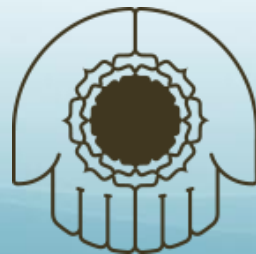


Integrating Yoga and Mindfulness into Practice with Youth

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Oxygen Project
{yoga for youth}

Mindfulness and Yoga



- **Mindfulness** is “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.” (Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, 1994, *Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*)
- **Yoga**: “to unite”; brings together mindful movement, awareness of breath, and mental focus.

Just Breathe

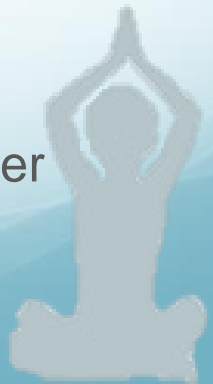
General Benefits of Yoga/Mindfulness for Youth

- Increased body awareness and confidence
- Feeling of safety in the body and mind
- Sense of control over the body
- Decreased reactivity
- Emotional regulation
- Increased ability to focus attention
- Elevated mood
- Stress reduction



Benefits of Yoga/Mindfulness with Trauma

- Non-verbal way to process
- Addresses common threat responses of hyperarousal and dissociation to increase window of tolerance
- Somatic intervention may lead to greater transformation if trauma has occurred during sensitive periods of brain development.
- Decreases cortisol levels, associated with high stress/anxiety
- Effects on the brain:
 - Reduces gray matter in the amygdala (associated with fear and anxiety)
 - Increases gray matter in hippocampus (involved in memory formation)
 - Strengthens communication between prefrontal cortex and other areas of the brain



Grounding/ Calming Techniques

Postures/ Movement:

- Standing (Mountain, Warrior I and II, Triangle)
- Balancing (Tree, Eagle, Warrior III)
- Seated (Forward fold)

Breathwork:

- Anchor Breath
- Alternate Nostril Breath
- Straw-sipping Breath

Meditation/ Relaxation:

- Clouds in the Sky
- Color Meditation
- Progressive Relaxation



Energizing/ Activating Techniques

Postures/ Movement:

- Sun Salutations
- Twisting (Washing Machine, Seated Twist)
- Backbending (Standing Backbend, Camel)

Breathwork:

- Lion's Breath
- "Ha" Breath
- Bee Breath

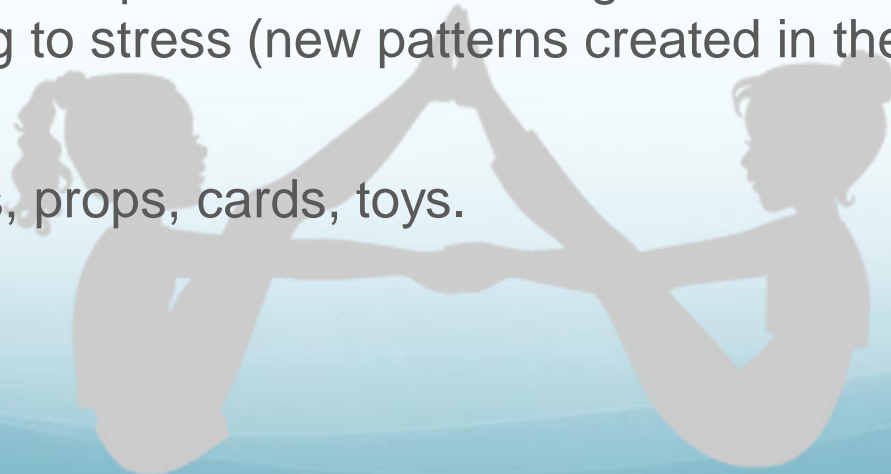
Sound and Mantra:

- Vowel sound chanting
- Mantra in postures



Tips for Integrating Techniques

- Offer choices, check-ins, and an understanding of what to expect.
- Use invitational language.
- Progress gradually (maybe begin with language around body awareness, then breathing, then postures).
- Practice techniques when not feeling anxious to build skills in responding to stress (new patterns created in the brain).
- Use books, props, cards, toys.



Tips for Integrating Techniques

- Include storylines, creative names for techniques, songs, etc.
- Balance energizing and calming/ grounding techniques to encourage self-regulation.
- Give “homework” to encourage consistent practice; check in on results.
- Allow the child to be the guide; meet them where they are.
- Know your limits; refer out when necessary.

