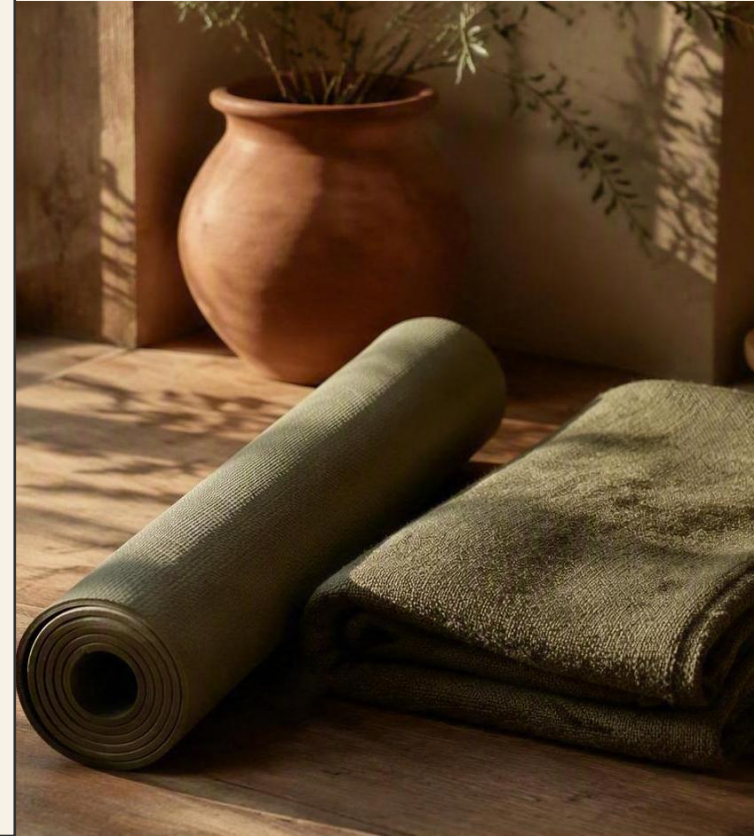


A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR RECOVERY

Coming Home to the Body

Trauma-informed yoga therapy, breathwork, and guided meditation for the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies.



Why These Practices Belong in Recovery



WHAT THE RESEARCH SHOWS

- Trauma Center Trauma-Sensitive Yoga (TCTSY) has appeared in 40+ peer-reviewed publications since 2009.
- A 2023 randomized trial in JAMA Network Open found TCTSY produced PTSD symptom improvement equivalent to Cognitive Processing Therapy — and people were significantly more likely to stay in it.
- A 2021 systematic review of yoga for substance use (J Am Board Fam Med) found 7 of 8 randomized trials improved anxiety, pain, or substance use outcomes.
- Women in SUD recovery in a 2021 study described yoga as acceptable, feasible, and welcome alongside their existing treatment.

These practices support your treatment and recovery program — they don't replace it.

Four Bodies, One You

Addiction and trauma pull these apart. Recovery brings them back into conversation.

Physical

Sensation, breath, safety in your own skin

Mental

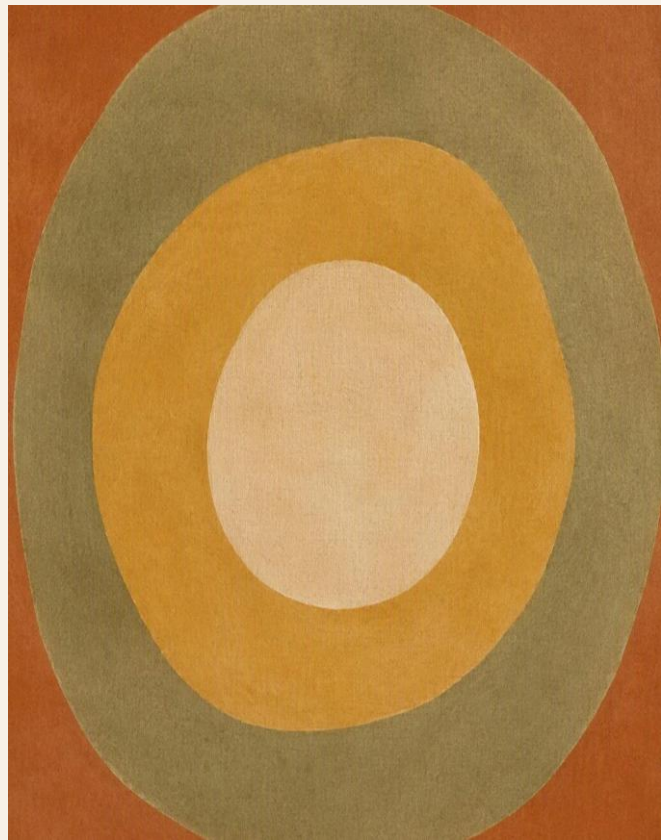
Attention, thoughts, the stories you rehearse

Emotional

Feeling fully without being flooded

Spiritual

Meaning, connection, something larger than the urge



The Physical Body



PRACTICES FOR SENSATION AND SAFETY

- Feet on the floor, seated tall — the simplest grounding form there is.
- Chair-based shapes: gentle twists, forward folds, shoulder rolls. No mat required.
- Constructive rest or legs up a wall for restlessness and poor sleep.
- Slow, repeatable movement — the same few forms daily beat an ambitious sequence you dread.
- Ask "how does this feel?" rather than "am I doing it right?" Interoception, not appearance.

You may change, modify, or come out of any shape at any time, for any reason.

The Mental Body



PRACTICES FOR ATTENTION AND THOUGHT

- Anchor the mind: count breaths one to five, then begin again. Losing count is part of it.
- Name what's happening — "planning," "remembering," "craving" — then return to the breath.
- Urge surfing: watch a craving rise, crest, and fall instead of fighting it.
- Eyes open with a soft gaze is always allowed. You never have to close your eyes.
- Three to five minutes daily builds more than an hour once a month.

A wandering mind isn't failure — noticing the wandering is the practice.

The Emotional Body



PRACTICES FOR FEELING AND REGULATION

- RAIN (Tara Brach): Recognize what's here, Allow it, Investigate with care, Nurture yourself.
- Lengthen the exhale to take the edge off intensity before you try to think it through.
- Titrate: touch the feeling for a few breaths, then return to a neutral anchor like your hands.
- Sighing, shaking, yawning, and tears are the body discharging — not something going wrong.
- Meet shame with a phrase rather than an argument: "May I be kind to myself right now."

Feeling less is not the goal. Feeling without being swept away is.

The Spiritual Body



PRACTICES FOR MEANING AND CONNECTION

- Connection, not doctrine — this asks nothing of your beliefs.
- Y12SR (Yoga of 12-Step Recovery, founded by Nikki Myers) pairs yoga with 12-step work.
- Open each practice with a simple intention, and close by dedicating it to someone.
- Gratitude, service, time outdoors, and being in a room with other people in recovery.
- Build a ritual: the same corner, the same time, the same blanket. Predictability is medicine.

"Something larger than me" can be a fellowship, the ocean, or your own future self.

What Makes a Practice Safe

TRAUMA-INFORMED GROUND RULES

- Choice — every cue is an invitation, never a command.
- Agency — you decide the depth, the duration, and when to stop.
- No hands-on assists without clear consent; many teachers skip touch entirely.
- Eyes open is fine. Sit near the door. Know you can leave.
- Predictable structure, no surprises, no walking the room behind you.
- If you go numb, floaty, or panicky: stop, open your eyes, press your feet down, and name five things you can see.



Breathwork: A Starting Menu



SLOW AND GENTLE IS THE WHOLE POINT

Diaphragmatic breath	Hand on belly, let it rise. 2–5 minutes.
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Extended exhale	In for 4, out for 6–8. Calms a revved-up system.
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Box breath	In 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4. Steadies focus.
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Coherent breath	About 5–6 breaths a minute, even in and out.
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Alternate nostril	Nadi shodhana — balancing and quieting.
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Cautions

- Skip long breath holds and fast, forceful breathing — both can trigger panic or dissociation.
- Never force the breath. Returning to normal breathing is always an option.
- Check with your care team first if you're pregnant or manage cardiac, respiratory, or seizure conditions.

Script: Extended Exhale

THREE MINUTES · READ ALOUD OR TO YOURSELF

Find a seat that feels supported. You can keep your eyes open, soft and low, or close them if that's comfortable.

Let the breath be exactly as it is for a few rounds. Nothing to fix.

When you're ready, breathe in for a count of four... and let the out-breath take six. If six is too long, take five.

Keep going at your own pace. In for four. Out for six. Let the exhale spill out rather than pushing it.

If counting gets stressful, drop it and simply make the out-breath a little longer than the in-breath.

After a minute or two, let the breath return to normal. Notice your feet on the floor before you move on.



Two Short Guided Meditations



GROUNDING FIRST, THEN SELF-COMPASSION

Orienting · 2 minutes

"Let your eyes wander the room. Notice five things you can see — no need to name them out loud. Now four things you could touch. Three sounds. Feel where your body meets the chair, and where your feet meet the floor. Nothing here needs your attention right now. You are in this room, in this moment, and you are safe enough to be here."

RAIN for a hard feeling · 5 minutes

"Recognize — name what's here: fear, shame, craving. Allow — let it be present without arguing with it. Investigate — where does it live in your body, and what does it need? Nurture — place a hand where you feel it and offer yourself a kind phrase: may I be gentle with myself right now. When you're ready, feel your feet and open your eyes."

Where to Find Support



HELP, TEACHERS, AND TRAINING

SAMHSA National Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357) · free, confidential, 24/7, English and Spanish. Text your ZIP to 435748, or visit [FindTreatment.gov](https://www.findtreatment.gov).

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Call, text, or chat 988. Veterans press 1; for Spanish press 2.

Find a TCTSY facilitator

Center for Trauma and Embodiment — traumasensitivelyoga.com

Yoga of 12-Step Recovery

Community meetings and peer support guide training — y12sr.com

Certified yoga therapists

C-IAYT directory, International Association of Yoga Therapists — iayt.org

If you're in immediate danger, call 911.

