Our Director of Curriculum and Development wisely said to me a few months ago, “Healing happens in community.” This is true on every level of our organization—being in and a part of this work is healing and empowering. I have seen how the community we cultivate—in our classes, among our teachers, within our Board, and with our donors—fosters a sense of power and hope. So thank you for being part of our Exhale to Inhale community!

2018 was a record-breaking year for ETI in terms of programming. We hosted over 450 yoga classes and had nearly 2,000 visits from new and returning participants. As a result of your support, we have enhanced the lives of over 700 survivors of domestic assault and sexual violence this year alone. Please know that because of you, survivors are experiencing decreased levels of stress and physiological symptoms of trauma—headaches, backaches, and insomnia—to name a few. They are also feeling an increased sense of resilience and agency—the ability to move on and take meaningful action to improve their lives. Our students have begun to practice yoga on their own and their children are encouraging them to “do [their] yoga.” Simply put, you are changing lives!

While this has been a tremendous year for us as an organization, it has been a sobering year on the larger landscape. We have watched as survivors’ voices and rights have continued to be challenged and questioned. It’s been both infuriating and painful. This dialogue that has played out on the national landscape has reinforced why I created Exhale to Inhale over 5 years ago. I’ve seen the long lasting impacts of trauma and believe in the healing power of yoga to enhance the inherent strength and resilience of survivors. Thank you for making it possible for us to do this important and life-affirming work. Even on the darkest days, Exhale to Inhale brings healing and hope.

I will continue to do this work in honor of the survivors in my life—my family members, my friends, and now thousands of Exhale to Inhale program participants. Thank you for joining me, standing with us, and helping empower survivors every day.

With immense gratitude,

Zoë LePage
zoe.lepage@exhaletoinhale.org
The goal of an Exhale to Inhale yoga practice is to build resiliency, foster a sense of agency, and provide tools for self-regulation. Our approach fosters a relationship between the mind and body, helping to cultivate a sense of safety. This in turn supports stability, positive self-esteem, and a foundation for forging healthy relationships. Our trauma-informed approach uses the knowledge that anxiety, depression, behavioral issues, relationship stress, etc. are often the result of unresolved trauma held in the physical body. The practice we offer is sensitive to the needs of the participant with trauma symptoms and offers tools for students to feel safe, empowered, and self-regulated.

Trauma is often the experience of having choice taken from you, and as such, many survivors feel that they lack the ability to take effective actions in their lives. Through yoga, we aim to help the survivor reconnect with their ability to make decisions for their own bodies and to navigate the situation that they are in.

2018 STATISTICS

Classes in all 5 boroughs of NY and east side of Los Angeles

456 classes taught 732 unique individuals served

1951 yoga visits

Your teacher’s suggestions for poses were so gentle, so inviting and so welcoming to individual modifications. The Exhale to Inhale platform is vital for trauma recoverers and was particularly meaningful for my personal growth beyond violence/victimization

– ETI Student
In 2018, Exhale to Inhale worked with a research consultant affiliated with the Affect and Psychophysiology of Trauma Research Lab at The New School to develop anonymous three question surveys. These mindfulness check-ins were piloted in 12 facilities and completed by 119 individuals. The data showed statistically significant improvements in stress levels, body pain, and agency from the beginning to end of class.

These specific measures (stress, bodily pain, and agency) were chosen as they are relevant to the experience of a survivor of domestic violence and sexual assault. Intuitively we believe that the practice of yoga is an impactful way to address the effects of trauma. High stress is associated with aggression, poor interpersonal connectivity, and reduced emotional regulation capacities. Traumatic symptoms may manifest in the body as headaches, back pain, and insomnia. Trauma is often the experience of having choice taken from you, and as such, many students feel they lack agency—the ability to take effective actions in their lives.

"I was in family court facing my ex. I was panicked at first, but I was able to use my breathwork and meditation to slow my over-active nervous system and stay sane. I don’t know what I would have done without those tools. The ETI program you created is so necessary and such a gift for survivors. Thank you for all you do."

– ETI Student

On a scale of 1-7, 1 is lowest and 7 is highest
Most ETI trauma-informed yoga classes meet once per week for 6 weeks.
Our training provides participants with an understanding of the science of trauma, the ability to recognize symptoms of trauma and the skills to create a trauma informed environment that supports recovery and resilience. Our training explores yoga poses, meditation, sequencing, and language with survivors in mind. In 2018, we expanded our teacher training to a 3-day, 17-hour format that has been attended by yoga teachers, clinicians, and other interested individuals.

2018 Trainings

- 6 Full-length trainings attended by 133 individuals
- 4 Four-hour workshops attended by 100 individuals
- 25 Teacher training scholarships awarded in exchange for 300 hours of volunteer teaching

Exhale to Inhale held trauma-informed teacher trainings and workshops at these select partner studios in 2018:

- mindbody soul STUDIO
- Y7
- ISHTA YOGA
- yoga works®
- PROSPECT HEIGHTS YOGA
- LA MAIDA

“Through the scholarships awarded by Exhale to Inhale, I was able to continue my training, which allows me to safely and effectively share the tools which facilitate healing for survivors. Through my knowledge of yoga and trauma, I am given the opportunity to help others increase self-confidence and self-awareness by inviting survivors to safely experience themselves, their relationships with others and the world around them.”

– ETI Training Participant

“I came in with some basic background on trauma informed yoga, so was unsure about how much new information I would learn. I ended up learning more than I ever imagined and came out inspired, touched, and with a more nuanced and deep understanding of trauma-informed yoga than I thought possible.”

– ETI Training Participant
#2018 Highlights

**Worth 100:**
**March, $25k received**
In honor of International Women’s Day 2018, lululemon designed two Worth 100 t-shirts to celebrate that everyone deserves to be treated with, and to feel their 100% worth. Exhale to Inhale was chosen as one of four non-profits selected to receive 100% of the t-shirt sales.

**#itstimetoheal:**
**April, $27k received**
Our third year of this campaign in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness month generated over $25k. As part of this campaign, we filmed our teachers reading The Window, a piece that highlights the insidious nature of domestic violence.

**Mind over Madness Yoga - Summer Solstice:**
**June, $5k received**
For the 4th year in a row, Exhale to Inhale was selected as a charity partner for the Times Square Summer Solstice. We spent the day with thousands of yogis from around the world in Times Square to celebrate the Summer Solstice with free yoga classes in the heart of New York City and we found our centers in one of the city’s busiest places.

**Yoga is Yours - International Day of Yoga:**
**June, $35k received**
In honor of International Day of Yoga, lululemon donated 100 percent of profits from its in-store and online sales to benefit non-profit groups that increase access to yoga and meditation for communities that face barriers to well-being. Exhale to Inhale received funds from multiple stores on both the East and West Coast.

**Movement for Meaning Campaign:**
**October, $6k received**
Ranging from workouts featuring burpees to savasana, we hosted 10 classes in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness month during our fifth year of this campaign.

**5th Anniversary Celebration:**
**October, $14k received**
We gathered with 100 longtime supporters in celebration of our 5th Anniversary of service.

**Give the Gift of Yoga:**
**December, $37k received**
Our second annual end of the year campaign raised over $37k thanks to the generosity of our community.
$25 provides a survivor access to a trauma informed class.
I’ve tried a lot of styles of yoga but what was unique and special about this was that I felt like I really belonged.

– ETI Student

Yoga brings me a dignity of carriage as well as physical strength. I can walk into any place and feel like I belong. Or, if I’m not comfortable, I have the strength of mind to say to myself, ‘No, let’s go.’ Yoga nourishes me…it literally saved my life on a daily basis.

– ETI Student and Volunteer