

FAQ

What is YogaFit for Warriors?

YogaFit for Warriors is a comprehensive trauma-informed yoga program focused on activating the natural neural, chemical and biological healing mechanisms in the body using particular yoga postures, breath techniques and mindfulness practices. Exposure to trauma, abuse or neglect is arguably the #1 unaddressed physical and health concern in the world today. However, exciting new neurological and psychological discoveries to include polyvagal theory, allow for a more expansive understanding of the full impact of trauma and more importantly exactly how and WHY yoga helps mitigate these impacts. Increasingly, Western medical and mental health professionals are acknowledging that the body holds the key to understanding trauma and that bottom-up processing practices like yoga are the new gold standard for treatment. Somatic processing and treatment methodologies like yoga are now being used to help repair and rebuild distressed nervous systems which in turn helps the brain integrate and "file" distressing memories.

How is a trauma-informed yoga class different?

The primary difference in a trauma informed yoga practice is the focus on HOW we practice instead of WHAT we practice. While we are certainly moving through postures, it is more the state of being we are in versus the focus on pure physical form in a pose. Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS) activation is the key to creating a more sustained healing state of being instead of the elevated cortisol releasing state of being in the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS). The SNS has been shown to stay perpetually "on" after a traumatic event or during chronic stress states and is the primary inhibitor of the natural healing mechanisms. Ideally, a good trauma-informed yoga practice teaches and empowers individuals to intentionally activate their PNS system and thus over time becomes their "new normal". This empowering approach helps to establish an enduring personal resiliency after a disempowering traumatic event.

Yoga classes focusing primarily on big or fast movement can actually get in the way of healing with less conscious movement and potentially more SNS activation. Through our unique methods, our students learn to feel when their SNS is activating and are better able to regulate their nervous system using breath practices, gentle movement, trauma-sensitive language, specific meditations and limbic-center focused guided imagery. Through these methodologies we create the fertile soil for healing to occur naturally. We have found our students are better able to release stuck energy once they feel safe and when they are able to gently acknowledge their bodies instead of disconnecting or disassociating. The part of the brain linked to healing is the limbic center or emotional brain which we intentionally activate by more grounded and mindful movements. This creates a gradual tolerance of increased sensations that our students learn to manage through a greater sense of awareness gained through mindfulness practices.

FAQ

What makes YogaFit's trauma-informed yoga program unique?

YogaFit's Master trainers who teach the Warriors Program have a depth and breadth of knowledge not just in yoga but also in mental and physical health fields. Additionally, our trainers maintain the highest certification in the Yoga profession as Certified Yoga Therapists with decades of experience and are at the cutting edge of the latest yoga therapy tools and techniques.

YogaFit's Warriors classes use vinyasa style, slower more mindful movement. We go slower to activate the healing limbic system and strongly believe that the rhythmic Vinyasa flow style is critical to restoring the natural processes of the body to include the cardiovascular, endocrine and digestive systems as well as the circadian and cranial rhythms that get disrupted after a traumatic event or prolonged stress. We also incorporate unique Psoas activating and releasing practices that we believe are vital to reclaiming the internal emotional support structure of the body through the psoas lines of energy that run down through the legs and up through the diaphragm, heart and jaw areas that mobilize in a stressful event for fight, flight and even bite.

YogaFit approaches yoga from a non-judgmental non-competitive viewpoint. Additionally, we encourage language/cueing that is inclusive and awareness oriented versus goal oriented which is critical for instilling a sense of safety and connection with our students and also for creating the potential for healing. These 2 main concepts are the foundational cornerstones of our Warriors Programs as well as our 200 and 300 RYT yoga teacher training programs. This is why YogaFit's Level One: Foundations is a required workshop for the Warriors Program. These concepts are instilled throughout all of our teacher training programs and have been since YogaFit's inception in 1994. The language we use in our classes and how we modulate our voice matters greatly from the standpoint of healing in the brain and nervous system. YogaFit's style of teaching is invitational in nature and gently encourages our students throughout their practice and more importantly offers choice through our generous use of modifications. The definition of a traumatic event is to be immobilized in fear which we can trigger in our students if we use language that is directive and command-oriented. Triggers for people are held in the body as well as through the senses. Yoga teachers may inadvertently trigger their students by using command-style language or unconsciously through body language or improper or unwanted physical adjustments. That's why we focus on how to move students gently in and out of poses while empowering them to make effective choices in their practice. Overtime this creates and reinforces a sense of resiliency, self-efficacy and the ability to emotionally self-regulate.



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YOGAFIT FOR WARRIORS

YogaFit for Warriors, is a trauma sensitive yoga program designed by Military veteran and Yoga Therapist, Shaye Molendyke and Yoga Therapist, Kristy Manuel, to bring safe, trauma sensitive yoga to help heal the mind body and spirit of those suffering from PTSD and trauma.

YogaFit for Warriors is designed for yoga teachers, mental and medical health professionals as well as anyone suffering to understand trauma and PTSD at a deeper level and learn how to foster greater healing. This includes but is not limited to our military and their families, emergency responders and healthcare workers. This Program is also appropriate to help those who suffer from the range of physical and emotional traumas including chronic high levels of stress, anxiety and other stress or trauma related mental medical and physical conditions.

In both trauma and stress, the body keeps the score. The brain rewires itself around the traumatic event and memories get stored in the tissues throughout the whole body. Yoga can help to free those memories, alleviating troubling emotions, persevering thought patterns as well as chronic somatic tension and hypervigilance that is the hallmark of PTSD and trauma. Yoga has been clinically shown to reduce cortisol levels by calming the fight-or-flight response and activating the relaxation and repair response.

Military members and spouses may be eligible to attend YogaFit for Warriors workshops through the Post 9/11 GI Bill licensing and certification program.

ABOUT YOGAFIT® TRAINING SYSTEMS

YogaFit Training Systems Worldwide was established in 1994 and has since trained more than 100,000 yoga and fitness professionals worldwide. The leader in mind body fitness education, YogaFit is the largest training school for yoga instructors in North America with further expansion ongoing internationally. YogaFit is the American Council on Exercise's (ACE) premier and only yoga partner.



YogaFit for Warriors 100 and 140 hour Programs

include the following 2-Day workshops

***Level 1**—YogaFit's foundational yoga teacher training that educates how to safely guide students through yoga poses using Transformational language and the Essence of YogaFit that encourages letting go of judgments, expectations and competition.

***YogaFit for Warriors (PTSD)**—focuses on psoas release exercises, slower movement, breathing exercises, meditation and specific imagery techniques to address PTSD and other common issues that develop in military settings with returning veterans as well as their families.

***Healing Emotional & Physical Trauma**—Explores how trauma affects the brain and gets stored in the body, making yoga the perfect mind-body modality to release trauma and usher in healing.

***Restoring Balance: Training the Parasympathetic Nervous System**—The Science of Yoga workshop where Heart Rate Variability (HRV) monitors are utilized and students learn to design the most optimal treatment methodology based on the HRV results.

YogaFit for Mood Balancing—Highlights the somatic component of anxiety and depression while teaching breathing and meditation practices to help balance the body and mind.

Addiction and Recovery—Students will gain a deeper understanding of Addiction in its many forms to include but not limited to Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking, Gambling, Sex, Overeating, Shop-ping and Exercise.

Warrior Kids—This childhood trauma workshop focuses on the unique nervous system and brain response of traumatic events in children as well as chronic emotional and physical abuse to include neglect. We address the somatic healing gaps in current therapies available for children today.

5 workshops are required for 100 hour program and all 7 workshops are required for the 140 hour program.

* Mandatory for both programs.

Help us bring the YogaFit for Warriors Program to people who need it most. Connect within your OWN communities, on behalf of YogaFit to share this program.

YogaFit MBF Conferences and Retreats

Arlington, VA Sept. 19-23, 2018

Spokane, WA Nov. 7-11, 2018

Warriors Conference Orlando, FL Dec. 6-8, 2018

Palm Springs, CA Jan. 2-6, 2019

Alexandria, VA Feb. 6-10, 2019

Warriors Retreat Versailles, KY Mar. 3-17, 2019

Chicago, IL Mar. 6-10, 2019

Toronto, ON Apr. 11-14, 2019

Minneapolis, MN May 29– Jun. 2, 2019

Scottsdale, AZ Jul. 10-14, 2019

Atlanta, GA Sep. 25-29, 2019

Alexandria, VA Oct. 9-13, 2019

Toronto, ON Oct. 24-27, 2019

YogaFit for Warriors Ambassador Program

Are you interested in becoming an Ambassador?

To apply you must be a student in the Warrior's program. Please send a current resume, training history, and brief outline about why you want to be involved and send your application to ambassador@yogafit.com.

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