



YOGA THERAPIST TRAINING PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Program Director: Amy Wheeler

1. WHAT ARE THE PRE-REQUISITES FOR THIS PROGRAM?

The student must be a registered 200-hour Yoga Teacher or equivalent 200-hours of yoga teacher training and experience related to yoga and meditation to apply.

2. WHAT MAKES THIS CERTIFIED YOGA THERAPIST TRAINING PROGRAM UNIQUE?

- Finish the program at your own pace; typically between 36-48 months
- Combination of in-person and online trainings
- Cost effective (less than \$18 per hour, plus practicum supervision)
- Payment plan available
- Practicum can be done in your hometown, no need to travel
- Yoga in the tradition of T. Krishnamcharya & related models
- Educational experience cohesive from module to module
- High quality teachers with decades of experience in Yoga and Yoga Therapy
- A balanced approach that includes traditional Yoga Philosophy Models, Integrative Medicine & Ayurveda
- Respects that you have a home life and family
- Includes requirements of daily yoga, breathing or meditation practice
- High quality clinical supervision during your supervised practicum

3. HOW LONG IS THE YOGA CERTIFICATION PROGRAM?

36-48 months of course work, you choose your pace, including 1 year or less of supervised practicum in your hometown

4. HOW MANY HOURS IN THE TOTAL PROGRAM?

- Distance Learning (Essential Framework Online) = 90 hours
- In-Person (Yoga Therapy for Mental & Physical Health Series - four 9-day modules) = 335 hours
- Zoom Friday Case Studies = 35 hours
- Community Days (9 days) = 99 hours
- Entering the Yoga Therapy Profession Weekend Retreats (three 3-day retreats) = 100 hours
- Practicum = 207 hours total in your hometown or India
- Practicum Mentoring = 22 hours

5. IS THERE A LOWER OR UPPER AGE LIMIT FOR POTENTIAL STUDENTS?

No. If you can comprehend the material and have a passion for the work, you are welcome to apply.

6. HOW MUCH DOES THE PROGRAM COST?

The cost of the program is \$15,000, plus your program manual costs and practicum mentor fees. The practicum mentor fees are paid over the span of the program. There is a \$50 application fee (non-refundable) and once accepted, a \$1,000 deposit (applied to your tuition and non-refundable). The balance \$14,000 to be paid before the class begins or through our payment program. Please see our *Payment Terms* document for more information on our payment program.

7. ARE THERE ANY EXTRA FEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

The program manuals cost \$500 and payment is due before the program starts. Your practicum mentor fees are estimated to be \$2,000. Your practicum mentor fees can vary and are paid directly to your mentor.

Please note that these costs cover tuition and instruction. The program cost does not include travel, airfare, hotel, rental cars or food. Each student will be responsible for negotiating their own room and board. We do have students who have chosen to rent houses and cook together and can put you in touch with them.

You have the option to purchase additional books from our recommended book list. You will provide your own yoga mat, bolster, blankets, notebooks, etc.

You may need to purchase a computer if your computer is outdated; as older computers are not likely to play audio and video for distance learning modules.

You are encouraged to apply to be a member of the International Association of Yoga Therapists when you begin the program. See www.iayt.org for details.

We also highly recommend that you attend one of more of the IAYT yearly conferences, often held in Southern California, if your budget permits.

8. IS THERE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THIS PROGRAM?

We do have a payment plan available to help you budget for the program. Please see our *Payment Terms* document for more information on our payment plan.

9. IS THERE A WORK-STUDY OR SCHOLARSHIP OPTION FOR THE PROGRAM?

Not at this time. As the program grows, we hope to offer this option.

10. WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS LIKE?

The application process is now open. To begin the process, you will fill out the application, submit a letter of recommendation or have one sent on your behalf (only if this is your first program with Optimal State of Living or Amy Wheeler), and pay a \$50 non-refundable application fee.

When you apply to the yoga therapy program we will create a personalized advising calendar with specific steps and dates for you.

If this your first time participating in a program with Optimal State of Living or Amy Wheeler, we will set up a time to interview you. Once you have submitted your application, you will receive an email within 48 hours to set up a phone call with Amy. We will set up a mutually agreed upon time for an interview via Skype or Web-Ex video. This interview will last no more than 30 minutes.

After the interview you will receive an email within 4 weeks regarding your acceptance status (4 weeks after you have submitted your application if you have already taken a class with us). You might be accepted immediately and we will ask for you to submit your \$1,000 deposit at that time. You may be asked to complete some remedial work to prepare you for admittance and then admitted when this work is complete. Or we, in some cases, may not be able to accept you as a student at this time. In this case you will be notified. If you are accepted we will send you a personalized advising calendar with steps and dates.

11. DOES THIS PROGRAM QUALIFY FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS?

We are now able to provide Continuing Education Credits for Psychologists, LCSW, LPCC, LEP, LMFT and Nurses in California through the Spiritual Competency Resource Center.

12. WHAT KIND OF CERTIFICATION CAN I RECEIVE FOR THIS PROGRAM?

After completing the requirements, you can take your Optimal State Yoga Therapist Certificate of Completion and turn it into IAYT. They will then give you a certificate to become a Certified Yoga Therapist or C-IAYT. IAYT has a small fee to become a C-IAYT (certified by the IAYT as a Yoga Therapist). See www.iayt.org for details.

13. ARE YOU AN IAYT MEMBER SCHOOL?

Yes, we are an IAYT member school. This is different than having an accredited 800-hour Program or being Certified-IAYT. The Optimal State of Living has submitted the application to IAYT for accreditation of our yoga therapy program. We will be able to provide information on our status after IAYT completes its review process.

14. WHERE CAN I DO MY PRACTICUM?

The student will do a 207-hour practicum at the site of their choosing.

Students may choose to develop their own business in their local area. These might be paid or unpaid practicum hours. The practicum mentor will go over each case and help to give guidance and course corrections. These meetings with the practicum mentor will be one-on-one via Skype or in person.

Students must choose yoga clients with a variety of issues. The student must see a minimum of 5 unique people or groups over the course of the practicum. Yoga therapy students must attempt to meet

with each client at least 4-6 times and follow the progress over many months. The 207 hours of your practicum will include both hours with the client, as well as planning and recording progress.

15. WHO WILL BE THE MAIN TEACHERS FOR THIS PROGRAM?

We have chosen to make this a very cohesive program with teachers that share the same philosophy of Yoga and Ayurveda. Each module will blend well with the next for a comprehensive and deep experience. Amy Wheeler will attend every module and share in the teaching duties at each module. The main yoga tradition that will be represented will be that of Sri T. Krishnamacharya (the teacher of TKV Desikachar, BKS Iyengar and Pattabhi Jois). The Ayurvedic medicine teachings will also be cohesive with the philosophy of the overall program. Each teacher has been carefully vetted and chosen so that the student has a deep experience with many different teachers, all arrows pointing in the same direction. Please note that all students, from all traditions are welcome to join this program.

16. CAN I TAKE MORE THAN ONE STEP AT A TIME?

No. Concurrent enrollment in any Optimal State of Living programs is not appropriate. Each step will take your full attention.

17. DO I HAVE TO TAKE THE DIFFERENT STEPS IN ORDER?

Yes. The first step is the Optimal State Essential Framework Online and Community Days. The second step is the Optimal State Yoga Therapy for Mental Health Series. The third step is the Optimal State Yoga Therapy for Physical Health Series. The in-person modules include accompanying tests and quizzes. Zoom Fridays are an integral part of the in-person modules in the second and third steps. The fourth step is comprised of the three Entering the Yoga Therapist Profession Weekend Retreats with focuses on working in the mental health, physical health, and public servant sectors. The fifth and final step is your clinical practicum in your hometown.

18. DO I NEED TO FINISH THE WHOLE PROGRAM TO BECOME A CERTIFIED YOGA THERAPIST?

Yes. Becoming a Certified Yoga Therapist with IAYT is dependent on mastery on all assignments and course requirements. Registration is also dependent on the evaluation of the Yoga Practicum Mentor who will observe your skills and help you to improve areas of deficiency. You will be given written feedback so that you can work on areas of improvement and work toward a successful outcome.

19. I AM DISABLED AND MAY NEED ASSISTANCE, OR I AM WORRIED THAT I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DO THE YOGA PRACTICES. CAN I JOIN THE PROGRAM?

Yes. We are committed to making sure that your needs will be accommodated. We have chosen a yoga studio location/facility that is handicap ready (including bathrooms). The hotel is also able to facilitate the needs of anyone with a handicap. The teachers are happy to wear hearing friendly devices to meet your needs. It should be noted that the videos provided in the program are not closed-captioned.

Regarding the actual yoga practices, these are very gentle techniques including postures, breathing techniques and meditations. They are available and modifiable for people of all ages and abilities. We have taught students that are advanced asana practitioners as well as students who have special needs; for example, a quadriplegic. Every practice can be modified to meet the needs of the students.

20. WILL I BE REQUIRED TO WRITE A THESIS FOR THIS PROGRAM?

No. This program is very experiential in nature. There will be homework assignments, but it will not include a formal thesis paper.

21. HOW MUCH HOMEWORK TIME SHOULD I PLAN FOR EACH MONTH?

Typically homework will be 1-2 hours per week of your time, plus your daily yoga practice.

23. WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE A LIFE EVENT THAT INTERRUPTS MY PROGRAM?

We will do our best to help accommodate your life circumstances. It may be that you will join another class the following year. We will determine the best solution on an individual basis at the time of the event.

24. WILL I BE ASSIGNED A PRACTICUM MENTOR FOR THE PROGRAM?

Yes. When we assign you a mentor we will consider your birth constitution, your area of interest and your location. We will recommend 2-3 people from whom to choose for your personal practice and clinical practicum supervision. You will work with your chosen mentor throughout the entire program, including during your practicum. Please note that your practicum mentor fees are estimated to be \$2,000. Your practicum mentor fees can vary and are paid directly to your mentor. We anticipate that you will need somewhere between 20 and 30 hours of supervision.

25. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT I NEED TO DO A DAILY YOGA PRACTICE DURING THE PROGRAM?

In order to serve others, you must nourish yourself with a practice each day. You will be asked to record a short journal entry about your practice several times a week. You will work with your mentor, peer-mentors and intuition throughout the program to develop a practice that is right for you. It might include postures, breathing practices or meditations. This is mandatory to graduate from the program.

26. WILL THIS YOGA SCHOOL HAVE EXCELLENT ETHICAL GUIDELINES?

Yes. Our yoga school will follow the ethical and professional guidelines of the IAYT. These ethics will be followed during your coursework as a student. When you become a Optimal State Certified Yoga Therapist, you will be expected to follow these ethics with your students, as well. You will be asked to sign a Code of Ethical Behavior before you begin the program.

27. WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN THE IDEAL CANDIDATE?

We are looking for a heart-centered person with integrity and passion for becoming an Optimal State Certified Yoga Therapist. High levels of intellect are appreciated; however, the most important thing is to be able to empathize with the client, be an incredible listener, and create a safe atmosphere for the client to heal. You do not need to memorize Sanskrit or chant mantras to be an excellent Optimal State Certified Yoga Therapist.

If you have additional questions, please contact jacqui@theoptimalstate.com. We will respond within 48 hours and add your question to this FAQ tip sheet.

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