

300-Hour Yoga Teacher Training & Advanced Studies Online Program with Mark Stephens

OVERVIEW & SYLLABUS

In practicing yoga, it speaks to us in a language that transcends words yet carries messages deep into the heart of our lives, making our lives better and opening us to sharing with others in the most deeply meaningful ways.

We sense the natural desire to deepen our practice and to share the practice with others, because we know it will make their lives better.

We teach because we're on the path of a conscious life that serves the world, making the world a better place.

We teach to learn - about ourselves, about one another - and to walk the path we are meant to explore in this life.

OVERVIEW

The Online 300-Hour Yoga Teacher Training & Advanced Studies Program focuses on the safe and effective practice and teaching of yoga as a tool for cultivating self-transformation and healthy, joyful, conscious living. While emphasizing the granular details of doing and teaching yoga asana with deep and refined knowledge and skills, this training provides a broad overview of yoga history and philosophy, practical functional anatomy and physiology, the refined teaching of pranayama, bandhas, mantra, and subtle energy, and planning and sequencing of classes, qualities of voice, hands-on adjustments, ethics in teaching, the profession and business of yoga, and other topics.

This training is designed in part based upon the reality that many graduates of 200-hour programs often have significant gaps in their knowledge and skills, often due to the chosen focus or limitations of the prior training they completed. For example, some trainings teach only subtle anatomy or human anatomy, some teach both but in extremely shallow or abstract ways, and there are almost invariably issues with retention of what was previously learned. Here we strive to fill those gaps with a comprehensive curriculum delivered in the best available ways, thus offering the opportunity to expand, deepen, and refine all one knows about yoga and how best to teach it while opening to new areas of understanding. Given the uneven types, levels and qualities of knowledge students bring to 300-hour programs, there will be some topics you will experience as entirely new and others you will experience as both review and expansion.

HOW WE DO IT

Yoga will always and forever be a human experience in which the interactions of teacher and student are the primary means of transmission. Where it's impossible to directly interact, we can make innovative use of ancient-to-modern technologies to create various means of active engagement and virtual interaction. Thus, we use a mix of learning resources:

- Video Presentations of Lectures
- Live and Recorded Asana, Pranayama, and Meditation Practices
- Online Conferencing for Active Discussions (bi-weekly live sessions)
- Community Forum
- Interactive Cohort Teaching Practices
- Self-Guided Practice
- Reading/Researching
- Tactile Exercises
- Self-Reflective Journaling

You are strongly encouraged to take notes and to maintain a journal of your training and teaching experience. Working collaboratively with others in this program through the Community Forum to discuss course materials, research asanas, complete assignments and enjoy the benefit of an expanded and shared learning experience will further enhance your learning and development as a teacher or dedicated student.

THE SIX MODULES

This program is divided into six 50-hour modules. Module I begins on February 20, 2021, and all online content for that Module will be available starting that day. Each successive Module begins six weeks thereafter, at which point you will gain access to that Module (dates are given in the Course Calendar, below). Each Module contains a more highly detailed Syllabus that will be provided prior to the start of each Module.

Each Module contains several pre-recorded videos covering different topics. These are the essential core of the instructional media for this training. There are additional supportive instructional resources that will be made available to you, including the Anatomy Manual and various worksheets and templates. In addition, we will have live online sessions on a bi-weekly basis (every other week), thus giving us three such live sessions per Module. All live sessions will be recorded so that you can watch or listen to them at another time. Each Module requires practicing and teaching yoga; there are no expectations or requirements for the "level" or "adeptness" of one's personal practices.

You can proceed at your own pace within each Module and you can take up to 3 months to complete each module. You must pass the Module Quiz for each module before proceeding to

the next module. Module VI (the final Module) begins on September 18, 2021. You can opt to take the Certification exam between October 31, 2021 and February 20, 2022.

As you read further into this Course Overview and Syllabus, please bear in mind that this course is focused primarily on the postural aspects of yoga practice and how best to teach them to others. We reiterate this here and now because the course also covers many other topics; we simply wish to ensure that you know that asanas will not be lost in the various other realms of yoga that we cover.

You may notice that one thread of the overall training somewhat follows a kosha map, which will become clearer after we explore koshas in Module II.

The topics covered in each Module are given in the general outline of the course. The complete syllabus, including video timings, reading assignments, Zoom meeting assets, and other details, are provided in the syllabus that is distributed to course participants once the course begins. Reading this version of the training syllabus in conjunction with detailed course descriptions online at markstephens.com provides a full picture of the curriculum.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Join the community forum
- Watch all the video lectures in their entirety
- Complete the short quizzes at the end of each Module
- Attend all of the bi-weekly live sessions OR watch all recorded replays
- Complete the Independent Study Project (more info provided in Module II)
- Complete Certification Exam with a passing grade of 80% by February 20, 2022

REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED LEARNING RESOURCES

Required

- Anatomy manual (PDF version will be emailed one week before the training begins)
- Props: yoga mat, blocks (2), blankets (2)
- Modeling clay and a citrus fruit (such as [this](#))
- Internet access
- An Anatomy App (such as “Essential Anatomy 5”)
- Personal yoga journal (a book filled with blank pages)
- Books:
 - T. Desikachar, *The Heart of Yoga* (includes *Yoga Sutra of Patanjali*)
 - Jo-Ann Staugaard-Jones, *The Concise Anatomy of Yoga*
 - Mark Stephens, *Teaching Yoga* (TY), *Yoga Adjustments* (YA), *Yoga Sequencing* (YS), *Yoga Therapy* (YT). (These are available in 10 languages.)

Recommended

- Props: strap, bolster, wedge
- Books:
 - Suzi Hatley. *Anatomy and Asana*
 - Sally Kempton, *Meditation for the Love of It*
 - Vanda Scarvali, *Awakening the Spine*
 - Jo-Ann Staugaard-Jones, *The Concise Anatomy of Yoga*
 - Ganga White, *Yoga Beyond Belief*
 - David Gordon White. *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali: A Biography*
 - Want More Books? Ask Mark, and/or see the *Yoga Therapy* bibliography (500+ entries).

CERTIFICATION

To complete this training and receive a 300 Hour Yoga Teacher Certification, you must complete all the course requirements and pass the Certification Exam by February 20, 2022. The Certification Exam requires a passing grade of 80% or better and may be taken multiple times. Completion of this course and the Certification Exam qualifies you to register with Yoga Alliance at the RYT-500 level.

MODULE CALENDAR

Please note, dates and time provided are in Pacific Standard Time. If you are not in the Pacific Time zone, use this handy [time zone converter](#).

Module 1: Strengthening the Foundations of Practice and Teaching

Starts February 20, 2021

Live sessions:

- February 23, March 9 & 23 (9:00am-1:00pm PST)

Module 2: Cultivating Inner Power

Starts April 3, 2021

Live sessions:

- April 6 & 20, May 4 (9:00am-1:00pm PST)

Module 3: The Heart of Things

Starts May 15, 2021

Live sessions:

- May 18, June 1 & 15 (9:00am-1:00pm PST)

Module 4: Opening to Inner Wisdom

Starts June 26, 2021

Live sessions:

- June 29, July 13 & 27 (9:00am-1:00pm PST)

Module 5: For the Love of it All

Starts August 7, 2021

Live sessions:

- August 10 & 24, September 7 (9:00am-1:00pm PST)

Module 6: The Mirror

Starts September 18, 2021

Live sessions:

- September 21, October 5 & 19 (9:00am-1:00pm PST)

Certification Exam: due by February 20, 2022.

MODULE OUTLINE

Module I: Strengthening the Foundations of Practice and Teaching – February 20, 2021

We begin our journey by renewing and deepening our understanding of essential ideas and practices at the heart of yoga. We will survey yoga histories and concepts, distilling key insights along the way. We will consider the basic sensibilities of the yoga teacher, and consider how those sensibilities come into clearer focus in our own practices of asana, pranayama, and meditation. We will peer into the human body to better understand its structures, how they optimally function, and how sometimes they don't function so well. We will explore asana, with an initial focus on the family of standing postures. We will breathe, practice, share, and get to know one another as best we can.

- Welcome and Course Overview
- Opening Circle
- The Multi-Dimensional Nature of Yoga
 - Asana
 - Mantra
 - Pranayama
 - Mudra-Bandha
 - Meditation
 - Visualization
- Taking the Seat of the Teacher
- Essential Elements of Asana Practice
 - Breathing

- Sthira Sukham Asanam
- Alignment Principles
- Energetic Actions
- Roots and Extension
- Playing the Edge
- Modification & Use of Props
- Variations
- Dristana
- Bandhas
- Pranayama I: History, Theory, Breath Awareness, Basic Technique
- Human Anatomy & Physiology for Yoga Teachers: A Comprehensive & Practical Course
- Asanas: Standing (28 Postures)
- The Sound of Aum (or is it Om?)

Module II: Cultivating Inner Power – April 3, 2021

Here we begin a deeper exploration of some yoga dances, with the magical, metaphysical, and ethereal meeting the the scientific, physical, and material. We peer more into the ideas about subtle energy and spiritual anatomy and look for ways to bring them alive in classes. We go deeply into the realms of energy cultivation with refined pranayama practices, informed along the way by a steady glance at the human respiratory system. We appreciate such things as Samana-vayu in core abdominal practices and how we might gain greater levity when supported mostly by our own hands and arms. We also explore a little more deeply in the *Yoga Sutra*, especially Patanjali's yoga psychology.

- Theories and Concepts of Subtle Energy
 - Gunas
 - Prana & Pranna-Vayu
 - Nadis
 - Chakras
 - Mudra & Bandha
- Pranayama II: Cultivating Energetic Balance and Conscious Awakening
 - The Human Respiratory System
 - Preparatory Practices: General & Specific Asanas for Pranayama, Yoga Nidra, Neti, Tavalya Kriya, Jalandhara Bandha, Simhasana
 - Sama & Visama Vritti, Viloma, Antara and Bahya Kumbhaka, Kapalabhati, Sitali, Nadi Shodhana (6 stages)
- Before & After the 8 Limbs: A Closer Look at Patanjali's Spiritual Philosophy, Psychological Theory, and Practical Techniques
- Homage to Carl Gustav Jung: Chakra Meditation for a Balanced Life
- Asanas: The Core (10 Practices)
- Asanas: Arm Support & Balance (18 Postures)

Module III: The Heart of Things – May 15, 2021

We imagine getting to know one another during the three months it takes us to get to Module III. We intend to go with this by exploring more in the realm of most brings many people to yoga and motivates most to stay with the practice: our larger lives, what it means, how we choose to live, and how we can have a better life and world. We will consider how some of the ancients came to these questions and what they did with them. We will borrow their tools, perhaps refine them, and maybe add a few of our own. We will explore in the heart, including in the family of backbends, and we'll re-explore centering and integration with twists.

- The Gita at Breakfast: Your Place, Your Purpose, and Your Actions in Life
- Homage to Swami Durgananda (and Sally Kempton): Heart-Centered Meditation
- Making Life (and Yoga) More Meaningful
- Creating Space for Self-Transformation
- The Sounds of the Universe: Sublime Mantras
- Asanas: Backbends (17 Postures)
- Asanas: Twists (7 Postures)

Module IV: Opening to Inner Wisdom – June 26, 2021

Now we explore moving more deeply into stillness and clarity. We will fold into ourselves and tap into the caverns that sometimes restrain our wiser selves but can also be sources of liberation from the patterns and tendencies that limit our lives. And we'll expand our capacity to work with anyone and everyone. Do you teach classes that are open to the public and to drop-in students? If so, you will have students with ailments and pregnant students in your classes; therefore, you will be (or are) a pre-natal yoga teacher and perhaps a yoga therapist. We want to ensure you can share with and guide your students – all your students – in informed and sensitive ways. We also want you to make all of this more relevant to you in your life.

- Asanas: Seated and Supine Forward Bends and Hip Openers (14 Postures)
- Asanas: Inversions and Finishing (10 Postures)
- Special Conditions of Women in Yoga (especially working with pregnant students)
- Restorative Yoga: Healing What Ails Us and Working with Student Ailments
- Independent Study Overview and The Four Questions

Module V: For the Love of It All – August 7, 2021

We are moving even more deeply into the heart, that anandamaya kosha. Here we will briefly reflect on our path thus far, gathering our insights, and getting clearer about our intentions and goals in teaching. We'll explore the dances of dynamic yoga and the dances of yoga for, well, everyone: "yoga for..." With this we will tap into our creative selves along with a little bit more of clarifying theory to bring it all together in designing amazing yoga classes and workshops.

- Koshas: Mapping the Practice
- Dynamic Yoga
 - Surya Namaskars
 - Chandra Namaskars

- Integrated Flow Mini-Sequences
- Sequencing Course
- Yoga for... (Kids, Seniors, Athletes, Anxiety, Insomnia, Desk Workers, Dogs...)
- Independent Study Collaborations

Module VI: The Mirror – September 18, 2021

Look in the mirror; now look again, more inside. Where have you been? Where are you going? What does yoga mean to you today? How will you translate all of this into your actions going forward? To best get at these questions, we will reflect on the path we've shared since February 20th, and we will survey the landscape before us to best chart our paths going forward from here, including to (and beyond) the certification exam.

- Independent Study Presentations
- The Yoga Teaching Profession
 - Continuing Education
 - Classes
 - Workshops
 - Retreats
 - Online
 - Sustainability
- The Business of Yoga
 - Studios/Private
 - Non-Profits/Public
- Yoga, You, and the World Today and Tomorrow
- The Mirror of Yoga
- Certification Exam Preview