

# Ep #243: Healing & Synergy: 3 Myths About Yoga And Business



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Susi Hatley**

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## Ep #243: Healing & Synergy: 3 Myths About Yoga And Business

**Male Announcer:** You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hatley. You will hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hatley.

Welcome and welcome back. I'm so glad that you're here because we are in the healing and synergy miniseries, which is a multi-episode series looking at the three significant factors that I see as being important for being successful as a yoga therapist or a health professional integrating yoga therapeutically.

And those key areas are applying anatomy and biomechanics therapeutically in a really, really effective way. Teaching our clients how to truly listen to their whispers. And it's more than just going beyond awareness, really tuning in to what these symptoms and sensations have to offer and share with us, and then the business piece.

So I've been sharing stories from trainees and grads, teaching anatomical and biomechanical concepts, walking people through meditations and body scans to kind of bring these ideas to an experiential space so that there's some evidence and proven experience that you can explore and take some of these insights into your practice.

So if you're new to this podcast and this is the first episode you're jumping in on, you might be wondering, "What's this miniseries thing?" So that's what this is about and it's multi-episode and we'll complete this in a few episodes. So I encourage you to kind of harken back to what we've already talked about to get an idea of sort of the baseline of where I operate.

With this episode I want to dig into some business ideas because it's often an arena that is neglected amongst a lot of training programs. A lot of training programs, rightly so, focus on technical skills, which is terrific. It's important. But they're a little substandard in really offering business skills.

And I think one of the issues that really resides in the yoga industry, particularly, well both, in the teacher and therapist industries, is that it's very

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difficult to make a living as a yoga therapist or yoga teacher. And people aren't wrong about that, although I do disagree. And they're not wrong about it because there's plenty of evidence out there of yoga therapists and teachers who have not made a living.

There were some stats a few years ago posted by the IAYT that, I think, I could be wrong about this, but it was somewhere around the \$10,000 a year mark that yoga therapists were earning. And they were often complimenting their yoga therapy with yoga teaching. But to make your income solely from a yoga therapist was tricky. There's evidence that's there.

And I'm saying that I disagree with them, as I often do on this podcast, meaning I disagree with the general belief you can't, because I have evidence to prove otherwise. And a big reason why people aren't successful is because they don't have the skill, right? And so there's generally not a great building of business skill.

And a lot of people who are in the yoga industry, like a lot of healing professionals, they sometimes look at the technical side and the business side being like oil and water, in that business just has this other flavor to it, which doesn't meld with the caring and the endearing that happen with the technical side. So I've been really trying to put out there saying, well, the whole point here is to build and grow the yogi in your business and to nurture yourself in your business.

And with this episode, I want to kind of dig into this more, talk about three of the myths around this idea about not being able to make a living at this. And again, I mean, I've got the grads that prove that it's possible. Some of them are earning a full-time living. Some of them are earning a part-time living. Some of them are in their retirement and then using it.

Many of them are turning clients away because they have a certain lifestyle they want to have. They're really happy with what they're earning, and they need to kind of prune out how they are delivering and who they are

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delivering their programs to. So I've got evidence that says otherwise in terms of making a living as a yoga therapist.

Okay, so let's kind of talk about what are the three common myths. I'll give you some ideas in each of these myths to kind of consider for your own self, and we'll just take it from there.

So the first myth, and I've briefed it already, is that you can't make a living as a yoga therapist. And as I've already mentioned, there are two sets of skills that you need, and a lot of therapy training programs and teacher training programs are fantastic at teaching skills, teaching the skills of technique. And so we've got a lot of great and very skillful yoga therapists out there, but then how they turn that into something that's also providing them with some revenue, that's the trickier part.

So then because they're not getting it, that's not the evidence that's out there for them, they believe that it's not possible. So the key here is that you do need both sets of skills, and if you didn't grow your technical skill, you wouldn't be very good at what you did. And business people generally aren't born business people. There are people who do come into the world that way, I certainly wasn't one of those people, and pretty much every single trainee that I have graduated is not one of those people.

So we need to grow skills. Business is a set of skills and tools just like yoga therapy training, you learn a set of skills and tools. And if you just recall yourself when you took your first training, and if you're not even a yoga therapist yet, but you're thinking about developing your skill at that, think about the training you've already done in your life, whether it's OT, PT, massage therapy, chiropractor, whatever, at one point, you had to grow skill.

So there's that skill, there's skill and tools inside of business that you do need to grow. And when you grow those skills and you learn how to engage and interact with potential clients, it really is game changing.

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And here's one idea that I'd love for you to consider. A lot of times I'm having conversations with yoga therapists or yoga therapy trainees and they say, you know, how do you describe yoga therapy? I mean, the general public doesn't really know yoga therapy, so how do you describe what it is that we do? Because if they don't know what it is that we do, how can we sell them in the process? And therein lies our first problem. And by that, I mean the first problem to solve.

So I was one of the first, if not the first yoga therapist in my city. I was certainly the first one doing it full-time. I was the first one who had a studio that was geared solely towards yoga therapy. So there were a lot of people who had no idea what yoga therapy was. And here I was doing my thing. But I didn't sell yoga therapy. Sure, on my website I talked about yoga therapy and I had words that were like therapeutic applications of yoga, but I wasn't selling yoga therapy per se.

And what I'm about to say next is really important and it's not euphemistic. I was offering a solution to a problem, and that problem is persistent, and was back in the day, persistent chronic pain. If someone had persistent chronic pain and they were looking for an integrative way of helping themselves, I had a solution that matched that problem. Round peg, round hole.

To be clear, I was not helping everybody who has chronic and persistent pain because my service does not help everyone with chronic and persistent pain. The key piece of that are people who are looking for an integrative approach. And now that wording might not land for a lot of people, so I'm just sharing with you the idea that I was, like what I wrote on my website back then was a bit more specific and a little bit more nuanced than me just kind of stating a few words here.

But the important thing is, I wasn't selling yoga therapy. I was selling, I was providing, I was inviting people to see that there was this other option that was more integrative. And I can be really clear about that because I am not a PT. I am not an OT. I'm not a chiropractor. I'm not any of those health professionals. What I am is a kinesiologist, biomechanics specialist, huge

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understanding of anatomy, and I am super skilled at helping people become aware, helping people feel the whispers, and mind-body integration.

Now granted, I am more skilled now than I was back then, but I was still very skilled back then, right? So I can offer that skill as a solution to this problem. Now I know I keep saying this, solution to the problem, but I'm really hammering this on purpose because we're not selling yoga therapy, we're offering a solution to a problem. It just happens that the vehicle is yoga therapy.

Now I'm going to say this in another way. I love acupuncture. I used acupuncture all the way through my pregnancy and then postpartum, and I've used it since then. I find it's just an incredible tool, but you know what? It's not really the acupuncture that's the thing. It's the person that I'm seeing, right? I've seen other acupuncturists in my past, and that's sort of when I first realized that I loved acupuncture, but I also found different acupuncturists who weren't so great. The resonance wasn't there, right?

So the first acupuncturist I saw, I saw him for a little while and then he passed away. And then I went to see his apprentice, but the apprentice and I just didn't, there wasn't a resonance there. Still providing acupuncture, but not quite the vibe there, yeah?

Think about hairstylists. Sometimes you've got a great vibe with one, sometimes you don't. They're all hairstylists. Dentists, same thing. So we can call, we know that dentistry is about the teeth, but then your interaction with the dentist or the dental hygienist is really the game changer. So again, what we're looking at is who are we and what's the problem that we're solving?

We're not selling yoga therapy, okay? This is where we really start to shift the future for ourselves. We're solving a problem. So get clear on the problem, get clear on your solution, and then start playing with that in your communication.

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The second myth is that you need hustle energy in order to make your business work. And the key here is that that's not actually true. When I think about hustle energy, I think about a frenetic, sort of frantic, not breathing, sort of out of your body, ungrounded kind of energy. What works better is consistent and deliberate action.

There are times, yes, that there is hard work to be done. There are times where there are problems. I just went through a fall where there were a whole bunch of technical problems in my classroom, my online classroom setup and some of our email setup. And it was hard. It was very, very hard. And there were a lot of problems to be solved and then we had to shift platforms and all those things.

So it was difficult. But difficulty is different from hustle energy. Getting down and solving the problem and then taking the steps to make the change, that's different from hustling.

Okay, so let me put this into some perspective. If we harken back to the first myth and we really think about what is the problem that we're solving, I'm going to address this next point to those of you who have a client base. It might be a small one, or it might be a medium-sized one, and you want to grow it.

So think about what you're already doing that's working. Think about the things that you're already saying to the people that you're teaching, that you're interacting with, that has a resonance, that you love talking about and that land well for other people. And get clear on that message, because that's the message that's already working.

So many of the things that we do in our businesses, we're already doing well, we just need to become aware of what it is that we're doing, right? So sometimes, and I've had this happen in the past where I've brought in a marketer thinking that they would be able to communicate better what I'm saying. And then they don't understand at all what I'm doing and they don't understand yoga at all, or they have a perspective of what yoga is.



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And very soon in the process is like, oh, no, they don't actually know anything about what I'm trying to do here. I actually know more about what I'm doing. And I learned that because I'm explaining to them all of what it is that I'm doing. It's not landing well for them, but in the process of me explaining it to them, I realize I actually know more than I actually thought I know, and I'm the one who actually knows my message better.

And I see that happening with other trainees that I've taught and grads that I've taught, is they'll bring someone in from the marketing world thinking that they'll be able to message what they're offering better than they are already doing. And the reality is, time and time again, consistently I see as evidence amongst my trainees, my grads, and even myself, I just need to get clear on what I'm already doing and what I'm already doing that's landing for my client. And then honing that more clearly, perhaps, and just saying it more and more and more and more.

So one of the things that I noticed early on, particularly as I re-listened and I kind of reviewed some of my podcast episodes is I say, ad nauseam for some people, that where the pain is, isn't the problem. When you reduce compensatory patterns, physical pain can be reduced and eradicated. I say that an awful lot, right? I talk about listening to the whispers.

And these are messages that land for the people who resonate with what I'm teaching. When I can be specific and deliberate in saying those things over and over and over and over and over and over again, then I'm actually taking care of myth number one as well because I am outlining the solution to a problem that my potential client has.

So if someone has got no interest in an integrative approach, if someone has no interest in this idea of where the pain is isn't the problem, so where is it? Let's go excavating. If someone has no interest in listening to the whispers, they are not my client. So I don't need to dwell on, oh, I'm saying the wrong thing. I get to dwell on, all right, who's next? Keep being consistent, keep being deliberate, right? Do you see that distinction here?



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Now if you're new to this, you're relatively new, maybe you've got one client or maybe you're just starting out, then start just playing around with what's already worked with your practice, with yourself, or in your training when you were working with other trainees, or if you were doing a practicum when you were working with your practicum clientele.

What did you notice you were already saying that was very much in resonance with your clientele? What were the characteristics of the clientele that you worked really well with? What did you love about them? And then build upon that. What's that interaction? What was that relationship like?

And then start to write that out, who are your people? And bullet point those characteristics. What are you often saying to those people? Even if it was five people, what were you saying to them a lot of the time? And then start to talk more about that because that's part of your inherent message, that's part of your inherent solution. And then be deliberate and consistent with telling people about that.

So when people ask you what you do, then you can say, I help people, blah, blah, blah, blah. Try not to fall into the trap of saying I'm a yoga teacher or I'm a yoga therapist. Rather, see if you can play with, well, you know what? I help people – In my case, I would say I help people reduce and eradicate physical pain. Then the next question comes, oh, are you a PT? And I'll say, nope, I'm not a PT, but I do use yoga therapeutically. Oh, well, how does that happen?

That's a very, very common type of process that goes through. Those people might not end up being my clients, but it's me practicing, it's me sharing out in the world what it is that I offer as an invitation to potential clients.

And here is something that I've noticed, is that when I am messaging out and communicating what it is that I do, it's not this direct back and forth. So I want you to kind of, in your mind, I want you to imagine you speaking forward from your mouth. So you're looking at a target, like a bullseye

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target, and you're saying what you're saying, it's going out towards that target.

Now I want you to imagine that the target is like a trampoline. So you send the message out, oftentimes people expect the response from a client is going to come directly back. So you offer, and then someone should say yes out of that offer. That should happen. But that doesn't often happen that way. That's not the image that tends to work.

It's more circular. So then the message goes out, then it circles back and around. So a lot of times in my past, I would have said to like a workshop I was running, I may have said, so what else do you want to learn from me? We've done this SI joint workshop, are you interested in the knees or the feet or the shoulders? And people would check mark what they would love to learn and then oftentimes would put happy faces, like, yeah, this was so awesome, I'd love to learn more from you.

And then I would send out an offer, and none of those people would register, right? So I sent out the offer, I sent it out to that target, it did not come back directly. So it's so easy to then say, ugh, nobody wants this. But because I was consistent and deliberate with consistently sending out that message, then where the people came from just sort of happened. People just sort of showed up.

It's one of those weird, I'm going to be kind of crass with this, it's a weird ass providence woo-hoo universe manifestation weird thing. Because I was being deliberate and consistent, the vibe was out there. People were talking, things were happening, but my actions had to be deliberate and consistent.

So often, people would come into my universe and I had no idea where they were coming from. None. And then when I would ask them they were like, oh yeah, someone told me about you, or I heard this message somewhere, or I don't even know, I just kind of happened upon you somewhere. So that's kind of how it works.

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But again, deliberate and consistent around the message of there's a problem to solve, that all comes together. If you don't have that, then yes, it's going to be difficult to make a living at this. And yes, you could fall into that trap or that rut of hustle energy. And again, neither of those things have to come to pass.

So this leads to the third one, and the myth is that people will not pay your fee. This is very common to hear. And it's so interesting because it's often tied to the way people think about their own health systems in the country that they live in. And I work with a global audience and so there's many different styles of healthcare provision that's out there. And it's so interesting how, even though it's all so different, oftentimes, that's where people land.

Like in Canada, people will say, well, because healthcare is covered in our taxes and it's kind of felt like we don't pay for it because we're not at the doctor and putting out the credit card when we're at the doctor. Most of it's covered through our taxes. So we go to the doctor, we get the service and we leave. Trainees will say, or grads will say, well, people don't want to pay. They're not used to paying.

And so where the paradigm shift starts to happen is, well, let's harken back to point one. When you are outlining a problem to solve and a person is clear that that solution will likely be helpful to them, they will absolutely pay a fee. That part has to be clear, though. There needs to be a solution.

Think about anything that you have recently purchased, whether it's something very big, like a computer or a car, or something less so, like grocery food or pants or underwear, right? They're all to solve a problem. And then in those times where you were investing in a more expensive option, which would require you to kind of play around with your resources and what you had from a cash perspective, think about how you made that decision.

A big reason why people take my certification program is because I spend a lot of time and I have a true blue business coach that helps and works

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with my trainees so that when they are graduating they've got the skill. They help them move that needle towards growing a client base that they really love.

People will pay the fee if there's clarity on what that solution is and if that solution is one that they are looking for. But you need to come from that perspective of what it is that you're offering. And it's not yoga therapy. Yoga therapy is the vehicle. It's a solution to a problem. So if you're clear on the problem and you're clear on the solution, start there. Be consistent and deliberate in your messaging.

Keep at it. And as you keep at it, people will gain the trust that you are truly worth what you are saying and people will enroll. So play around with those ideas. There will be more ideas coming down the pipe.

And if these ideas resonate with you and you want to take your training to the next level, I have my intake for the therapeutic yoga intensive this coming April 20th to the 25th, and then we move into the next module of our certification program in June.

And this really is the program about helping you grow your technical skills so you are fabulous at helping people reduce and eradicate physical pain, as well as building a business that really honors who you are, helps you build out what the solution is to someone's problem, helps you get clear on what that process is so you can be consistent and deliberate in your messaging and you can really fine tune that. So you just know who your ideal person is and teach what is true in your heart and bolstered by your skill.

You can learn more at [functionalsynergy.com/intensive](http://functionalsynergy.com/intensive) for our intensive program, and [functionalsynergy.com/certification](http://functionalsynergy.com/certification) for the whole certification program. And by all means, send us a note to [health@functionalsynergy.com](mailto:health@functionalsynergy.com). All right, take care. You have a great, great day. We'll see you next time. Bye.