

Lunch & Learn Recap: Restorative Yoga and Meditation for Spoonies

March 21, 2024

Announcements

- Subscribe for Zoom recaps, updates, and invitations for future events.
 - <https://batemanhornecenter.org/outreach/newsletter/>
- BHC Research is still recruiting for two Long Covid studies. Visit <https://batemanhornecenter.org/research/> to apply or for additional information.
- April presentation: One Person's Improvement Story: Informed Movement and Pacing
- Lunch & Learn series is open for presenters in 2024. Email outreach@batemanhornecenter.org if you are interested in presenting to the BHC community.
- Latest newsletter: <https://batemanhornecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Winter-2024-newsletter.pdf>

The following information was shared by a volunteer presenter and attendees and does not necessarily reflect BHC guidance nor endorsement.

Diane Sorensen announced that Lunch & Learn is in its ninth year!

Pat Harada Linfoot has been teaching Yoga and meditation classes and workshops and retreats and teacher training for 25 years. These practices are opportunities for physical, psychological, and spiritual inquiry. They have taught Pat that the connection to herself and the ability to take the world around her into account are important life skills. Offering mercy and humor is necessary, useful, and kind. She believes that she can make a difference by changing her world one person at a time. Her passion is to develop personal and community practices based on accountability, gratitude, compassion, and resilience.

Pat led the participants in modified restorative yoga and meditation practices and shared the following:

- Meditation allows us to settle

- There are many tools to help with weak concentration such as mantras or counting or “yes” on the inhale and “thankyou” on the exhale. When we lose our way in concentration we simply start over.
- She ended the practice with a series of questions:
 - Where in your body do you feel open?
 - Where in your body do you feel tight?
 - Where in your body do you feel stuck?
 - Where in your body do you feel closed?
- Then apply these questions to your lives for example, where in your life do you feel open?
- Restorative yoga is a healing tool to allow us to soften and release by the use of props.
- Yoga and meditation are noticing practices. They can help us step away from the thoughts that are controlling us.
- Pat’s book recommendations
 - <https://batemanhornecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Restorative-Yoga-References-1.pdf>
- Pat has a virtual restorative yoga and meditation studio. **She has offered a month of free access to her classes for our community. You can gain access by sending an email to Pat and she will register you for the month of free classes.**
 - The studio is <https://studiobe.community>
 - Pat’s contact information is as follows
 - Email: tapagoy@gmail.com and for the online studio: info@studiobe.community
 - Instagram: @patharadalinfoot @studiobe.community_

Question and Answer

Q: “Finds focused-breathing challenging because it feels like I can’t get air.”

A: That’s a normal reaction. We don’t have to manipulate breath. When I say place your hands on your belly. I’m actually asking you to just feel breath. I don’t change my breath but my breath teaches me a lot of where I’m at this moment. If I’m anxious, my breath is so different. Let go of the commands and just be with the breath. Awareness is what opens the door. Ask yourself questions like

How is my breath feeling today?

Where do I feel it most in my body?

Do I feel the inhales or the exhales, or vice versa?

Q: Where did the speaker get the band that she used when sitting?

A: It's called a yoga strap but you could also use a belt or scarf. The presenter used the strap to help her sit up straight while in lotus pose.

Q: What does somatic mean?

A: Somatic means of the body. Instead of being neck down, it's being aware of sensations rather than being aware of thoughts. Letting go of what's happening in the head and being able to access the wisdom of our bodies.

Q: Do you recommend exhaling through your nose or mouth?

A: For every day breathing it is advisable to exhale through your nose. However, there are certain yoga practices that include exhaling through your mouth.

Resources shared during the session

- Ally Boothroyd's yoga nidra guided work on YouTube.
- *The Breathing Book*, by Donna Farhi is helpful on breath awareness and exercises.
- Greer Hoffmann at stasis.life is a great website to learn how to breathe correctly. There are free tutorials that are awesome.
- Another option for online adaptive yoga and meditation for people with disabilities and chronic illness. No cost if budget is an issue!
 - <https://www.mindbodysolutions.org/online-classes/>
- Silver Sneakers has live yoga and meditation. It's free with some Medicare plans.
- Audiobook, *Daring to Rest*, by Karen Brody, about yoga nidra. She includes short guided sessions.
 - <https://daringtoforest.com/>
- BHC produced yoga videos
 - Recumbent Isometric Yoga
 - <https://youtu.be/dEkEZqdBk08>
 - Floor Yoga
 - <https://youtu.be/3ndodS22xio>
 - Chair Yoga
 - <https://youtu.be/EI7TwEhKhWc>
 - Yoga for Long COVID
 - <https://youtu.be/Fojl3rlC36M>

General Resources

- Crisis Resources
 - Dial 988
 - [What Happens When You Call 988?](#) (Article)
 - Dial 911
 - [Crisis Text Line](#)
 - [Crisis resource page](#) (BHC)

- Support Groups
 - BHC Support Group 2nd and 3rd Tuesday at 1 pm MST
 - <https://batemanhornecenter.org/events/>
 - Surviving with ME
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/695317212152964>
 - ME/CFS Social Group
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1202428297198122>
 - CFS/ME Friends
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CFSMEFRIENDS>
 - International ME Support Chat
 - 11am-1pm EST/ 5 -7pm GMT / 3-5am Melbourne time & 9-11pm EST/ 3-5am GMT/ 2-4pm Melbourne time
 - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84362703704?pwd=bfKmegaCLNhS6KwOUve7fkcsQjs7sB.1>
 - ME/CFS phone support group
 - Occurs on Saturday nights at 8pm, EST.
 - Call: 609-746-1155. Punch in: 915110#. Group is open to all.
 - Massachusetts ME and FM Association Small Group Chats
 - <https://www.massmecfs.org/>
 - #MEAction Living w/ME Support Group
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/211058135999671>
 - Caregiver Support Group
 - <https://www.meaction.net/event/me-partner-caregivers-support-group/all/>
 - Health Stories Collaborative Creative Meetups
 - <https://www.healthstorycollaborative.org/creativemeetups>

- Caregiver Support

- [Caregiver Wisdom](#) is an online venture to support chronic illness caregivers. [Current free offerings](#) include: a [monthly support group](#), a [free online community](#) that's off of social media, and [a blog](#) with helpful posts.
 - A support group for partner caregivers (please note all caregivers are welcome) takes place the first Sunday of each month at **12 p.m. PT / 3 p.m. ET**. We focus on monthly topics and have small breakout rooms for closer community connection. To be added to the email list, contact Kim at kim.mecfs@gmail.com.
 - #MEAction's support group for all family caregivers takes place the third Saturday of each month at 12:30 p.m. PT / 3:30 p.m. ET. To be added to the email list, contact Denise at caregiver@meaction.net.
 - If you are on Facebook, [#MEAction has a Facebook group for caregivers](#)
 - If you are on Discord, Nia has started a [channel for ME/Long COVID caregivers](#).
- Communicating Illness
 - Cards: <https://stickmancommunications.co.uk/products/>
 - [Crash Survival Guidebook Communication Cards](#) (BHC)
 - [Chronic Illness: What I Want You to Know](#) (BHC)
 - [Insights into My Chronic Illness](#) (BHC)