



Trauma-Sensitive Yoga POSITION DESCRIPTION

Introduction:

Trauma-sensitive yoga offers a body-based approach using both the mind and body to promote healing. Trauma-sensitive, body-based yoga helps people to develop body awareness, to learn to befriend their bodies, and to self-regulate core arousal systems.

Trauma-sensitive yoga is a CAM modality that is beneficial for people of differing physical and emotional abilities. Trauma-sensitive yoga can benefit the VA population, including those suffering from PTSD, MST, and other disabilities.

As Bessel van der Kolk, M.D. says, the goal of working with trauma (and most substance abuse issues are rooted in trauma) is to help people live in the present. For people suffering from trauma, safety is the bottom line. But people need to feel their bodies as a first step – to build body awareness. A trauma-sensitive yoga practice can help people learn to befriend their bodies and to feel safe. Only after feeling the body and learning to feel safe in the body can one learn to regulate core arousal systems and to relax using simple breathing techniques. Then people can be more open to other forms of therapy and to counseling.

Program Description:

The trauma-sensitive yoga program will be offered at three times each week for a 12 week period.

The groups will be offered to:

1. Women Veterans Program: women-only class
(2 one hour programs each week: one during the day and one evening)
2. Substance Abuse Residential program:
mixed gender class (one hour a week, during the day)

Trauma-sensitive yoga is specifically designed to offer participants a way to develop skills in each of these areas:

1. Present moment experiences
2. Practice making choices
3. Practice taking effective action
4. Creating rhythms (connections – with self, with others)
5. Developing spatial orientation
6. Sensing body dynamics

*From *Overcoming Trauma Through Yoga: Reclaiming the Body* by David Emerson

Simple trauma-sensitive yoga postures and breathing exercises will be practiced each week. Trauma-sensitive yoga can be done using a yoga mat, a yoga block, or using a chair for those who are more comfortable seated.

Project Cost:

Three classes per week @ \$80.00 per one hour class.

Twelve week program: \$2,880.00

Instructor Principal Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Instruction: The yoga instructor will teach three yoga classes a week for 12 weeks. The yoga instructor will have no supervisory duties.
2. Evaluation: Each week an evaluation form for each participant will be completed and submitted to the VA partner program employees as notes to be added to the patients' charts/files.
3. A Participant evaluation form will be completed by each participant at the end of each yoga class (see attached).
4. Number of program participants will be tracked.

Criteria for Success

- (1) Participation attendance records of the yoga programs.
- (2) Final compilation of the participant evaluations, to include numbers of 'yes' and 'no' for each question and a compilation of all veteran written comments.

In addition, the program will be offered as a research project to student in The University of Utah School of Social Work and in the Department of Exercise Sports Science.

Level of Responsibility:

The yoga instructor will operate under the guidance of the Women's Veteran's Program Manager (Gina Painter). They will collaborate with regard to the patient participation and patient treatment plan.

The yoga instructor will assure that the Wellness Room is clean, presentable and safe for attendees. If there are any problems with the room, housekeeping can be called and Curtis Ivins can be notified to rectify the situation.

Yoga Instructor:

(Relevant information on group or teachers in the program)

Selected Readings to Support the Proposal:

Effects of Trauma and Stress:

The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel van der Kolk, MD. 2014.

Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy by Pat Ogden, 2006.

When the Body Says No: Understanding the Stress-Disease Connection by Gabor Mate, M.D. 2003.

Invisible Heroes: Survivors of Trauma and How They Heal by Belleruth Naparstek and Robert Scaer. 2004.

In an Unspoken Voice: How the Body Releases Trauma and Restores Goodness by Peter A. Levine, PhD. 2010.

In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction. by Gabor Mate, M.D. 2008.

How to Change the Way We Think:

The Emotional Life of Your Brain by Richard Davidson. 2012.

Train Your Mind, Change Your Brain by Sharon Begley. 2007.

Pocket Guide to Interpersonal Neurobiology: An Integrative Handbook of the Mind by Daniel Siegel, MD. 2012.

Overcoming Trauma through Yoga: Reclaiming Your Body by David Emerson et al. 2011.

Article: Yoga and PTSD by Bessel van der Kolk, MD.

<http://www.traumacenter.org/products/..%5Cclients%5CMagInside.Su09.p12-13.pdf>

Yoga as Medicine by Dr. Timothy McCall. Random House, 2008.

Yoga for Depression: A Compassionate Guide to Relieve Suffering Through Yoga by Amy Weintraub. Broadway Books, 2004.

Emotional Yoga: How the Body Can Heal the Mind by Bija Bennett.

Yoga from the Inside Out: Making Peace with Your Body Through Yoga by Christina Sell, Hohm Press, 2003.