical bodies for the day, so why not have one for our minds, as well?

**c. Lack of Sleep:** It is very, very difficult to meditate without enough sleep. If we begin meditating on little sleep, we often feel drowsy and end up dozing off. Also, a sleep deficit reduces our ability to concentrate and control our thoughts, which makes our meditation sessions far less effective. We are also less likely to meditate in the first place when fatigue undermines our resolve.

What’s the answer? Take a break and get some sleep!

**d. Feeling “Good Enough”:** Feeling good can be our biggest inspiration and our biggest obstacle. If we are not careful, feeling good can subtly erode our resolve to continue with our meditation practice. The idea that because we feel good, we don’t need to meditate seems like it makes sense on the surface, but will ultimately undo our progress if we follow it. It can be as simple as waking up in the morning and deciding to lounge around and enjoy the





morning instead of meditating because “we feel good, so it’s all good.” If we skip too many times we will regress in our practice and lose the positive mindset we cultivated.

Good is good, but great is even better. We can only reach great if we keep up our meditation. Focus on maintaining and improving the positive experience.

**e. Stopping Short:** This is a very subtle pitfall in our meditation practice which can take a very long time to overcome if we do not realize it is happening. This occurs during a session when our mind finally settles into a place of calm and then we decide to immediately terminate the meditation because we think that we have achieved our goal. By terminating our session early, we are in fact missing out on the enormous benefits from continuing.

We can think of meditation in two steps. Step one is achieving the initial calm during a meditation and step two is sitting with that calm. By residing in a tranquil state we deepen our calm, improve our clarity and strengthen our feeling of relaxation for the post-meditation period.

Here’s a fun way to look at different aspects of meditation based on the word itself!

**M** – Mantras, mudras and asanas are the concentration points. They provide you with the form and focus for the meditation. Mantra is a repeated sound rhythm that directs the mind. Mudra means ‘seal’ used to seal the body’s energy flow into a particular pattern and asanas are the body postures.

**E** – Eliminate Mental Intrigues. Mental Intrigues are what happens when the mind is left on automatic and thoughts and feelings dominate you. The combination of the subconscious and thoughts start the mental intrigues and self-defeating patterns. Meditation helps to clean the mind of these thoughts and break your old patterns. It is a sort of mental housekeeping.

**D** – Don’t over analyse or intellectualise. This takes you away from the meditative process. Intellectualising thoughts expands the intrigue and your mind weaves the thoughts into an elaborate story that goes to all parts of your mind. You lose track of

your real self and then become part of the games people play.

**I** – Integrates. Meditation integrates your mind and your perception. Meditation builds awareness. It lets you be present to what you are doing.

**T** – Talk with committed language and train your mind to speak the truth. Feel truth in your heart and speak from the truth in your heart with all parts of your mind behind what you say. Language is a powerful tool for change. Imagine for a moment if everything you said today appeared in tomorrow’s newspaper.

**A** – Aspects of the mind are the 9 patterns that are seen in our personality. Meditations for each aspect strengthen the qualities of that aspect and balances it within you. When the aspect is aligned it supports your awareness, purpose and your Soul.

**T** -Time and technique. Meditate when you are alert. Mornings are best and not after a big meal. Different meditations have different effects with some as short as 3 minutes and others up to 2 ½ hours.

**I** – Intuition requires consciousness.

With meditation you can reach your intuition and you will be a different person. You will become stronger. You have an understanding that reads between the lines.

**O** – Open yourself to the process. Meditation is everywhere and is for everyone. It’s not magic, it’s not a religion it is a technology that uses what you already have – your body, your mind and your senses.

**N** – Neutral mind will develop through the meditation process. The Neutral Mind is not a psychological state. It is a state of being. It witnesses and gives you clarity. It takes us out of the box and allows you to be totally original and authentic.

Learn more about Meditation Classes and Courses offered at PranaShanti Yoga

Centre in Ottawa, Ontario at: [www.pranashanti.com](http://www.pranashanti.com)

**About Devinder Kaur:**

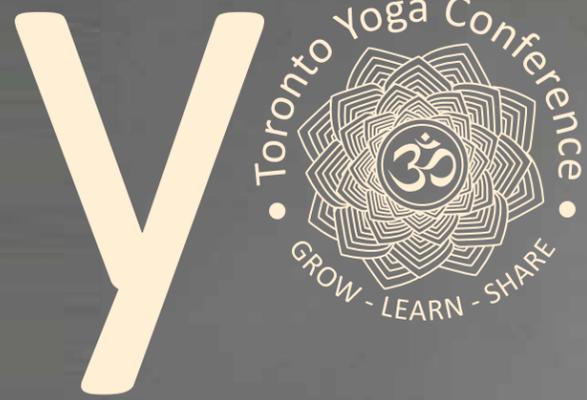
Attend a Kundalini class with Devinder, and you’ll experience why students have studied and practiced with her for well over 15 years. She is a smart, experienced, and positive yoga teacher, who approaches the spiritual practice of Kundalini with humour and sensitivity. Her strong interpersonal approach to teaching helps people reach their individual goals and empower themselves through yoga. Chosen by the international Kundalini community, Devinder recently won the 2014 International Kundalini Yoga Teachers Association’s “Certificate of Teacher

Recognition” for an outstanding reputation of teaching.

While talented and practiced, Devinder is also thoroughly accredited – she is a 500 Hour Yoga Alliance Registered Yoga Teacher in the Hatha and Kundalini Yoga traditions. She is an Ottawa Hatha Yoga Teacher Trainer and is recognized as the Kundalini Yoga Level 1 and Level 2 Lead Trainer in the Ottawa region, as certified by the Kundalini Research Institute (KRI). Devinder is also honoured to serve as member of the KRI Board of Directors. [www.devinderkaur.ca](http://www.devinderkaur.ca)



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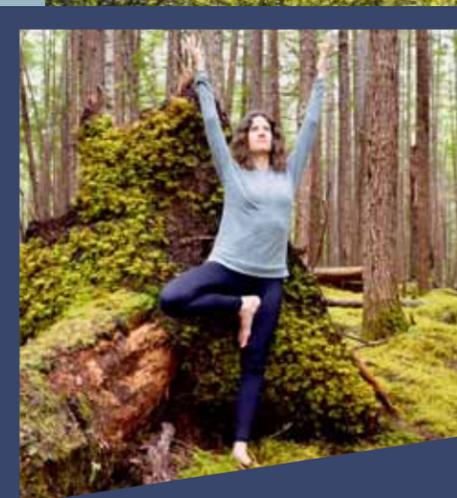
Suspension Yoga  
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# INTO THE WILD

## ONE WOMAN'S ACCOUNT OF HER EXPERIENCE AT AN OFF-GRID YOGA TEACHER TRAINING

BY GLORIA MANNIS



*"This was an opportunity to fully live yoga and to rediscover the joy of simply being me."*

### NORTHERN LIGHTS, MOUNTAIN VIEWS, GETTING BACK TO MY WILDER-NESS

Laying down in the warm grass after a heart-opening yoga practice, looking up at the forest, somehow I knew I'd made it back. Back to an authentic way of life and back to myself.

This yoga training wasn't a cookie cutter experience. It was an in-depth, holistic, and authentic spiritual yoga training combined with four weeks of living off-grid surrounded by stunning landscapes, old-growth forest and drinking clean mountain water. This was an opportunity to fully live yoga in all of its aspects.

Anuttara's Yoga Training is facilitated by two instructors who have made Yoga their life and remain incredibly down to earth, humorous and light-hearted. Together they impart wisdom from traditional lineages, initiating us in legitimate sacred practices, combined with spiritual psychology, devotional dance, music and fire ceremonies, plus an unbeatable view!

This is an incredibly unique training that takes your personal practice as well as your teaching, far beyond the mat.

Learn more about Anuttara Ashram, an off-grid Yoga Community in the mountains of Northern BC at :

[anuttara.org](http://anuttara.org)



# ANDREA OLIVERA:

## CANADIAN PIONEER IN AYURVEDA BEAUTY RITUALS

Andrea Olivera is a true pioneer in Canada's holistic beauty and wellness industry. As one of the first Ayurveda healers in Canada, she is a successful entrepreneur, published author, and creator of her own line of botanical skin care products.

Andrea's teachings and path into the healing arts began at an early age. As a child, she was raised by five loving women who embraced the earth science teachings. At 12 years, her mother started teaching Andrea about the essentials of the healing arts and by the tender age of 13, she was a Reiki and crystal master. Andrea continued her learning with the dotting five women into her adulthood. Upon graduating from high school, she trained as an Aesthetician and worked as a makeup artist.

**Today, Ayurveda Rituals is more than just a yoga studio or spa, it is a complete health and wellness center that provides customized treatments based on the scientific practices of Ayurveda.**

By 1990, Ayurveda started to make its way into the western world. Ayurveda is an ancient Indian science of life that dates back more than 10,000 years. It is a very personalized approach to health and wellness; using your own personal knowledge of your mind and body to guide you in choosing the right diet, exercise, supplements, meditation and other lifestyle factors to promote optimal health. There are two main guiding principals of Ayurveda: 1 - the body and mind are inextricably connected; 2 - nothing is more powerful



in healing and transforming the body than the mind. Today Ayurveda is still one of the most powerful and sophisticated mind-body healing systems practiced around the world.

In 1995, Andrea left her position as educational director of a well-known Toronto spa and travelled to India to practice Ayurveda. She lived the Vedic lifestyle in ashrams and studied extensively with Ayurveda masters in Indian Astrology, Yogic Psychology and Philosophy and Ayurveda therapies, including Marma, Abhyanga, Shirodhara and Pancha Karma.

After her training in India, Andrea continued to live the Vedic lifestyle in ashrams and studied Ayurvedic medicine at the Canadian School of Eastern Medicine. She studied under Dr. Pankaj Seth. From there, she completed the Ayurvedic Lifestyle Consultant program under Dr. David Frawley at the American Institute for Vedic Studies. Andrea has also

studied under other masters including Dr. Deepak Chopra, Bri, Maya Tiwari, Dr. Robert Svoboda, and Dr. Vasant Lad. Today, along with her Ayurveda practice, Andrea is also an avid Vedic Philosophy and Jyotish Astrology student and practitioner. She also follows the practices of Shamanic mother earth.

Once she finished her training, Andrea merged her two professional fields; devoting her career to health and beauty. She opened Ayurveda Rituals, and from 1995 to present, taught yoga, esthetics, and how to incorporate Ayurveda rituals into skin care treatments. During her lengthy career, she has also worked with and trained many massage therapists, yoga instructors, and estheticians at local, national and international spas and yoga studios. She taught them how to incorporate Ayurveda principals into their services. Today, Ayurveda Rituals is more than just a yoga studio or spa, it is a

complete health and wellness center that provides customized treatments based on the scientific practices of Ayurveda.

Ayurveda Rituals is best known for many unique services developed exclusively by Andrea. The services include:

- Andrea's personal line of natural skin care products and holistic facial treatments
- Healing mind-body-spirit therapies
- Wellness and spiritual counselling
- Restorative and Indian Head massage
- A professional Ayurveda Spa Practitioner Program
- Indian Head Massage workshop for Yoga Teachers on the Mat

As a Canadian Ayurveda pioneer, Andrea has appeared in the Aveda's International Congress Festival alongside Helga Hefner and organized the Toronto Ayurveda Expo. She has been recognized by people all over the world for her revolutionary integration of yoga, Ayurveda, and eastern practices

**My main Guru is Mantriji and my first book is about his life and how he taught many well known astrologers like Hart deFouw in North America Jyotisha Vedic astrology and I sat with him to learn the Vedas and Jyotisha for 20 years. My first book is on his life called A Rishi Among Us-Tales of Krishan Mantri**

into wellness and healing spa treatments. Her spa is the only Ayurveda spa in Canada that legendary India masters visit.

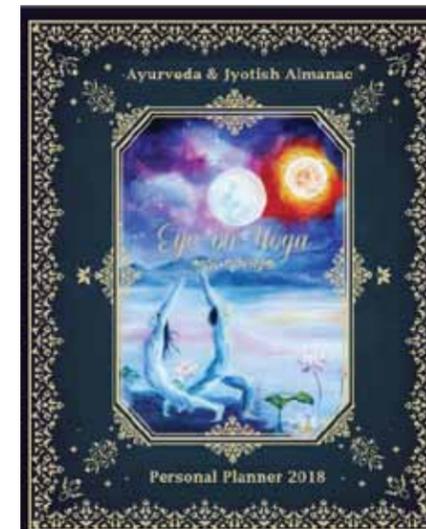
She hosts several training programs throughout the year. Her half day courses are done inhouse during the week. During her one-week spiritual pilgrimage, Andrea combines theoretical learning with tours

of the special Indian places throughout Toronto including temples, restaurants and other spiritual places. Andrea also offers different weekend package retreats. Package 3 is held Friday night, and all-day Saturday and Sunday at Ayurveda Rituals.

To meet the growing demand for training and specialization in Ayurveda principles, Andrea has developed courses and retreats to educate professional and personal students in the science of Ayurveda elements.

Her Ayurveda Spa Specialist Course is an intense one-week training program done in house. After completed the weeklong part of program, students can complete the case students independently online. Students of all ages and from all over the world have come to Toronto to take Andrea's courses.

Ayurveda Rituals also offers several mind, body, and spiritual spa services. One of the more popular treatments offered at Ayurveda Rituals is the Emotional



Release Therapy. This highly sought-after psychotherapy uses a combination of herbs, oils, and massage to release cellular energy, providing a holistic emotional detoxification and anti-aging treatment.

Her bestselling book *Eye on Yoga - Ayurveda & Jyotish Astrology Almanac - Personal Planner 2018* is currently available in her spa, online on her website and through Amazon. Spa owners wishing to add the inspirational Almanac to their location for personal use or to sell professionally as the first certified rep within their community can contact Andrea at Ayurveda Rituals. Her 2019 Almanac will be available to the public this September. Andrea is also currently working on her next book, *Elemental Wisdom*. The teachings in

this book will be beneficial for individuals who are experiencing deep trauma and emotional stress.

During her career, many A-list celebrities have come to her for massage, facial treatments and skin care products. Some of her more notable clients include Tom Selleck, Torrey DeVitto, Sarah Foret, Steve Guttenberg, Marcia Gay-Harden, Maggie Quigley, Ted Danson, Deepa Mehta, John Taylor, Duran Duran, Daphne Zuniga, Lisa Ray, Bob Wisdom, and Joseph Fiennes.

After spending a few years creating customized skin care products for her celebrity customers, Andrea decided to develop her own line to market. In 2005, she launched her own personal line of holistic skin care brand. Her botanical creams, serums, sprays, masques, cleansers, and hydrating sprays, perfumes, body oils, incorporate the natural elements of Ayurveda and the earth sciences with esthetic skin care rituals. Today, she continues to blend East Indian, Persian, Egyptian and South American traditions to create products and services that nurture the mind, body, and spirit for complete health and wellness practices.

In 2013, after listening to the feedback she had received from her clientele, Andrea took another leap of faith and opened her own Ayurveda Rituals storefront location at 1081 Bathurst Street. She sells her skin care line, best-selling book, *Eye on Yoga - Ayurveda & Jyotish Astrology Almanac - Personal Planner 2018*, courses, training and spa sessions to the public.

Along with the products, Andrea developed courses to teach other professionals how to use her skin care products. Today, many health and wellness practitioners have benefitted from her training sessions that include: Ayurveda Facial, Indian Head Massage, and Abhyanga Body Massage.

To carry and represent Andrea's Ayurveda skin care products, individuals must first complete her Ayurveda Rituals Beauty Consultant course to fully understand the brand and how to properly use the skin care line. Andrea has inhouse and online programs available to interested pupils.

Andrea's entire life has been spent learning the earth sciences. From an early age, she had five loving women teach her the elements of Ayurveda, yoga, and jyotish practices. As an adult, she has not only built a successful career in the ancient art of Ayurveda but has lead the nation in the holistic Ayurveda principles of health and wellness by developing her own personal skin care products, spa treatments, education programs, and a best-selling book. And she isn't finished yet. Andrea continues to develop new products, services and books to improve the health and wellbeing of people all over the world. For more information on the programs, products, and current specials offered at Ayurveda Rituals, you can visit her website at: <http://ayurvedictouch.com>.



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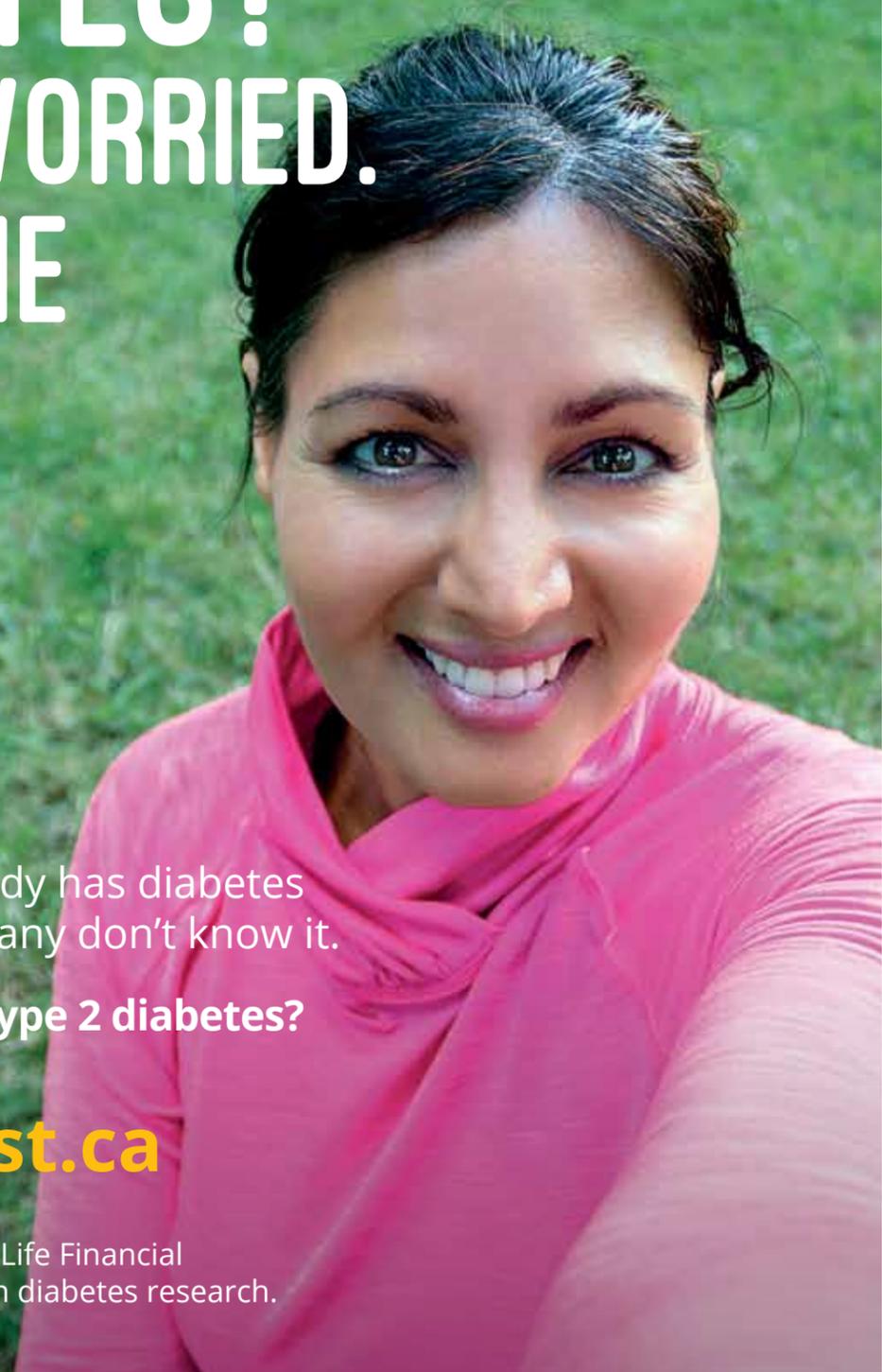
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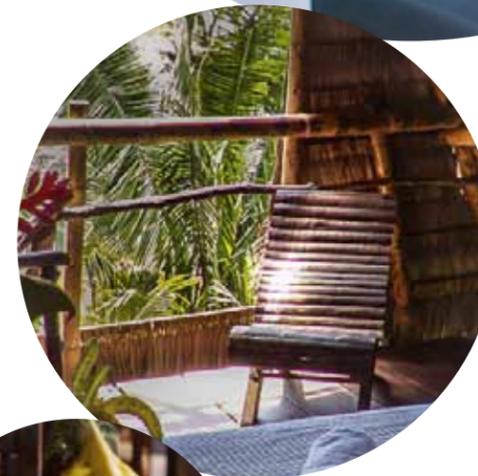
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# FROM ADDICTION TO CONNECTION: MY JOURNEY TO YOGA

I came to yoga slowly and without even realizing it.

After years of living in active addiction, my life became so uncomfortable that I didn't want to keep living. I contemplated suicide, but feared I'd either mess it up, or change my mind in the last fleeting seconds when it was already too late. In hindsight, it wasn't that I truly wanted to die, but rather that it was too painful to keep living.

I sought help in 2010 where my rehabilitation included a variety of forms of meditation. Each morning I would wake up around 4 a.m. because I was too anxious to sleep. Hours later we would have Qigong, meditation or yoga and I would bolt out of class within the first five minutes to vomit.

Years of drinking & drugging had completely disconnected me from my body and the ability to be with feelings. I was so disconnected, that this was my body's physical response to practicing presence & being with sensation. It took weeks of showing up every morning for practice, before I could make it through a 30 minute class and while it was most challenging, something inside told me that it might also be most beneficial.

I felt fleeting moments of calm and having lived the majority of my teens and adult life riddled with anxiety, I longed for this simple sense of being okay.

I started practicing an assortment of meditation techniques including guided

visualizations, mantra meditations, chakra balancing and anything else I could find. The abundance of free resources online and in local communities introduced me to numerous techniques until I could learn to simply sit. I didn't know that this was yoga, but feeling its powerful effects, I kept exploring, learning & practicing daily.

In my second year of sobriety, I suffered a lengthy period of debilitating depression. The host of medications I was treated with changed my body from a size zero to a size ten. While it increased my ability to function marginally, again something inside told me, this wasn't the way for me. I was now both depressed and 45 lbs heavier than before.

I was working hard to change my life. I saw a therapist weekly, joined a support group for anxiety & depression, and read endless books to inspire and overcome my conditions. Then one day at a speaker event Marianne Williamson summed it up for me: I could continue to move through life in this dull, aching, disconnection, or I could rip it off like a band-aid, face processing the pain and move forward in authenticity.

I made the decision to make drastic lifestyle changes to support my well-being and regain my health. I knew I needed to start exercising more rigorously, but felt intimidated by the gym and past experiences with a "push yourself" culture. Having heard that yoga was meditative, I headed to the nearest studio. That night during my first yoga class I discovered that I did not mind being challenged if it was a slow and mindful self-inquiry into my own boundaries.

They told me to come back in the morning so there I was at 6am sweating it out to the Bikram sequence. I felt like I may vomit many times during my first three months of classes, but I loved the silence, the repetition and the focus it required. I had gained feelings of competency in my journey with meditation, so I trusted that I just needed to stick with the practice.

Every practice I went into my own internal awareness. As far as I knew, I was the only person in the room. Everything else melted away as I focused on my breath, body and connection to self. Soon I found myself attending kundalini groups - again not realizing this was yoga. My friend called it "oneness" and I simply liked that there was somewhere people gathered to practice together.

6 months later I found myself moving to Salt Spring Island to live in a yoga community and practice karma yoga. I felt very connected with this as in my sobriety I learned that being of service is what life's all about. On Salt Spring I was introduced to the eight limbs of classical ashtanga yoga and the rich, elaborate systems that it encompassed. Yoga philosophy fit perfectly with the principles and spirituality that I needed to practice for my sobriety.

After having a life changing experience at the centre, I returned to the city where I received a scholarship for a YTT program. I thought it would be a good way to keep



## BIO:

*Hi I'm Laura O'Reilly. I grew up in Downtown Toronto, Studied in Quebec and wound up making my home in beautiful BC. I believe we're all here to be of service, helping one another. After battling mental health and addictions, I learned that life is too short not to follow your own path. With a newfound passion in recovery, I discovered sharing yoga as my way to contribute. I enjoy work, am filled with play and when not on the mat you may find me singing, playing an instrument, wandering in nature or exploring a new place. My daily practices are rooted in spirituality, a desire to serve and the belief that everything happens for a reason.*

myself busy while I looked for work. The night before the program started I was vibrating with nerves. Worrying that I was too inexperienced, unworthy or that I would fail and drop out like many things I'd attempted before, I was terrified by my own insecurities and sense of inadequacy. That morning during asana practice standing in warrior pose, I suddenly knew that this was where I was meant to be. For the first time in years, I felt like I was home.

I had always given myself until the age of 30, to find the career I loved. I had made a silent pact to resign myself to making "a living" after that if I still hadn't found my passion. About one month before my 31st birthday, I had stumbled across it without even looking.

So I decided I wanted to be a yoga teacher. With no experience and a blatant disregard for all of my fears, I began teaching four free classes a week. I rented a tiny room with a bar fridge, hotplate and shared bathroom while making my best efforts to earn my keep. I had no experience being self-employed and was unsure where to start. So I started where I was at, by putting one foot in front of the other.

Today I teach yoga full time and I love it! There's nothing I'd rather do. I specialize in working with people recovering from addictions and am beyond grateful to help them in their journey of health and happiness. I am blessed to facilitate teacher trainings and mentor others, supporting them to live their passions. And in all of this I find great fulfilment.

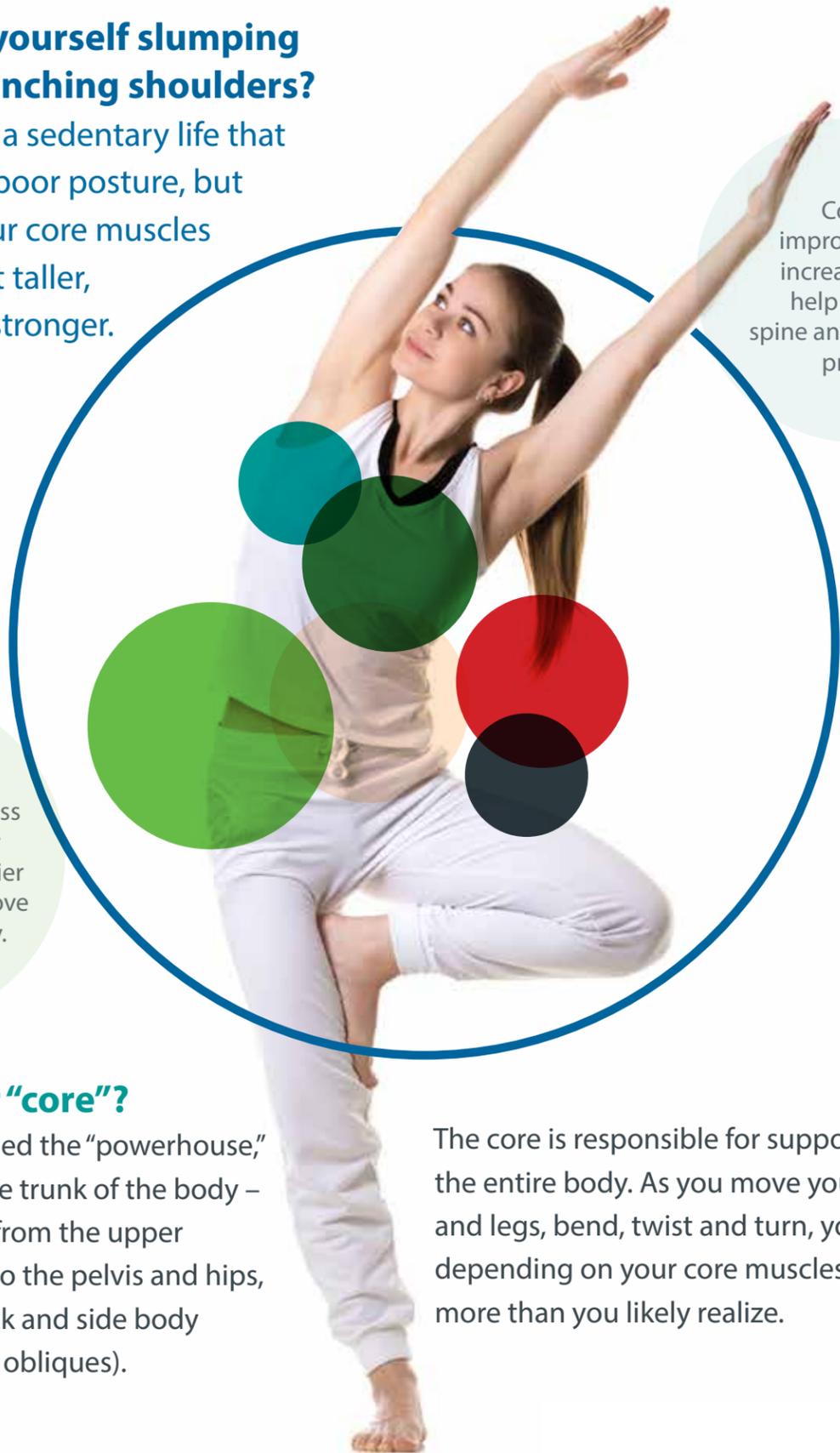
My struggles both past and present, are valuable lessons that help me, help others. They foster a connection that only the understanding of lived experience can offer. I'm grateful for everything, the pain, the challenge, the discomfort, the love, each moment, each sensation and the practice of being present with it. I still experience bouts of depression & anxiety but I know like everything in life, this too shall pass. I don't imagine I'll ever be perfect or free from challenge, but I know that living yoga grants me more resiliency and grace.

Yoga allows me to practice what I love, move through life with integrity, trust the unseen and grow with each opportunity. While I can't predict the road untravelled, daily practice keeps me grounded, grateful and prepared to move through life as the best version of me.

# Strong to the core

## Do you find yourself slumping in chairs? Hunching shoulders?

Many of us live a sedentary life that contributes to poor posture, but developing your core muscles will help you sit taller, straighter and stronger.



Core muscles improve balance, increase stability, help protect the spine and may even prevent pain.

Anyone at any fitness level can work their core, and feel sturdier and healthier to move throughout the day.

## What IS your “core”?

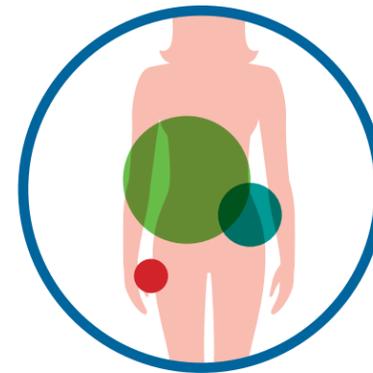
The core, also called the “powerhouse,” refers to the entire trunk of the body – front and back – from the upper abdomen down to the pelvis and hips, including the back and side body muscles (lats and obliques).

The core is responsible for supporting the entire body. As you move your arms and legs, bend, twist and turn, you’re depending on your core muscles much more than you likely realize.

## Get started!

In just a few minutes each day, you can strengthen your core muscles. Start slow and build up your repetitions. An exercise should challenge you without causing pain.

No gym or special equipment needed; mat optional.



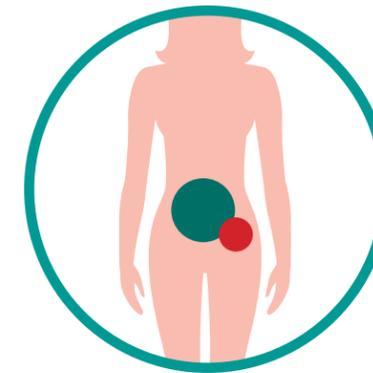
### CURL UPS

This tried and true exercise engages the entire core, with special work for the upper abdominal muscles.

- 1 Lie down on your back with bent knees and feet even and flat on the floor, hip-distance apart; tailbone is heavy and the spine is neutral

IMPORTANT: Keep the natural curvature of your spine – don’t imprint your lower back into the floor

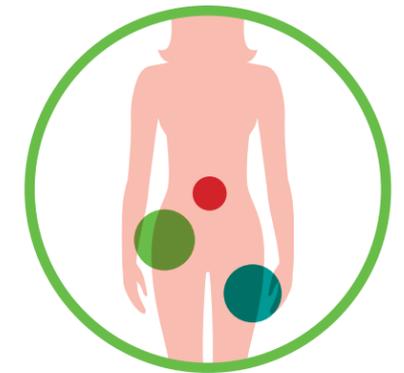
- 2 Arms behind ears or across the chest; chest stays open, shoulders away from the ears
- 3 Breathe in to prepare; exhale while rolling up with the chest (head and neck follow), leading from the sternum or heart (upper abs); do not strain your head or neck
- 4 Roll down and repeat



### PELVIC TILTS

The pelvic tilt requires such a small movement that you may feel like you’re not even exercising! Still, begin slowly with few repetitions.

- 1 Lie down on your back with bent knees and feet even and flat on the floor, hip-distance apart; tailbone is heavy and the spine is neutral
- 2 Imagine your hips and pelvis are like a rolling pin; while inhaling, drop the front of the pelvis while the lower back imprints into the floor or mat, tilting the pelvis toward your navel
- 3 Return (or roll back) to a neutral spine; repeat



### BRIDGING

This movement challenges the back of the legs (hamstrings) the core, and gluteus maximus.

- 1 Lie down on your back with bent knees and feet even and flat on the floor, hip-distance apart; tailbone is heavy and the spine is neutral
- 2 Focusing on pelvic and hip stability, exhale and press into your heels to lift your torso to knees up off the ground, bridging up to the middle of your shoulder blades (making a straight line)
- 3 Inhale at the top and exhale as you bridge down, tapping your tailbone on the ground to repeat

Begin bridging gently, building up to 6-8 repetitions. Take care not to put any pressure into your neck.

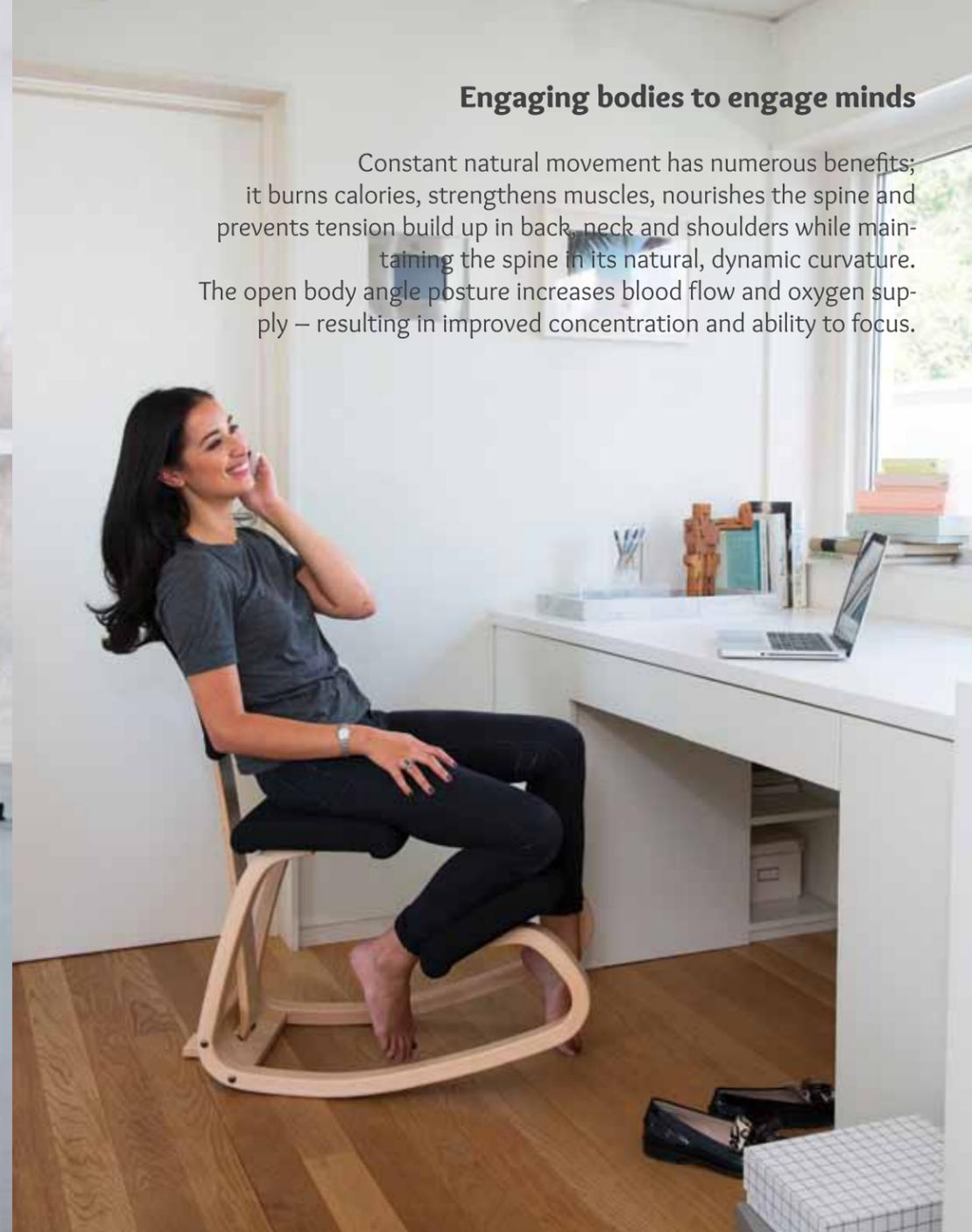
# SEATING FOR HOME, WORK & PLAY

We were born to move.  
For us it means freedom to move, even when sitting.

We believe that for a predominantly sitting society, chairs should reflect the basic principles of movement and variation. Chairs should follow the natural urge of the body to move and change position, whenever needed – all while providing proper postural support – naturally. At work and at home.

Prevention is the first and most effective weapon against back pain. This can be accomplished by adopting a more active, less sedentary lifestyle. But also, at rest, by using a chair/lounge chair/bed that supports you properly and encourages healthy posture. Even better, one which allows you to « shift » position through a range of postures – all while maintaining proper postural support. This is « healthy sitting » and creates a unique kind of comfort that comes from contoured body support – not overstuffed padding.

Try for a second to sit at the end of your chair, feet back. What do you feel? Or don't feel... Indeed the real problem isn't the chair itself, it's the posture in which the chair puts you. →Traditional chairs force our bodies into a 90-degree angle, which squishes our internal organs, and contributes to that post-lunch bloated feeling. Meanwhile, an open hip angle (anything greater than 90-degrees) is more optimal and helps to reduce pressure on your lower back. Ergonomists have found that the optimal open-hip angle is 135-degrees, which is far from the normal chair standard!



## Engaging bodies to engage minds

Constant natural movement has numerous benefits; it burns calories, strengthens muscles, nourishes the spine and prevents tension build up in back, neck and shoulders while maintaining the spine in its natural, dynamic curvature. The open body angle posture increases blood flow and oxygen supply – resulting in improved concentration and ability to focus.



**ABOUT BLUECONY™.** Bluecony™ was born from the desire to make a difference. Entrepreneur at heart, co-owners Aurélie Périé and Philippe Funez decided to source smart designs, with no compromise on function and comfort. They also designed IKUKO, a very unique meditation bench. And it's a success! Knowing that both evolve in a related field - Ashtanga yoga and Tao Shiatsu, it's no surprise that for the last 6+ years they've had at heart their customers' well-being and health, working towards offering relevant solutions, not believing that we should sit still and endure. They got your back!

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