



# OPTIMAL STATE

## 865 YOGA THERAPIST TRAINING PROGRAM

### MENTAL HEALTH SERIES OUTLINE

Program Director: Amy Wheeler

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#### **SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING**

The Optimal State Mental Health Series Program is comprised of three parts. We are not offering this program in individual segments at this time. Online classes are held Friday mornings 9:00am-10:00am PST on the Zoom Platform. Residential modules are held at the Comfort Inn Suites near the Ontario Airport (in Southern California) for ease of traveling students.

The three segments of the program include:

- Residential Mental Health Module I in January
- Online Mental Health Module II February to June
- Residential Mental Health Module III in July

#### **PROGRAM FUNDAMENTALS**

##### **Yoga Foundations**

Includes yoga philosophy based on Patañjali's Yoga Sutras, Hatha Yoga Pradipika and Bhagavad Gita; yoga teachings about the nature of mind, the guna-s or forces of nature; and the yogic framework for health and disease including the pañcamaya system, the 4-step model of healing, cakras, vayu-s, etc.

##### **Biomedical and Psychological Foundations**

Includes the anatomy and physiology of the brain and related physical body. We will review of various commonly-encountered conditions from the allopathic point of view; mechanisms of disease, treatment options and prognosis to facilitate integration of yoga therapy with conventional medicine; psychological concepts and mental health conditions; and stages of human development: physical, social and emotional. This section will also include the ayurvedic/samkhya framework of disease and healing and ayurvedic/samkhya subtle anatomy. Additionally, it will include western Psychology and Psychophysiology.

##### **Teaching and Therapeutic Skills**

Includes principles of establishing the teacher-student relationship; communication skills including listening and giving feedback; teaching methods for group and individual classes; and adjusting teaching for learning style differences. This course will also focus experiencing the effects of asana, pranayama, meditation, chanting and bhavana techniques for different illnesses and pathologies (as applied to the individual person).

We will discuss modifications for asana, pranayama, meditation, chanting and bhavana and how they apply to individuals and the disease process. Contraindications will also be discussed for all of the techniques. We will also prepare the students for their practicum experience by having classroom role-playing for intakes, writing courses for short- and long-term goals, and teaching yoga therapy practices to other students in the cohort.

## **PROGRAM FUNDAMENTALS,cont.**

### **Yoga Tools and their Application**

Includes teaching actual clients asana, pra ayama, dhyana and chanting; skills of a yoga therapist (intake and assessment, observation, eliciting goals and expectations, and providing instruction) and therapy course planning for short- and long-term goals (selection of appropriate tools, sequencing and modification over time.) We will bring in live clients to work with from the community to be yoga therapy clients. This work will be the essence of the course. Hands-on application of asana, pranayama, dhyana and chanting is the specialty of our program.

### **Professional Ethics and Practices**

Include ethics (personal integrity, ethics of a therapist including knowing when referral is the best option); knowledge of regulatory laws and good business practices; the value of personal professional development; and the value of sangha (community).

## **TOPICS COVERED**

### **Yoga Psychology**

Students will also learn the latest theories in the fields of stress management & psychology, and neuropsychology. The theories will focus on the mental and physiological effects of the stress response in the human body. Student will learn how to interview and practice active listening, learn how to take intake notes and achieve maximum success with it. Students will learn how to analyze the human body, mind and spirit and begin to create a comprehensive health education plan.

### **Yoga & Anxiety**

Students will learn the different categories, symptoms, and underlying causes of insomnia and anxiety from a western medical perspective as well as a yogic paradigm. The ancient yogic texts describe the differences between patterns of agitation vs. calm stability of the mind. The goal of this module will be for students to learn how to bring their client(s) to a place of calm, clear and alert mind. In this module, students will actively learn and practice how to use breathing techniques and meditation activities to individuals, with the goal of achieving the desired effects of less anxiety and higher quality sleep. Students will learn about yoga as a complementary modality to psychological services and proper referral guidelines. Students will practice filling out intake forms, interview techniques and observation skills on peer-clients as part of practicum preparation.

### **Yoga & Addiction**

Students will learn the different manifestations of and the underlying causes of addiction from a western medical and psychological perspective, as well as a yogic paradigm for healing using postures, breathing techniques and meditation. The ancient yogic texts describe the differences between patterns of agitation and calm stability of the mind. This module will teach students how to train clients with new patterns and coping skills, self- reflection on the triggers of addiction. Students will actively learn and practice how to use breathing techniques and meditation activities to each individual. Students will learn about yoga as a complementary modality to psychological services and proper referral guidelines. Students will practice filling out intake forms, interview techniques and observation skills on peer-clients as part of practicum preparation.

## TOPICS COVERED, *cont.*

### Yoga & Mental Health (Part 1)

Students will learn the signs, symptoms and western treatment protocols for common psychological disorders including PTSD, Schizoaffective Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, and clinical/seasonal depression. Students will learn and practice how to use yogic techniques such as postures, breathing techniques, meditation, visualization and sound therapy to find new ways of helping individual clients to heal and find acceptance of these life-long disordered mental patterns. Students will also understand statistics for compliance and relapse and how to increase the chances that a daily yoga practice will improve mental health. Students will learn about yoga as a complementary modality to psychological services and proper referral guidelines. Students will also learn the latest theories in the field of stress management and psychology of the stress- response. Additionally, students will learn the theory and practice of Yoga Nidra for psychological issues. Students will practice filling out intake forms, interview techniques and observation skills on peer-clients as part of practicum preparation.

### Yoga & Mental Health (Part 2)

Students will learn common signs and symptoms for young people on the Autism spectrum and those with ADHD. Students will also learn the yogic view of these disorders. Specialized movement patterns and breathing exercises are fundamental to help clients and their caregivers have a healthier and happier life. Equally as important are relationship building and empathy training, which are keys to success with these clients. Additionally, the art of being present, active listening skills and empathy building techniques will be explained and practiced: 1) to help each family find acceptance for the new and unexpected path that the family will enjoy together, 2) for their affected young person. Students will learn about yoga as a complementary modality to psychological services and proper referral guidelines. Students will also learn the latest theories in the field of stress management and psychology of the stress-response. Additionally, students will learn the theory and practice of Yoga Nidra for psychological issues. Students will practice filling out intake forms, interview techniques and observation skills on peer-clients as part of practicum preparation.

## HOMework/QUIZZES

Expect 2 hours a week in homework or quizzes each week during this course.

## TESTS

Expect two 50 point tests during the 19 weeks of the online portion of this course.

Boost your health, relationship and life into the *next level* of personal and professional *well-being*. Create your *Optimal State* of Living today.

