Yoga as Lifestyle Medicine

Presented in partnership with Smithsonian Associates

June 18, 2026

Dear Smithsonian Associate Student,

Your class on accessible yoga practices starts soon! This introductory lesson will teach you new ways to experience your body and the mind-body connection, and new ways to think about aging. I invite you to come with a childlike curiosity about what you can and cannot do: try to avoid self-limiting thoughts, judgments or self-criticism during our time together. That's an enormous piece of the practices: seeing your self with a more generous spirit, being open to possibilities, softening into the newness and embracing the familiar with wisdom.

Although I have copious class notes, research articles and suggested readings, I shall send them after we've practiced together. You might ask "why?" The answer is, because my intention is for you to come to class with what is called "beginner's mind." I want you to come fresh and ready to learn a new way of Doing and Being. No preparation, no "homework". Come ready to enjoy yourself and experience the benefits without preconceived notions or "evidence-based" bias.

I expect that you will come with particular interests. Send me questions so that I can respond now, or I will address them in our session (anonymously of course).

Now is a time to see yourself holistically: as a vital and vibrant being in a fragile vessel, with a body, mind and heart deserving special care.

It is an amazing thing to be able to teach yoga and meditation, even more amazing to be able to highlight practices for you as you strive to stay stronger longer, in every way.

The content will touch on every aspect of your physical body, on your intellectual, cognitive and emotional wellbeing. I will encourage you to work well within your limits, and to learn how to listen inwardly, to feel more intensely and choose more wisely. Ours will be an exercise in building greater awareness of what is happening moment to moment, and honoring that above all else.

Being devoted to all things yogic, there will be a spiritual aspect to our time together as we move through and beyond the physical to the metaphysical, as if philosophy has a functional impact on our overall wellbeing, which it does, indeed …

I hope you will love it and want to know more,

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YOGA AND AGING:
ACCESSIBLE YOGA PRACTICES

June 18th, 2026 12'noon-2:00

This is an introductory course explaining how yoga postures can be adapted ~ every movement will have variations so that you can safely participate as fully as you wish, carefully following a series of invitations, guidelines and instructions.

I have been an integrative medical advocate and therapeutic instructor since 1999, focused on preserving, maintaining and increasing health and wellbeing. It's fascinating and fun (yes it is) to see people enjoy themselves while building strength and stamina, reversing or overcoming symptoms, overcoming obstacles and learning to cope with limitations, real and imagined.

This is how we stay stronger, longer: physically, intellectually and emotionally.

What you will need in order to practice most effectively:

Bare feet and comfortable clothes

A stable high-back chair, if possible

A small cushion or pillow to place on the chair, a beach towel and small hand towel

A tissue box, yoga block or similar small light-weight item,

A scarf, belt, yoga strap or exercise strap, and a clear sense of **what you can and should do** in terms of movement

The outline of our program:

Define Yoga and yogic practices for our purposes as we age

Define integrative medicine and how yoga is a therapeutic partner for older individuals

Demonstrate basic postures and practices that yield identifiable and undeniable benefits

The plan is to sit quietly and become more centered and focused on your intention.

Then we will turn our awareness to the tip of our toes and fingertips to the crown of our head, creating length and lightness. In an ongoing way, I will encourage you to notice what you are doing and feeling, and recognize the kinetic chain, the continuity of movement throughout your body. And as it is my nature, I will weave in details about aging processes, medical conditions and personal preferences (including kinesiophobia, fear of movement and motivation issues).

You can expect to learn essential seated and supported standing poses as well as everyday movement strategies to improve balance, avoid falling, increase focus and concentration. We will reach, stretch, bow in forward bends, open our hearts in backbends, stabilize and balance, and if you wish, get up and down from the floor. We will breathe and chant and celebrate life.

After the program I'll send a reminder of what we did together. (I prefer to have this session be new to you, rather than distracted with unfamiliar notes.) If you have personal questions send them to me now so I can refer to them anonymously and/or respond to you privately.

Most of all, I want you to know that I appreciate the tenderness of aging. I have seen the positive impacts that yoga can have on health, world-view and our sense of self. I have seen it inspire and delight, and ease the path through transitions.

Thank you for joining this program, it's a very special opportunity ~

Namasté, the divine within me sees and recognizes the same light within you

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