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Yoga as a Therapy for Depression: Senior Thesis Portfolio

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Yoga as a Therapy For Depression

Senior Thesis Portfolio

Lisa C. Vigran

Program in Dance
Department of Theater Arts and Dance

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts
in the College of Communication and Fine Arts
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Part I

Introduction

Yoga as a therapy for depression is a concept that I have just recently become interested in. I have practiced yoga on and off for several years and I noticed a difference in my mood when I was practicing regularly. Yoga for me was a safe zone and, although it is hard work, it is centering and helps me to collect myself.

After several difficult experiences in my life I found my mood suffering and it was beginning to affect how I was living my life. I remembered yoga, and I became interested in why and how yoga can affect someone's mood so profoundly. I decided that for my thesis I was going to explore this question. How does yoga affect our bodies and our moods? I began researching what happens physiologically within the body when we practice yoga and how that process can affect our mood. I studied the history of yoga and its origins. I also followed a prescribed practice and kept journals about my experiences. I had the opportunity to take a private lesson with Marla Apt, an Iyengar yoga instructor who specializes in yoga as a therapy for depression, and I studied how the traditional ideas in yoga overlap with what we now know about human physiology and anatomy.

Over time I began to piece together ideas about how yoga can work to prevent depression. In this thesis I present my journey of discovery about the history and science of yoga as well as my own experiences with my practice. This is only the beginning of what I hope to learn about this topic, for much of the research done on yoga as therapy for depression has been done in India and it is a relatively new idea here in the United States. (Weintraub) There is much more to be learned and if we can manage to pursue this research, we might be well on our way to understanding the intertwined nature of our bodies and our minds and how we cannot address one without the other. Our mood,

which is produced by the chemicals in our body, cannot be seen, or treated as separate from our bodies. Yoga addresses an integration of the body and mind via the physical *asanas* and meditation practice, which affect the chemicals produced by the glands and organs that support a healthy, happy physiological and spiritual being. (Weintraub) I know better understand that we must address ourselves as whole people.

Depression and Healing Methods

There are many different levels of depression; however, in general, depression is defined by symptoms far more extreme than a feeling of sadness, or even sadness that lasts for a week or two. Depression is sometimes felt as a hopeless sadness, or loss of interest in life and activities that were once enjoyable. There can also be a lack of motivation or change in mood other than sadness such as irritability. There are sometimes alterations in sleep patterns and in appetite and weight. (Depression 2).

There are many different levels or severities of depression. There is major depression, which is a deep depression that may last for many months if not treated. It is possible that someone may only have one episode of depression in one's lifetime; however, it is much more probable that an individual will go through bouts of depression. Atypical depression is like major depression except for one distinct difference: positive events or good news may raise an individual's mood temporarily, although they will soon sink back into the depression. Dysthymia is described as a more "low grade depression." (Depression 2). This type of depression is a milder condition; however, it is chronic and can last for years. There may be good days interspersed throughout one's life, although most of life is lived in a state of depression. Yoga can be very effective for dysthymia. Yoga can also be very beneficial for seasonal affective disorder (SAD). SAD is caused by reduced levels of sunlight during the winter months which affects the hormone production in our bodies. (Weintraub 65) Although yoga can be particularly helpful for these last two categories of depression this is not to say yoga cannot be beneficial for other sorts of depression. If practiced correctly and regularly yoga can improve the quality of life for the average person, and more specific types of yoga—as well as

meditation and pranayama—can be beneficial for people suffering from depression.

(Weitraub 65)

In the United States depression has traditionally been treated with medication. Antidepressants are prescribed to alter the chemical and hormonal process of the body which in turn alters our mood. (Depression 2) These drugs can be very helpful. However, there are many other remedies that can be used along with medication to help balance mood in what may be considered a more natural way. Movement in general, meditation, and other ways of focusing the body and mind help to unify and fight the feelings of depression. Specific postures in yoga can fight the mood dips of depression effectively (Weitraub). Antidepressants are probably most effective when used with other supports such as yoga and therapy. It is also important to have a support system around the depressed individual, as well as a supportive community formed around like activities such as yoga, athletics, or some other social networking organization.

Yoga as Prevention

As mentioned in the section titled "Depression and Healing Methods," yoga is most effective when used in conjunction with other methods of fighting depression. It can also be very effective as a preventive method for people who are prone to depression. With consistent yoga practice, physical and mental stability can be achieved and maintained. (Weitraub 6)

It is important to understand that yoga can be used to help cure depression; however, if someone is already taking medication, he or she should not stop treatment and replace it with yoga. (Weitraub) Yoga changes the body and mind, and this takes time. It does not create an instant fix; however, it can be more thorough and effective than an instant fix. Yoga integrates the mind and the body. Through practice we can become more in tune with ourselves, more balanced chemically, and we can learn how to more effectively maintain our own moods.

Yoga for depression has been more fully studied in India than in the United States. Studies in India have shown more positive results than the studies in the this country. This is understood to be because the studies in India have been based on a more regular practice. It is far more effective to study yoga four to six days a week than one or two days a week. (Weintraub 65) More research needs to be done on the minimum yoga practice for preventing and healing depression.

History of Yoga

Yoga began to develop in ancient India and was passed down orally through generations. After many years of transmission as an oral tradition, Patanjali Maharishi, a Hindu vedic scholar, wrote the *Yoga Sutras* in 200 B.C. (Weintraub 57). This *Yoga Sutras* was the first place that definitively delineated guidelines for the practice of yoga as physical asanas, mediation, and pranayama. (Weintraub 57)

The concept of the eight-limbed path is outlined in the *Yoga Sutras*. This path meant to be a tool to help us understand how to work with our minds and bodies. Yoga is not simply the physical practice of postures, or *asanas*, but rather a complex philosophy for life that integrates our minds, our bodies, and how we interact with one another and the world around us. In Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, he outlines nine major distractions from the path of yoga. These include "disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness, laziness, addiction, false perception, failure to reach firm ground, and instability (Weintraub 57)." Patanjali also describes the symptoms that can develop from these nine obstacles or habits. These symptoms are "depression, anxiety, trembling in the limbs, and unsteady breath (Weintraub 57)."

According to Patanjali, there are eight ways that these symptoms and obstacles can be controlled. Ways to control the symptoms are, "restraint, observances, physical yogic postures, breath control, withdrawal of the senses, concentration, absorption, and cosmic consciousness (Weintraub 57)." The Sanskrit translations of these terms can be found in the appendix of this thesis.

It was not until relatively recently, considering the long history of yoga, that it began to make its way into the western world, and consequently the United States. A

yoga master named B.K.S. Iyengar helped move yoga into the consciousness of the western world. Iyengar was born in 1918 into a large, poor family in an impoverished village in India. He had a difficult life and was born with many health problems, perhaps because his mother had suffered from her own health problems during his birth (Taylor 1). When he was nine years old his father passed away and thus left Iyengar to move several times, live with different family members, and work where and at whatever he could find (Taylor 1). When he was fifteen years old Iyengar went to live with his eldest sister and her family, and it was here that he took his first yoga classes. In 1937, after only 4 years of training, he was asked to open a school in Pune by his yoga master (Taylor 1). At first this was very difficult for Iyengar because he was still at the beginning of his training and did not really know enough to be a grounded teacher, or even to practice safely himself. However, over many years Iyengar became a very talented and gifted yoga master. He learned from his own practice and experience, seeing what would work for him and what would not. He was eventually given opportunities to travel and give classes in places such as London, Paris, and eventually the United States (Taylor 1). Iyengar is still alive and in good health (his health improved a great deal with his practice of yoga) and has been teaching yoga for over sixty years. (Taylor 1)

Iyengar yoga is perhaps the best known and most practiced yoga technique today (Taylor 1). However, there have been many other forms of yoga that have developed, for example Hatha yoga, Bikram yoga, Anusara yoga, Kundalini yoga, and so on. These types of yoga are also often intertwined with one another and with some Iyengar. Many people today also practice only the asanas, or postures of yoga, and do not practice the whole philosophy. The philosophy itself has also been modified for current times, and it

does not have to be comprehensively used to be affective; however, it can be very useful to be familiar with all of the eight limbs of the path of yoga even if one does not practice them all.

Yoga has been used to enable those who practice it to live their lives to the fullest; however, certain postures can be helpful in certain types of healing. As we saw in Iyengar's life, the regular practice of yoga improved his health significantly. During his youth, with his yoga practice he recovered from malaria, typhoid, tuberculosis, and malnutrition (Taylor 1).

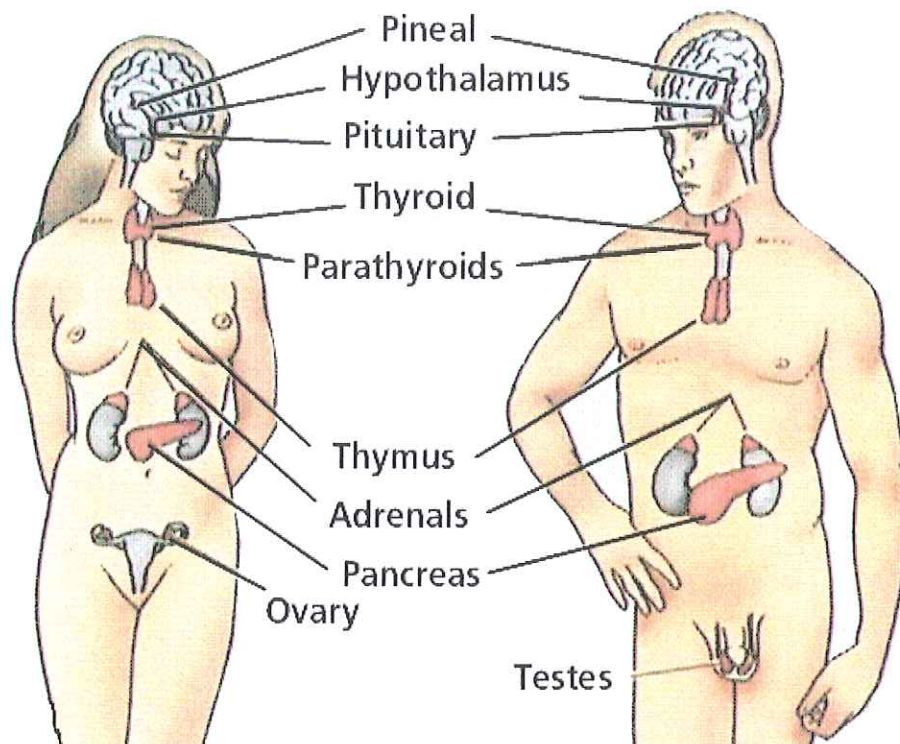
Recently, with the acquisition of knowledge about the human body, it is possible to begin to draw connections between modern science and the ancient science of yoga. Not all people agree on how exactly yoga affects the body-mind; however, the more research that is conducted the more we will see correlations. For example, *chakras* can be seen as overlying the main organs of the endocrine system which stimulate and regulate functions of the body. For example, studies have shown after yoga practice alpha and theta brain waves (responsible for unconscious memory, relaxation and emotions) increased by 40 percent (Weintraub 58). Meditation also alters brain waves and, along with breath, is a traditional part of yogic practices (Weintraub 58). It is also thought that through inversions, increased blood flow, and change the pressure on the brain and glands in the body, hormones release can be increased or decreased based on need and can alter our moods and our health (Weintraub 59).

This alteration in hormones can be especially helpful for certain types of depression. One of these is SAD. "One author hypothesizes that Yoga may be especially effective in treating seasonal affective disorder (SAD). It is theorized that sunlight

stimulates the pineal gland in the brain, which activates certain body chemistry. In the winter, when there is little sunlight directed toward the pineal gland, a seasonal depression, with all the symptoms of dysthymia, can set in. Yogic practices that focus the energy on the crown of the head, through inverted postures, special breathing exercises, visualizations, or by sounding certain tones, can directly stimulate the pineal gland. This stimulation, much like the success of phototherapy (special light that duplicates the sun's effect on the pineal gland), can activate the body chemistry to ameliorate SAD (Weinraub 66).” In general, yoga increases blood flow to parts of the body that may not get ample amounts of blood supply regularly. This also increases oxygen, and in general supports the wellbeing and functionality of these parts of the body (Weinraub 67).

This short introduction to the science of yoga and body-mind support via the glandular system, oxygen support, and blood flow offers us a foundation and appreciation of this age old system as we yearn for science to catch up with what the yoga masters have known for 2000 years.

Endocrine System



The endocrine system is responsible for regulating almost all functions of our bodies. The endocrine system is made up of a series of glands that excrete the hormones (chemical messengers) that monitor these functions. (Hartley) The various glands of the endocrine system excrete hormones that effect specific functions, some affecting other glands of the endocrine system itself and others performing related functions. Hormones specifically related to depressed are epinephrine, norepinephrine, and serotonin. (See Table 1 for a complete over view of hormones.)

While little research has been conducted on yoga as an antidepressant, we can align our theoretical conception of yoga as antidepressant by looking at the connections between serotonin, norepinephrine, and epinephrine. Depression is felt when the serotonin reuptake inhibitors are not functioning properly, and when stress causes norepinephrine to also drop below optimal levels and attention span is decreased.

(Norepinephrine) These drops in hormone levels affect our interest in life and our ability to engage in interest. Yoga is known to reverse depression, yet the science of how this affect occurs is not formally recognized. I aim to understand this relationship by discussing my understanding of the *asanas*, the *chakras*, and the accompanying glands that are stimulated by yoga practice. (Image www.cartag.org.lb/.../NervousEndocrine.htm.)

Important Neurotransmitters and Hormones

Neurotransmitters	Functions and Origins
Serotonin	Neurons in the brain stem produce serotonin, it connects to seven places in the body and the gut releases it. Responsible for cell division. Effects mood.
Norepinephrine	Released from the medulla of the adrenal glands as a hormone into the blood. It is a stress hormone that affects attention.
Hormones	
Hormones	Origin and Function
Growth Hormone	Originates in the pituitary gland. Controls growth of body and processing of nutrients.
Prolactin	Produced in the pituitary gland. Controls milk production in women.
Thyrotropin	Produced in the pituitary gland. Stimulates the Thyroid Gland to produce thyroid hormones.
Corticotropin	Also produced in the pituitary gland. Corticotropin activates the adrenal glands to produce adrenal hormones.
Antidiuretic Hormone	This is produced in the posterior lobe of the pituitary gland. It controls body water. It affects the kidneys and urine.
Oxytocin	Also produced in the posterior lobe of the pituitary gland. It helps to activate the contractions of the uterus when a woman is giving birth.
Thyroxine	Produced in the thyroid gland. Regulates metabolism and energy production.
Triiodothyronine	Also produced in the thyroid and has the same function as thyroxine.
Parathyroid Hormone	Produced in the parathyroids. They control the calcium level in the blood stream.
Corticosteroids	Produced in the adrenal cortex (part of the adrenal glands). Influences balance between salt and water. Influences how our bodies respond to stress, as well as our metabolism and immune system. It also plays a role in sexual development.
Epinephrine	Produced in the adrenal medulla. Commonly called adrenaline. This increases blood pressure and heart rate when our body or mind is under stress.
Melatonin	Produced in the pineal gland. May help to regulate our sleep-wake cycle.
Testosterone	Produced in the testes. Controls sexual development connected to masculinity.
Estrogen	Produced in the ovaries. Responsible for female sexual development.
Insulin	Produced in the pancreas. Controls blood sugar.
Glucagon	Produced in the pancreas. Also helps to control blood sugar.

Chakras

The ancient tradition of yoga has enveloped into so many cultures that there are several ideas about what *chakras* are. Each *chakra* is associated with many things depending on cultural understanding. *Chakras* are associated with colors, energies, levels of consciousness, and areas and functions of the body. The table below is not an all inclusive list of chakras, but covers the elements that are relevant to this thesis.

Chakra	Chakra Characteristics	Location	Gland it Correlates With
Chakra 1 or Muladhara , represented by the color red.	This is our grounding chakra and is associated with earth and stability.	This is our lowest chakra and is located at the base of our spine.	Located lower than any of the endocrine organs this chakra is sometimes thought to relate to our inner adrenals.
Chakra 2 or Swadhisthana , represented by the color orange.	Swadhisthana is associated with water, sexuality, and creativity.	This Chakra is located in our lower abdomen and groin.	Swadhisthana correlates with the lowest endocrine glands. The ovaries and the testicles.
Chakra 3 or Manipura , also known as Nabhi, represented by the color yellow.	Associated with fire, will force, and power. Also with metabolism.	The third Chakra is located in our solar plexus.	Chakra 3 correlates with our pancreas and our outer adrenal glands.
Chakra 4 or Anahata , represented by the color green.	Associated with emotion, and love.	This is the heart chakra located in the chest.	The Anahata chakra correlates with the thymus.
Chakra 5 or Vishuddha , represented by the color blue.	Associated with language and communication.	Vishuddha is located at our throat.	Vishuddha is associated with the thyroid gland of which it is located over.
Chakra 6 or Ajna , represented by the color indigo, purplish blue.	This chakra is associated with light and sight. It helps us look outward and inward to see ourselves.	Ajna is located at the brow, or what is often referred to as our third eye.	Ajna is often associated with the pineal gland, although there is some discussion as to whether it should be associated with the pituitary gland.
Chakra 7 or Sahasrara , the crown Chakra, represented by the color white or violet.	This Chakra is associated with thought and relation to the outside world, also self understanding.	Located at the crown of the head, the highest Chakra.	Associated with the location of the Pituitary gland, although there is some discussion that it should be associated with the pineal gland.

The *chakras* are important to the practice of yoga because they give some guidelines, or concepts to focus on within the body during practice. When studying yoga in connection to the physiology of the body, and the endocrine system in particular, the *chakras* can work as a link between the concepts used in yoga and the anatomical landmarks in the body. It also gives us a terminology, as well as visualizations to use when we discuss yoga, and its connection to our anatomy.

Primary Source Interview and Private Lesson

I was fortunate enough to have a private lesson and the opportunity to interview a yoga teacher by the name of Marla Apt. Ms. Apt is a certified Iyengar yoga instructor who specializes in yoga for depression. When I met with Ms. Apt she led me through some postures that are especially good for people suffering from depression and she began by telling me how yoga for depression places emphasis on the opening of the chest and face to the outside world.

People who have been depressed for some time are often inwardly focused, spend most of their time looking down, and their posture has begun to show this carriage. Part of the purpose of yoga is to bring them out of this introverted state and allow them to meet the world. Along with the opening of the chest and the lifting of the eyes there is a wide spread of the arms. Normally in yoga the fingers are held together, however, when practicing yoga for depression, the fingers should be spread wide, again to meet the world and create a more powerful stance.

There are certain types of postures that Ms. Apt informed me are especially good for yoga for depression. These include inversions, backbends, and some of the restorative postures. Ms. Apt participated in a study on yoga for depression at UCLA. For this study there was practice three days a week and each day was geared around a different focus. One day focused on inversions, another on backbends, and the third was a restorative class that heavily utilizes props such as chairs, bolsters, blocks and straps.


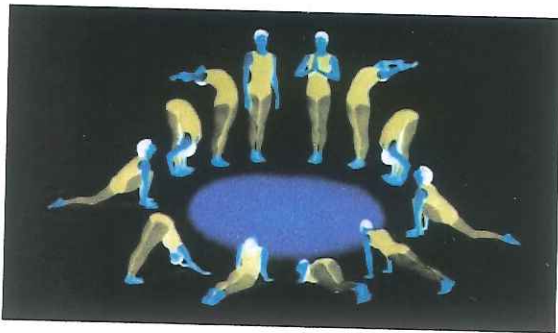
Inversions bring blood and oxygen to the brain, as well as releasing compression on the bottom of the brain and putting compression on the top of the brain. This inverted

position changes the flow of blood and increases oxygen and blood supply. The backbends open our chest and force us to open our posture to the world. The restorative postures allow for the body to maintain positions for a longer period of time than a person may be able to hold on their own in order to further relax muscles, deepen and soften breathing, and be actively supported by the props beneath you. Restorative poses allow compression, or stretch in the body while maintaining relaxation while not causing more tension.

Meeting with Marla Apt was a wonderful jumpstart to my project. She sparked my interest in yoga as a therapy for depression and grounded me with knowledge and trust to begin on my own. She also helped me experience in my own body how these postures felt, and what alignment was correct.

Yoga Sequence for Depression Therapy

This is a chart of the postures I practice with Ms. Apt. There are many different ways to do each posture, however, these were the best representations I could find. The pose that I felt most connected to was headstand. After I practiced headstand I felt energized and ready to go on with the day. However, I enjoy doing headstand at the end of practice, it is not such a good idea to do headstand in the beginning of a practice.

Equipment: Folding chair; bolster; straps; blocks; mat.	
Inversions	
<p>1. Adho Mukha Svasana (Downward facing dog)</p> <p>Downward facing dog is a posture that usually comes early in the practice and is a posture that is returned to throughout practice. Downward dog brings blood to the front of the brain and is considered a good inversion for early in class and for beginners because it has the same effect as a small inversion while keeping both feet on the ground.</p> <p>When I do downward facing I feel invigorated afterwards. It stretches the hamstrings and allows gravity to help and alter the blood flow to the head.</p>	
<p>2. Sun Salutation with Hopping in between postures.</p> <p>Sun salutation is a nice way to warm up before a practice. It can be done with hopping in between to make it a little more athletic, and raise the activity level. Sun salutation includes inversions, strength exercises, flexibility. It is a little bit of everything to get the blood flowing</p> <p>During sun salutation I often feel tired, but afterwards I feel far more awake and I feel energized. My hamstrings also feel long.</p>	

3. Salamba Sirasana (Head Stand)

Head stand is often done against the wall for beginners. It changes the compression from the bottom of the brain (the way it is whenever we are standing) to the top of the brain. For me headstand feels exhausting, however, after I have come down I feel more awake, not really energized but more alert.



4. Salamba Sarvangasana (propped up shoulder stand)

Shoulder stand is especially good for the Thyroid. It brings compression to the throat. After I do shoulder stand I often feel a slight pain in my lower back because of the reversed pull of gravity. Shoulder stand is an easy place for me to feel relaxed although it is not a resting pose.



5. Pincha Mayurasana (Peacock Feather)

This was a very difficult posture for me. It is an interesting inversion and for me personally it took a great deal of concentration. It also took strength to maintain the correct chest and elbow alignment. This is not one of my favorite postures, however it is very challenging, and this can be a very good thing.



6. Adho Mukha Vrkasana (handstand, face downwards)

Handstand is a posture that has really grown on me. I did not always like handstand and in fact it used to terrify me. However, recently I have come to really appreciate handstand. It gives me a sudden rush of energy and makes me feel very happy, almost giddy. This is interesting, when someone is feeling depressed it could be a great thing to be able to get a rush of energy.



Back Bends

1. Urdhva Dhanurasana I (Upwards bow, bridge pose)

Bridge pose is interesting because the first time I perform it I feel very energetic. However, the more times I practice the pose, the more I feel exhausted. After bridge pose I feel like I need rest for my body, but my adrenaline is high.



2. Urdhva Dhanurasana II (Lower into bridge pose)

Lowering into bridge pose is very challenging for me. It requires more strength and flexibility than simply pushing up into bridge pose. I could not do this pose without Ms. Apt spotting me so I did not fall. I lowered into bridge pose I felt a rush of adrenaline. It felt good to conquer a fear.

3. Viparita Dandasana

This is a supported back bend of the Iyengar style. It allows the body to sustain this position, stretch the chest and shoulders, without causing stress on the lower back. For me this posture was nice because it did not take the same amount of strength as the bridge pose.



This is a supported resting pose. It is the posture in which we practiced pranayama. It allows the shoulders open and relax the body at the same time. It is even more of a relaxed resting pose than Viparita Dandasana.

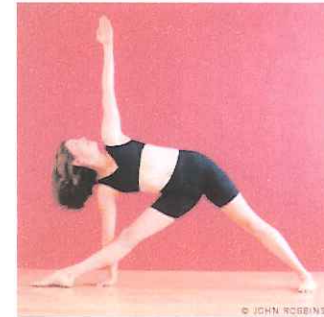
For me this felt even better than Shavasana. I felt relaxed and supported with no compression. It was calming for my mood.

Standing Poses



1. Uttihita Trikonasana (Triangle pose)

Although triangle pose is one that should feel fairly stable, it is a difficult one for me. It is good for depression because there is a need for constant effort toward opening the hips and the shoulders. There is one place in my upper back that does not like to open, and this pose was really good for me, it helped me notice my sticky spots in my spine.



2. Virabhandrasana (Standing lunge)

Standing lunge is good for depression because, once again, it helps to open the chest while pushing with great effort through the legs. It requires a strong stance, and for me it gets quite fatiguing.



Pranayama

1. Although there is Pranayama for depression we did not do an entire pranayama, we simply did a basic breathing exercise in the ending pose. We worked on deep breath without moving the ribs.



Iyengar, The Path to Holistic Healing

Conclusion

When I look back over the time that I have spent researching and experiencing this thesis, I have a strange sensation. I feel like the knowledge I have accumulated during this process has become so much a part of me that it is difficult for me to remember that I did not always know and understand these things. I took what I learned into the classroom, to use both in my dance classes and my academic classes. When I think about my life or the outside world I find myself drawing correlations with yogic philosophy, or remembering something that I read about the mind body spirit connection. I have also learned how important it is for me to continue to practice yoga on a regular basis, and I am just at the start of my journey of the investigation regular practice of yoga. This is a hopeful place for me to be at the end of this thesis; I have ideas about what I am interested in and now that I have begun to learn about yoga for depression, and yoga in general, I can see how much more there is for me to learn.

Appendix A: Definitions of Yoga Terminology

Yoga Terminology	Definition
<i>Atman</i>	Our Consciousness, our true nature
<i>Kleshas</i>	Afflictions
<i>Avidya</i>	Ignorance
<i>Raga</i>	Attraction
<i>Dvesha</i>	Aversion
<i>Asmita</i>	“I-ness,” self-centered perspective
<i>Yama</i>	Restraint
<i>Niyama</i>	Observances
<i>Asana</i>	Physical Postures
<i>Pranayama</i>	Breath practice and control
<i>Pratyahara</i>	Withdraw of the senses
<i>Dharana</i>	Concentration, focus
<i>Dhyana</i>	Absorption
<i>Samadhi</i>	Cosmic Consciousness
<i>Chakra</i>	Spinning wheel of energy of which there are traditionally seven
<i>Ahimsa</i>	Non-harming, one of the five Yamas
<i>Satya</i>	Truthfulness, one of the five Yamas
<i>Asteya</i>	Nonstealing, one of the five Yamas
<i>Brahmacharya</i>	Chastity, one of the five Yamas
<i>Aparigaha</i>	Greedlessness, one of the five Yamas
<i>Shauca</i>	Purity, one of the five Niyamas
<i>Santooha</i>	Contentment, one of the five Niyamas
<i>Tapas</i>	Austerity, one of the five Niyamas
<i>Svadyaya</i>	Self-study, one of the five Niyamas
<i>Ishcara-pranidhana</i>	Surrender to the Lord, one of the five Niyamas

Appendix B: Journals

After each of my yoga practices I kept a journal of how I felt during and after the practice. This was interesting because if I had done yoga more regularly as I would have liked I think my experience would have been very different. I noticed that during the few weeks that I was practicing consistently I had a very different experience from the periods of time in which I wasn't practicing as consistently.

Below are my journals. Some are from various classes and different styles of practice. Some of the journals are from my personal practices, which I found far more difficult to commit to regularly. I had a struggle with motivating myself, so, as a result, some of the journals are simply about one or two postures. I tried to do at least a simple posture even if I was not feeling up to doing much of anything because of the depression that my yoga practice was designed to intervene. This is my irony, and yet every depressed person's reality.

The most important thing my journals revealed to me is that consistency in practice is the key to a stabilized mood.

2-2-07

Thesis Journal #1

Today was my private lesson with Marla Apt. She was very nice and talked me through a private for someone with depression. She told me more about what everything was for than she would have if I had simply come for a lesson, and so I got a better understanding of the different purposes of the postures, and how they would help someone struggling with depression.

She said the main things to work on were inversions because they are invigorating, backbends because they open the chest and armpits to the world, and being aware of distal parts of the body to take space and be open. She said in general the Iyengar yoga has very specific corrections, however, when they are working with people on depression they are less interested in corrections and more interested in the general opening and space taking of the body. Marla told me that when people are depressed their posture tends to sink in and down, and their gaze is often focused on the floor. In this practice I was told to keep looking ahead with eyes wide open, chest lifted, and shoulders pulling down and back.

We started the practice with some downward dog, trying to release the thoracic spine and sternum to allow the chest to move forward. We then moved on to a sun salutation, the first few times just regular, and then jumping from pose to pose. Marla said that the practice with a person struggling with depression is designed differently depending on the person. She said an older person may feel irritated or unsettled with all the jumping, however a younger person may find it invigorating.

We then moved on to some inversions. We began with handstands against the wall. It was difficult for me to get up initially but once she helped me up I was able to work on opening the chest in the inverted position while pushing down through the hands and lengthening the side body. We then did elbow stand, where you balance on your forearms while going into an inversion. This was new to me but interesting, and we worked on the same opening and lifting as in the handstand. Then we did head stand, this was easier for me. I was able to get up alone and again work on the same lengthening

principles. After all the inversions I felt more awake and like I had more energy than I did going onto the practice.

After inversions we did some standing poses. We did triangle pose while really focusing on opening the chest. We also did another pose which I cannot remember the name of right now, but both feet pointed the same way and we came to a lunge with the arms stretched upward and the chest lifting along with the eyes.

We then moved into back bends. We started with a supported back bend using a chair and blankets. This was new to me but worked well. Even in a supported pose there was a lot of effort involved to open the chest and retain the posture. This seemed to be a theme, to never let the body feel dormant or sink into itself. We then moved onto unsupported back bends, like bridge pose. This was tiring, but energizing. Marla then spotted me while I lowered back into the bridge, and after a few of these she helped pull me back up to standing.

I did one pose using the ropes on the wall, I simply held the ropes and let them pull my arms behind me while I raised onto my toes and lifted my chest while I bent back. Marla showed me some of the other props that they would use with someone who had difficulty with back bends. These were interesting to see and try to feel the different ways that someone could be supported.

Toward the end we did shoulder stand, and then a very supported plow that allowed me to basically hang passively. This was supposed to allow me to relax my neck and jaw, these are two places where tension is often held in the muscles during depression. We then did this thing where we rocked back into plow and then into forward bend. We did this ten times fast, and I could feel my back relaxing.

At the end of the practice we did not do Shavasana. Instead she set me up with a strap in butterfly position with my legs and had me lay back on a blanket. This supported pose opened my chest so that my body would not go back to sleep as it may in Shavasana. Marla said that the pranayama practice in Iyengar yoga is a separate practice, so we did not do the special breathing, however, while I was in my final pose she had me try to breath without letting my abdomen rise. This was difficult but made me breath into my chest.

When I first came out of the yoga studio I felt very happy and excited. I had not worried while I was in the classroom about all the things that have been worrying me all the time. It was a nice release. The great lift in mood did not last a very long time, maybe half an hour. However, it was the first time in a long time that I had had a time out from my worries, and I feel like I have an idea of how to continue on. Overall, it was a great experience, and I learned a lot.

I also learned that in the yoga philosophy suffering is caused by the lack of acknowledgment and connection with the collective "self" and the fixation on the personal and individual "self". I found this very interesting.

Journal Entry

Friday March 9, 2007

Bikram Yoga Practice

This morning I went to a Bikram yoga class that was supposed to go from 7:00 until 8:30 but it went until about 9:00. It was very interesting because I had not done Bikram yoga before. The best I could gather is that this type of yoga practice is set, meaning it is always the same sequence of exercises. The room is heated, I do not know how hot it actually was but it felt about 100 degrees. This made the practice more exhausting, and I was sweating in the first five minutes.

I was focusing on the practice, but also thinking about how the postures they were doing would fit into the poses that help to battle depression and anxiety. They did not do many of these poses. For example, there were no inversions. there were a few very mild back bends, however, there was no bridge pose, or anything like that. Because it was not a restorative class there were of course no prop assisted restorative poses. The majority of the class seemed to me to focus on standing poses, with a significant amount of time dedicated to balancing postures.

The postures were preformed twice in a row. The first time was longer, and the second time was shorter but was supposed to begin at the depth in the body that the previous longer set had finished in.

Senior Thesis Journal

Yoga Practice

3-12-07

Today I was feeling very tired. I have been tired a lot lately, but today seemed even more so, maybe because it was our first day back in classes since spring break. I really did not want to do yoga (along with not wanting to do anything else). Even though I know it sounds really wimpy, I tried to make a deal with myself: just do one yoga pose. This is of course hardly anything, however I was afraid I was not going to be able to make myself do anything at all, all I really wanted was to crawl into bed.

I chose to do a head stand in the hopes that it would give me the energy I needed to get ready for bed (even though it is only a few minutes after nine). I did do a head stand against the wall and it was very helpful. Before I did this I was so tired I felt like I could do nothing. Recently it has been happening to me occasionally that I get so exhausted I can not really function. I often fall asleep on the couch or sitting on top of my bed, wherever I happen to be when I run out of energy. After I did the headstand, I had a small "burst" of energy. It was actually not so bursting as just existing, the energy to do a few more things. This energy did not last long at all, however I think it would have lasted longer had I practiced more than one headstand. However, it was interesting to me that with even one simple inversion, I could have five more minutes of being awake, and functioning.

Senior Thesis Journal

3-18-07

Yoga Practice

This morning I did a short yoga practice. I had previously done some arm waits and abs and ballet strengtheners for my external rotators. Because I had been moving I think I had worked off my morning blues. I decided to work on some inversions today. I closed my door and used it to help me balance on the inversions. I tried to start with handstands which really scare me. I became really frustrate because I can not get up on my own, but in my private with Marla Apt she suggested that I just keep trying and it will come pretty soon. I can tell I am really close but it gets frustrating and I did not get up today. I then did some head stands and tried to balance without the door. My goal is to do them in the center of the room but I did not do that today. I could not quite find the balance point in reference to the door.

Right now I am feeling tired, a little shaky and a little frustrated. I do not however feel sad. I feel a little irritated like I really want to succeed with my goals in yoga and my goals in life. I think this is good, or at least better than feeling depressed.

Senior Thesis Journal

3-19-07

Yoga Journal

Today we did some yoga instead of ballet. Tekla led the practice and it was only about 20 or 25 minutes long. I do not know what school of yoga we were doing but it was really fun. It moved really quickly and we did several sun salutations in a row. There seemed to be a lot of emphasis put on chataranga, we did this between almost every exercise.

I found this sort of quick and continual movement very helpful. I found that I did not have a great deal of time to think about things that were worrying me. This also probably meant that I did not have a great deal of time to focus on my alignment either and this is not good. However, it may be useful every once in a while to just practice without picking myself apart.

I found that my body really started to warm up in a way that it does not usually. My hamstrings and calves really grew warm and began to lengthen and my heels go significantly closer to the ground. My arms got tired from all the plank positions and the lowering down and the downward dog. It felt nice to be shaky and tired from yoga.

I find that I benefit more from a lead practice than from practicing by myself even if when I practice on my own I do poses more specific to yoga depression. I feel more discouraged being in a room by myself, but practicing with other people and an instructor to correct me and give me feed back feels much better. I think this is interesting, it seems to clearly link my mood with the feeling of isolation or company as well as physical exercise.

Senior Thesis

3-23-07

Yoga Journal

Today I took Ella with me and we signed up for the two week trial at yoga works. We took an Iyengar lass from a woman I don't know but it was a good class (at least I thought so). We worked in a very slow but deep way. We did a lot of hamstring stretching and upper body opening.

I really felt a difference in my body after class and I think this difference in my body spread to my mood and state of mind. With the opening of my chest I felt like I opened up to the world a little bit. This is always good when I feel this way after yoga, but the feeling never stays very long. I wonder if I do the yoga frequently if this feeling will last longer or if I need to do yoga all the time to have this feeling.

It was interesting to me how in the Iyengar class (even though it was not a restorative class) we used props for almost everything. It was a very crowded class, especially when everyone was suppose to find a spot on the wall for themselves. It was overall a very good class and although I did not even sweat, I felt a lot different after class, in a very positive way.

Senior Thesis

4-1-07

Yoga Journal

Today I went down to yoga works in Santa Monica and took an Avenger class from Marla Apt. It was good to take her class since she is the woman who gave me the private lesson on yoga for depression. She has a very straight forward manner which I find nice for yoga, the instructions were clear concise and exact.

We did a lot of work against the wall (actually all the work was against the wall) to feel supported and help be aware of alignment. It was interesting because we did a lot of work with our feet pressing into the wall and then lifting one or the other of our legs and stretching it in different ways while trying to maintain proper alignment and keep the supporting leg (the one rooting into the wall) active and engaged in such a way that it will support the action. The main thing we kept focusing on was keeping both sides of the back long and keeping the hips level. This was interesting because this is what I have been working on in ballet.

After the class I felt very relaxed. I was in a pretty good space, or mood, and I just wanted to sit still and not worry about anything. I think that it is really good for me to move every day, although it seems difficult for me to make myself go to class or practice on my own every day.

Senior Thesis Journal

4-2-07

Yoga Journal

Today I went and took a yoga class at Yoga Works. I took the lunch time flow class and it was different than the past few classes I have taken. It was interesting because it was much more moving than the Iyengar classes. Before class I felt like I was tired and really hungry. I did however get tired very quickly, I hope this was because I did not have a chance to eat before class, and not because I am completely out of shape.

After class I was in a sort of daze. The more yoga I have been taking the more I have been feeling in a yoga daze after class. I feel really relaxed and like I could float away. I love how I feel after yoga and I am beginning to feel almost like I am addicted to the practice of yoga. This recent feeling has been making me think that I am having chemical changes in my brain or physiology of some sort.

The rest of the day until recently I was in a very good and mellow mood. For some reason of which I am not certain I have been feeling sort of sad for the past two hours, but up until then I felt pretty good.

Today I had ballet in the morning and it was very interesting because the yoga class I took last night was an Iyengar class and really focused on what I had been working on in ballet. When I went into ballet today I felt very aware (in a new way) of my hip alignment and the length in my back. I was almost frustrated because I could feel what was not working but my body was not really in a place to fix it. However, I thought it was pretty amazing how the yoga class and the ballet class were really working together to inform me of how my body is working and how it should be working.

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Part II

Cultures of Dance

Dance has existed for thousands of years, and has developed in cultures all over the world. In our traditional “Western” culture there are a few specific understandings of what dance and who dances. There are trained dancers, for example all the people in the LMU dance program, and there is social dancing, that takes place at clubs and school dances which takes to formal training. Because this is part of our culture this is sometimes all that people consider dancing. However, it can be very interesting and rewarding to take a step back and observe what other cultures experience as their understanding of dance, where it takes place, and who it is that does the dancing, and for what reasons.

In Pegge Vissicaro’s book *Studying Dance Cultures around the World*, there is a chapter titled “Human Interaction”. This is an interesting chapter because it looks at the role that various social structures play in dance. It examines how people think about dance and community. The chapter also looks at how being raised in a specific tradition influences what individuals see as dancing and the appropriate, traditional behaviors that surround the dance.

Vissicaro discusses two different types of dance organizations. One is community, and the other is a society. Community is a group of people who come together to dance and have some things in common, even if it is only that they enjoy the same dance. Then there is society. A society is something that anyone can join. The example used in the chapter is “The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, established in 1923, with the purpose to protect and promote the standards of Scottish country dancing.” (Vissicaro 49). This is an organization that can be joined by all sorts of people from

every corner of the world, and there is no limit to how many people can join. This is a very different idea from community.

When I look at where I dance, and friends of mine dance I see several different types of communities. I dance Argentine Tango, and there is a community of tango dancers in Los Angeles. There are individuals who I know by name, and individuals who I recognize, and also many others whom I do not know at all; however, we meet on Fridays to go out dancing, some of them I see when going or coming from my dance lesson. We are all interested in the Tango, its history, the dance, to a certain extent the music, and these (along with attending the same events) are the things that make us a community. I also am part of the dance community at LMU. We have a dance program that (although it is growing) is small enough for us to know each other by name, and if not by name, we definitely recognize one another as we walk across campus. We spend a great deal of time together, we have class, rehearsals and other events we attend together. We share many experiences together and often spend even more time out of class together, because we are friends as well. All these factors create a very close community. We all have similar expectations for our classes, as well as our behavior in the classroom.

My little sister is in a salsa club at her school. This is another example of a dance community. People get together because they enjoy the dance, they take time out of their day once a week to come together and have a chance to do something together. Even if they do not spend more time together out side of the time they are dancing, they can still be a close community.

The following chapter in Vissicaro's book is "The Dynamic Individual". This is a very interesting chapter that addresses issues such as "World View" and "Culture"

(Vissicaro 59). According to Vissicaro these are two of the main things that effect how a person makes sense of the world around them.

In my "Interpersonal Communications" class freshmen year, we talked a little bit about how a person's world view develops. We talked about the difference between world view and "Culture" that can occur within different sections of the community, for example the different world views of men and women. Even though there are often men and women within the same community, in communications we examined how men and women are sometimes two communities. World view is established through how a person is raised, and then a person's personal life experience, so of course the world view of a younger generation will be different than that of their grandparents, they have been raised differently, and their life experience has been much different, therefore, even if a grandchild and grandparent live in the same house, and therefore family community, or the same neighborhood, they are in a way a separate community.

This chapter also looked at morality according to different cultures and how morality is involved with dance and what is considered acceptable and what is not. Through out history religion and dance have been intertwined. There are several classes I have taken at Loyola Marymount University that discussed the relationship of dance and religion. In my "Religions of the Near East" class that I took from Prof. Sumek my junior year, we discussed how some of the religions thought about and either practiced or did not practice dance. We watched a film of the whirling dervishes, and learned about how they use movement and dance to grow closer to God. However, in many branches of Christianity, as well as many branches of Islam dancing is seen as an activity that will lead one toward sin.

In my lower division philosophy class, we read some of the works of Socrates. Socrates was not a Christian, he lived before the Christian era, however my understanding of Socrates' philosophy had some similarities with my generalized view of Christianity (I know not all branches of Christianity believe the same, and not all Christians are alike). Socrates seemed to preach a clear separation between the mind and the body. He seemed to see the mind as much more worthy than the body, and the body as the downfall of the mind, the desires of the body leading the mind to corruption. Of course being a dancer I could not find it within myself to agree with this, and I felt that it was philosophy and academia in general that insisted on separating a person into two separate parts, valuing one so highly above the other.

Last Semester, (Fall 2006) I took my upper division philosophy class from Dr. Wilson. The class was "Ethics in the News" and we looked at Aristotle, Kant and Mill. In this class I did not get the impression that there was a necessary divide of a human being. In my office hours with Dr. Wilson we had a discussion about the traditional simplification of philosophy that gives the impression that the mind and the body should be separate entities, however, I learned that not all philosophers feel this way, and some indeed feel that the integration of the whole person is indeed very important. This was a very reassuring lesson for me. However, through my exploration of philosophy, I have thought a lot about the idea of morality. Whether they are philosophical or a religious, ideas of morality can severely affect the acceptance of the body, and usually linked to that of dance in any given culture.

Vissicaro also discussed they different settings where dance was acceptable and recognized in different cultures. I have found myself fascinated with world dance classes

here at Loyola Marymount University. It is always interesting for me to learn where in the culture the dance is practiced, and why. And then it is of course always interesting to learn the movements themselves, and be exposed to the music. I think that my first world dance class was "Dance of India", I took it my Sophomore year. I learned some Baratanatyem, a classical dance form of India. This dance form started in the temples, and was dance by women, mostly priestesses. It was a very interesting dance that was composed of many different complex rhythms expressed through stomping. There was great attention paid to detail in the face, hands, feet, and postures. Even though the dance form has moved into many different schools around the country, and is preformed all over the world, Baratanatyem quite often still expresses the traditional religious stories of the Hindu tradition.

My junior year I took "Dance of Bali". This had some similarities to dance of India, for example the attention to detail. However, the main similarity was the originality of the dance form in and for a religious purpose, it began to develop in the temples, and although it is now practiced many places, it is still found in the temples of Indonesia.

My junior year I also took "Dance of Mexico", and although my instructor for this course did not talk as much about the origin of the dance form, I got the impression that although the dance form may be practiced at some religious gatherings, it evolved more as a social dance.

Exploring the different world dances, how people perceive and grow to understand what dancing means, and trying to understand how a world view begins to be created and culture passed from generation to generation is very important. By learning

about these things we can broaden our own world view, and through learning other cultures, we can turn around and examine our own, either through the eyes of another culture, or simply next to a culture. As Vissicaro writes about, our world view tells us how to perceive other cultures and their dancing, so if we can understand other's world view, or at least learn about it, we can look at our own dances, and dance culture and see what we think when taking a step back.

Senior Thesis Review of Classes

Freshman Year

Dance Comp I and II

- Introduced us to new ideas of what dance can be
- intro to composition principles
- gesture, transition, repetition, augmentation etc.
- intro to the elements of dance vocabulary
 - space, time, shape, and energy
- discovering creative processes
 - willingness to take risk, discovery of body mind and spirit, individual voice, development of ideas

Dance Styles and Forms

- Some dance history
 - Learned about happenings
- More intense focus on using and exploring compositional devices
 - Important of a motif, diminishing, augmentation
- Learned and practiced music dance relationship
 - Mickey Mousing, wallpaper, meter
- Partnering fundamentals
 - active and passive energy
 - toll someone, drag someone, mirror, lift, travel together, make someone fall but stop them before they hit the floor
 - developed music/partner study

- intro to discovering our own personal aesthetic
 - discovering and developing our own movement signature

Laban

- learned basic laban notation
- body patterning/total body connection
 - movement development of infants
- studied more deeply the elements of movement
- learned body part phrasing
 - simultaneous, successive and sequential movement

Music For Dance (In process)

- Drumming rhythms
- Another type of learning process
 - watch and imitate
- Call and response singing

To Dance is Human

- Dance from different cultures
 - learning to appreciate differences in values
- breaking down the definitions of what is dance and what it means to be human
- Sharing cultural stories
- discovering self and our individual cultural markers

Dance History

- Looking at the development of (mostly) western dance from French courts till now
- Learned how to research and write a dance analysis paper

- How to speak about dance in an intelligent way in relation to history
- Learned about prominent choreographers

Kinese I and II

- Learned about bones structure
 - bone rhythms
- Muscular structure
 - Origin and insertion
 - function
- cellular structure
- How bones and muscles work while we dance
- some nutrition
- bone and muscle development
- circulation pattern

Principles of Teaching (In process)

- How to develop a lesson plan and a class
- California standards for teaching
- what is appropriate for different age groups
- How to make corrections
- How to communicate with other teachers/principles
- Importance of dance in a school curriculum
 - How dance can help build a fully rounded child
 - How dance can be used to teach other things, ex. science

Dance as Social Action

-How dance can be used to inform people of social issues and make a stand on political and social issues

-How to use tools to involve and activate the audience

-posters, statistics etc.

-how to incorporate outside sources, especially news, such as news papers and other news media into our improve. and choreography

-incorporating text into our work

-using improve as a source for choreographic creativity

-learned how to constructively criticize dances to improve them and lead them closer to their goal

Ballet

-Learned to lift from core

-How to align body

-How to work through the feet

-how to hold arms from the back

-how to brush the leg up instead of lifting it

-how to use imagery to project and find new ways of working in the body and finding specific muscles

-Ballet vocabulary

-Musicality

-How to dance with live music

-how to use resistance and opposition to stabilize the body

Modern

Damon Rago:

- Introduced me to an entirely new way of moving, new movement pathways
- new vocabulary, ex. vertical plain, horizontal plain etc.
- correct alignment in parallel
- foot articulation
- intro. to being comfortable upside down
 - inversions
 - gorilla scooches
- intro. to rolls
- became familiar with time signatures other than the usual ex. 7 and 12
- taking physical risks
- learned how the pelvis and pelvic floor are essential to movement
- The importance of using breath

Sharon Kinney:

- Introduction to Paul Taylor style movement
- Challenge of going from one style of modern to an almost entirely different idea of modern movement ex. no inversions, more balletic
- Emphasis on contractions

Maria Gillespie:

- How to invert with extreme control
- release technique
- how to connect movements and move with flow
- more complex pathways, especially on the floor

- How to move with increased musicality
- How to stay really positive while working with difficult material

Holly Johnston: (workshop and modern)

- High velocity movement
- slow articulated movement
- how to stand up to the effort and the work
- discovering our inner animal
- maintaining correct alignment and technique while moving through complex movement pathways
- attention to detail in terms of defining space
- muscular awareness

Jazz

- really learned to dance and feel emotion and free
- technique in center
- being conscious of how we used our bodies (which muscles)
- maintaining a stable core yet allowing all other parts of the body to move freely
- learning choreography in various genres of jazz dance
- learning choreography quickly and perfecting it in the style it was shown us

Hip Hop

- Intro to breaking, intro to popping, intro to house and hip hop house
- musicality
- hip hop technique
- practiced free styling

Yoga For Dancers

- built strength and flexibility
- built body awareness
- familiarized with yoga vocabulary
- learned the structure of a yoga class to meet a particular goal
- practiced journaling to watch our progress
- learned about muscular structure
- learned how to activate certain muscles
- used imagery to help maneuver the body

Dance of India

- Learned how classical Indian dance uses the body
- Using eye movements in choreography
- stories told with the body, especially hand gestures
- poly rhythms in the body, feet moving one way while hands move another, the head moves another, and the eyes move another
- the importance tradition and religion play in the dance form
- how to wrap the cloth that is worn during training
- how to stop multiple rhythms, sevens, eights, fives etc.

Dance of Bali

- A traditional dance from Indonesia
- how to wear the traditional costume
- the hand and feet positions used in Balinese dance
- how to perform with live musicians

-traditional makeup

Dance of Mexico

-some traditional folkloric dances

-the rhythms used in the feet

-did a report on something from Mexico

Classical Dance of Spain (In progress)

-Castanet's

-Balletic classical Spanish dance

Argentine Tango

-how to work with a partner

-the culture surrounding tango

-steps of traditional argentine tango, and the creativity and innovation accepted in

creating new steps

-milonga (social dancing) as well as performance dancing

Aesthetics Statement

I prefer different aesthetic qualities when I am dancing, when I am choreographing, and when I am watching dance. Within each of these categories there are many different styles and aesthetics that I enjoy. Even within the different styles there are elements that I particularly enjoy and elements that I do not particularly enjoy.

When it comes to dancing there are many styles that I enjoy, however it was not always this way, it took me some time to appreciate some of them. My sophomore year I took my first lyrical jazz class, and it did not take me long to fall in love with it. It took me a while to get into the type of movement, however, I grew to love the breath in the movement and the feeling of contraction and release. When I move this way I feel a sort of freedom that is almost healing for me. It gives me an outlet for emotion. I have also grown to love modern, however I am partial to high powered athletic movement, I am not such a fan of classical modern. I love ballet. I love it even though my body is not really built for it. I love taking class, I think I appreciate the bound movement, and the focus on detail within the body. Over all I enjoy hip hop, although there are some styles of which I am not so fond. I have really fallen in love with dance from Asia. The two classes I have been fortunate enough to experience were dance of Bali and dance of India. There were similarities in these two dance forms that I really enjoy moving to. There is great poise, great intricacy of hand motions, focus, and head placement. There is a great deal of plie in a way that causes the pose to not be symmetrical, and clear shapes and negative space is formed. I have also fallen in love with Argentine Tango. I love the connection with the music and with a partner. I like how improvised the dance can be, and the unspoken conversation necessary between partners. I love the Argentinian culture, and

the community surrounding tango. As far as more commercial jazz is concerned I did not think it was something I would enjoy. However, at the finale this semester I got the opportunity to participate in a jazz piece, and I actually really enjoyed it, I love the energy. When it comes to Laban movement, there are many things that I enjoy depending on the day. It is hard for me to narrow this down too much.

When I am choreographing (which is not my favorite thing) I enjoy a far more limited aesthetic preference. I tend to use bound movement, especially when standing, and perhaps some pedestrian movement. I also like to use the floor, and my movement on the floor I much more free flowing. I really enjoy creating shapes and using things like flexion that may be found in Balinese or Indian dance. However, I also like to incorporate more classical lines, arabesque, attitude, etc. These in general are my aesthetic preferences when I am choreographing.

As an audience, or observer of dance it is far more complicated. For example there may be one modern piece that I love and one I do not like, even perhaps performed by the same company. However, on the whole I love watching ballet, both classical and more contemporary. I enjoy watching some modern, again more high powered movement, and not so much classical modern. I like watching Jazz, however, not in very long sittings. Tap can either be very fun and intricate or can get a little bit tedious for me. Watching musical theater is fun for me, I love the combination of movement and song. I am very intrigued by almost any world dance. I am fascinated by the combination of art, ritual, music, costumes and unique movement qualities.

I am always interested in trying anything new, either as a dancer, or as an observer. You never know when you will see something new and wonderful, and even if

the performance, or dance experience is not the best, it gives you insight into who you are and what you like.

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SEARCH

[Select Medical Corporation](#)

Physical Therapist Assistant Location: CA - Visalia

Job Description

NovaCare Rehabilitation, a division of Select Medical Corporation, is a nationally prominent, locally driven provider of outpatient physical rehabilitation. We offer a wide range of core and specialty programs that focus on prevention and rehabilitation. Comprehensive benefits and competitive pay. To learn more about nationwide opportunities visit www.novacare.com
EOE

Job Specifications

Position Type: Full-Time

Job Source: Company Placement

Benefits: 401(k), Bonus Plan, Dental Insurance, Disability Insurance, Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Paid Training, Paid Vacation, Paid Sick Leave

Job Requirements

Education: PTA Certificate

Minimum Experience: Not Required

Contact Information

Hiring Company: NovaCare

Contact Name: Cheryl Scialpi

Contact Phone: 1 888 735 6332 x 6405

Contact Fax: 1 717 412 9277

Contact E-mail: cscialpi@selectmedicalcorp.com

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[Southern California Sports Rehabilitation](#)

Physical Therapist Assistant Location: CA - West Covina/Whittier

Job Description

PTA needed to perform manual therapy, progress therapeutic exercises, and instruct in aquatic therapy for orthopedic injuries.

Job Specifications

- Position Type: Full-Time
- Job Source: Company Placement
- Salary Range: From \$45000 to \$50000
- Benefits: 401(k), Bonus Plan, Dental Insurance, Disability Insurance, Health Insurance, Paid Vacation, Paid Sick Leave

Job Requirements

- Education: PTA Certificate
- Travel Level: Medium
- Minimum Experience: Not Required

Contact Information

- Hiring Company: Southern California Sports Rehabilitation
- Contact Name: Debra Hogan
- Contact Phone: (562) 948-4004
- Contact Fax: (562) 948-4004
- Contact E-mail: debra@scsrtherapy.net

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Peoplefirst Rehabilitation

Physical Therapist Assistant Location: CA - Los Angeles

Job Description

About the Opportunity We are currently recruiting for a Physical Therapy Assistant in the state of California. Focused opportunities are currently in Los Angeles. You will work in a team where you will provide quality, compassionate care in a secure setting. Under the supervision of the Physical Therapist, you will implement the patient's Care Plan for rehabilitation. Help mentally and/or physically impaired patients to participate in tasks to restore, reinforce, and enhance their performance.

Qualifications

- Graduate of an accredited Physical Therapy Assistant program culminating in an associate's degree.
- Current and valid state PTA license or equivalent in the states where services are rendered
- CPR certification (when required)

Benefits This position offers an exceptional pay rate and benefits package including: * Medical and Dental Insurance Plans * Vision Coverage * Vacation * Paid Time Off * 401K/Matching Program * Continuing Education Opportunities * Healthcare Flexible Spending Account * Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account * Employee and Dependent Life Insurance * Group Legal Plan * Laser Eye Surgery Discount Plan

If interested, please email your resume to: Matt.Eilers@Peoplefirstrehab.com Phone 888-836-8906 Fax 888-836-8907

*Kindred Healthcare is a drug-free employer. EOE

If interested, please apply online at <http://track.jobviper.com/ViewJob.asp?id=334795-438-8134>

Job Specifications

Position Type: Full-Time

Job Source: Company Placement

Contact Information

Hiring Company: Peoplefirst Rehabilitation

Contact Name: Matt Eilers

Contact E-mail: Matt.Eilers@Peoplefirstrehab.com

About : Physical Therapy

Physical Therapy Schools

From [Laura Inverarity, P.T.](#),
Your Guide to [Physical Therapy](#).
FREE Newsletter. [Sign Up Now!](#)

Alabama - Iowa

Interested in a career in physical therapy? There are many physical therapy schools in the United States. Physical therapy programs vary by [masters or doctorate degrees](#). When deciding on a physical therapy school, it is important to choose a program that is accredited by the [American Physical Therapy Association](#).

Click on the provided links to be directed to each physical therapy school's web site for more information.

Alabama

[Alabama State University](#)

Location: Montgomery, AL

Degree: Doctorate

[The University of Alabama at Birmingham](#)

Location: Birmingham, AL

Degree: Doctorate

[University of South Alabama](#)

Location: Mobile, AL

Degree: Doctorate

Alaska

No Programs

Arizona

[AT Still University of Health Sciences](#)

Location: Mesa, AZ

Degree: Doctorate

[Northern Arizona University](#)

Location: Flagstaff, AZ

Degree: Doctorate

Arkansas

[Arkansas State University](#)

Location: State University, AR

Degree: Masters

[University of Central Arkansas](#)

Location: Conway, AR

Degree: Doctorate

California

[Azusa Pacific University](#)

Location: Azusa, CA

Degree: Doctorate

[California State University, Fresno](#)

Location: Fresno, CA

Degree: Masters

[California State University, Long Beach](#)

Location: Long Beach, CA
Degree: Masters

[California State University, Northridge](#)

Location: Northridge, CA
Degree: Masters

[California State University, Sacramento](#)

Location: Sacramento, CA
Degree: Masters

[Chapman University](#)

Location: Orange, CA
Degree: Doctorate

[Loma Linda University](#)

Location: Loma Linda, CA
Degree: Doctorate

[Mount St Mary's College](#)

Location: Los Angeles, CA
Degree: Doctorate

[Samuel Merritt College](#)

Location: Oakland, CA
Degree: Doctorate

[University of California, San Francisco/San Francisco State University](#)

Location: San Francisco, CA
Degree: Masters/Doctorate

[University of Southern California](#)

Location: Los Angeles, CA
Degree: Doctorate

[University of the Pacific](#)

Location: Stockton, CA
Degree: Doctorate

[Western University of Health Sciences](#)

Location: Pomona, CA
Degree: Doctorate

Colorado

[Regis University](#)

Location: Denver, CO
Degree: Doctorate

[University of Colorado Health Sciences Center](#)

Location: Denver, CO
Degree: Doctorate

Connecticut

[Quinnipiac University](#)

Location: Hamden, CT
Degree: Doctorate

[Sacred Heart University](#)

Location: Fairfield, CT
Degree: Masters

[University of Connecticut](#)

Location: Storrs, CT
Degree: Masters

[University of Hartford](#)

Location: West Hartford, CT
Degree: Masters

D.C., Washington

[Howard University](#)

Location: Washington, DC
Degree: Masters

[The George Washington University](#)

Location: D.C., Washington
Degree: Doctorate

Delaware

[University of Delaware](#)

Location: Newark, DE
Degree: Doctorate

Florida

[Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University](#)

Location: Tallahassee, FL
Degree: Masters

[Florida Gulf Coast University](#)

Location: Fort Myers, FL
Degree: Masters

[Florida International University](#)

Location: Miami, FL
Degree: Masters

[Nova Southeastern University](#)

Location: Ft.

Lauderdale, FL

Degree: Masters

[University of Central Florida](#)

Location: Orlando, FL
Degree: Masters

[University of Florida](#)

Location: Gainesville, FL
Degree: Doctorate

[University of Miami](#)

Location: Coral Gables, FL
Degree: Doctorate

[University of North Florida](#)

Location: Jacksonville, FL
Degree: Masters

[University of South Florida](#)

Location: Tampa, FL
Degree: Doctorate

[University of St Augustine for Health Sciences](#)

Location: St Augustine, FL
Degree: Doctorate

Georgia

[Armstrong Atlantic State University](#)

Location: Savannah, GA

Degree: Masters

[Emory University](#)

Location: Atlanta, GA

Degree: Doctorate

[Georgia State University](#)

Location: Atlanta, GA

Degree: Doctorate

[Medical College of Georgia](#)

Location: Augusta, GA

Degree: Doctorate

[North Georgia College and State University](#)

Location: Dahlonega, GA

Degree: Masters

Illinois

[Bradley University](#)

Location: Peoria, IL

Degree: Doctorate

[Governors State University](#)

Location: University Park, IL

Degree: Masters

[Midwestern University](#)

Location: Downer's Grove, IL

Degree: Doctorate

[Northern Illinois University](#)

Location: DeKalb, IL

Degree: Masters

[Northwestern University](#)

Location: Chicago, IL

Degree: Doctorate

[Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science](#)

Location: North Chicago, IL

Degree: Doctorate

[The University of Illinois at Chicago](#)

Location: Chicago, IL

Degree: Doctorate

Indiana

[Indiana University](#)

Location: Indianapolis, IN

Degree: Doctorate

[University of Evansville](#)

Location: Evansville, IN

Degree: Masters

[University of Indianapolis](#)

Location: Indianapolis, IN

Degree: Doctorate

Iowa

[Clarke College](#)

Location: Dubuque, IA

Degree: Doctorate

[Des Moines University - Osteopathic Medical Center](#)

Location: Des Moines, IA

Degree: Doctorate

[St Ambrose University](#)

Location: Davenport, IA

Degree: Doctorate

[The University of Iowa](#)

Location: Iowa City, IA

Degree: Doctorate

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