



Interested in attending our yoga classes for veterans? Wonderful!

We welcome you!

Here is some information to help you get started

We offer an orientation session:

You are joining an on-going class.

We will meet with you before you begin to share some of the important practices, such as the breathing (pranayama) and the energy gateways (root lock and belly lock) as well as the reasoning and science that support these techniques.

Meeting before your first class for just 20 minutes can be a big help.

Call Nancy at the YES to Vets number **317 371-7967** to make a plan!

Some yoga class ground rules:

- We start and finish class on time.
- Please arrive in time to set up and be ready to start. Being on time generally means arriving to class 5- 10 minutes before start time.
- In the rare occurrence you are delayed, text us at 317 371-7967 to let us know.
- Our yoga classes are a “cell phone-free” zone! No cell phones on your mat. Cell phones should be turned off and left with your shoes and other belongs.
- We maintain a respectful confidentiality – we keep shared information to ourselves.
- Please don’t push yourself or “over-effort”! We get the best results with a “tortoise wins the race” attitude. Consistent appropriate effort moves us forward, pushing often sets us back...
- You have full choice throughout the class. It is your responsibility to practice in the manner that is right for you at every moment.



Here's what you can expect:

- A pleasant space with the needed **props**: floor mats, blankets for support and cushioning, straps, eye pillows, etc.
 - Having one's own yoga mat and eye pillow is ideal. Bring yours if you have them – you are welcome to use ours until you get your own.
- A well-trained, experienced and dedicated **teaching team**.
 - Generally there are 2 or 3 of us in each class. We have years of yoga experience and have sought additional training in the therapeutic uses of yoga, the effects of trauma and how traumatic experiences change the brain, how yoga benefits the brain, as well as understanding the unique needs of the military population as best we can.
- A group of other **veterans welcoming you** with open arms, happy to see the benefits of yoga reaching others.
 - Class size varies, we typically have 10 – 16 students in class.
 - Your fellow students will be men and women veterans and their loved ones.

What we do in class:

- breathing practices/pranayama
- seated practices (on chairs generally, some sit on the floor)
- standing postures
- floor poses, on the front/prone
- floor poses, on the back/supine
- relaxation, while seated, lying on the back, or any other comfortable position

5 Yoga (Sanskrit) terms that we use:

Since we are practicing advanced yoga techniques, additional terms are needed:

1. prana - life force
2. pranayama – the breathing practices used to purposefully increase, direct and accumulate prana within our system
3. ujjayi breath – the “victorious uplifting” breath with sound
4. drishti – eye position, holding the eyes steady affects the mind positively
5. namaste’ – a greeting acknowledging the “Inner Spark of Light” in all

Ancient Yoga Practices meet Neuroscience and Biomechanics:

- Yoga alignment principles match modern biomechanics
- Neuroplasticity - brain changes influenced by our environment and experiences
- Neurogenesis - just as with muscles, our brain responds to “demand’. Yoga is ideal for placing demand on the brain: the effort to concentrate, balance and hold new positions all encourage neurogenesis.
- Crossing the center line of the body improves hemispheric communication, coordination and the “brain/body” connection, as well as memory recall
- Breathing practices (pranayama) affect the nervous system



Yoga practice principles:

- every posture has a drishti, we hold the eyes steady throughout the practice
- focus on the breath, strengthening ability to concentration
- use the breath to go into and exit out of all postures - same full attention to the transitions as the postures
- breath and movement are synchronized
- we use strong contraction of muscles paired with full relaxation as a means of muscle training
- explore limitations, modify as needed, practice how is right for you at each moment
- avoid pain, do movement slower and smaller until there is no pain
- practice several brief sessions during the week on your own
- use the internal balance aids: drishti and root lock
- avoid competing, with others or yourself, or a former you

Thank you!