

Ep. #357 - What is the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive



Full Episode Transcript

With your host:

Susi Hately

[From Pain to Possibility](#) with Susi Hately

Introduction (00:00.00)

You are listening to From Pain To Possibility with Susi Hatley. You'll 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 you're here because today I am specifically talking about the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive, why it's existed for almost 25 years now, who it's actually for, and what problem it is designed to solve. This isn't a general episode about yoga philosophy or even yoga therapy philosophy.

It's not a conversation about credentials, hours, or becoming a yoga therapist, but rather it's about the moment that many yoga teachers or health professionals who love yoga eventually reach, often quietly, sometimes with a bit of confusion, maybe that like GNA feeling in your belly, sometimes frustration.

It's the moment when you really realize that what used to work doesn't reliably work anymore, and you know that there's another way. You know that there's a more whole-body, whole-mind way. So even though your instructions and cues are thoughtful and your care for your students or clients is genuine, the people in your care, the people in your classes, their bodies aren't changing in the way you expected them to, and you're not really sure why.

In many cases, they might feel more benefit and feel better and get relief from a class or two or a session or two, and they might feel something shift, but the pain returns or migrates or becomes more layered, and it's disorienting because you've done everything right so far in all of the training you have had.

It's that moment there when effort, compassion, and knowledge stop translating into lasting change. That is the reason why this Therapeutic Yoga Intensive exists, and if you've ever found yourself wondering whether you're missing something that isn't another technique, this episode is for you. Most people don't come to the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive because they're new to teaching yoga.

They come because they're experienced. Many have taught yoga for at least a couple of years, many four or five to 10 years, or they're body workers, massage therapists, physical therapists, fitness professionals, or movement educators who happen to really like yoga. All in all, they've taken trainings, they've studied some anatomy.

They've refined their cueing, and they care deeply about doing right by the people they work with. But they're noticing patterns that aren't resolving. Their people are feeling more, the sensation is growing, their interoception is growing, but they don't actually get better in the way that you want.

Relief is happening, but it fades later that day or the next morning. Pain moves from one area of the body to another. Stability seems to require more and more effort, and the cues like “engage your core,” “support yourself,” “stabilize.” There's just more gripping and holding and guarding. You're seeing things.

You can't quite name why what you're doing isn't quite working the way you want it to. What's additive to this particular challenge is that this stage doesn't feel like a beginner problem, and you already kind of deeply know that it's not about better alignment language or learning a new pose, variation, or different choreography.

It's certainly not solved by asking people to try harder. I notice with a lot of teachers who come to the Intensive that there's a quiet sense of doubt that has started to creep in, and it's this doubt because the tools they've been given aren't quite explaining or supporting what's actually happening in front of them.

So you can see something is off. They know something's off. They can see the effort they're putting into the classes is sort of backfiring, but they don't have the words or the framework to really understand why. That's why they come to the Intensive. It's not that they're needing more information, but they do need a new way of seeing the fundamental belief and the core problem that the Intensive addresses.

It is multifold. Number one, that healing is possible, that tissue can change, and that feeling and sensation are not the same thing as coordination. Someone can feel effort and still compensate like crazy. Someone can feel strong and still be bracing like crazy, and someone can feel stretching and still be loading their tissues really poorly.

So this is leading to more inefficient functional patterns and loading patterns. This is a reason why people aren't getting better. So much movement education, including yoga, places a lot of emphasis on sensation. If someone feels something, there's an assumption that something productive is happening, and if they don't feel enough, there's an assumption they need to do more.

Over time, this creates a very specific pattern: people trying to fix sensation with more sensation, more engagement, more effort, more holding, more stretching. The problem, though, is that pain and dysfunction are often not caused by a lack of effort. Rather, what I notice time and time again is the coordination of that effort.

The Therapeutic Yoga Intensive exists to help you see things like those coordinating patterns, where breath weaves in with load, how the ribs, the pelvis, the spine, the arms, and the legs relate or coordinate with each other, where force is being absorbed and where it's being avoided, how it's being dissipated and transferred, and why so often pain reflects a protective strategy rather than a structural defect.

When you begin to see movement in this way, a lot of things change fundamentally. Hence my point of healing being possible as people apply these principles that I teach inside of the

Therapeutic Yoga Intensive. They stop chasing symptoms. They stop chasing outcomes. They stop relying on hoping and praying that something will work.

And they stop forcing bodies into shapes and into choreography that don't actually help, and they understand why. Instead, you start working with learning, truly seeing how motor coordination, how motor control, plays out in a human body and how it can gently change. This is the missing piece for so many people and professionals.

So how does the Intensive actually work? There are two versions of the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive. There is the live online six-day immersion. There's also an asynchronous version that runs over six weeks. In both cases, they're the foundation of how I work clinically and how I train others to work therapeutically.

And it's really important, I think, to be very clear on what it is and what it isn't. It's not a pose-based training. It's not a rigid system. It's not about fixing people. Instead, it's about learning how to work with human beings who have bodies that are sensitive, appear complex, or stuck, all without forcing change.

And the learning structure begins by you experiencing the work in your own body. Because you cannot teach coordination you have not felt. You cannot recognize subtle compensation patterns if you haven't experienced compensation patterns for yourself. You don't need to be able to feel the compensation patterns you're expected to see.

No, you need to be able to feel compensations, period, in order to be able to see compensation patterns. When you learn how to observe movement, you're learning not just what's happening but how it is happening. You're practicing teaching and you're practicing being taught, and you're exploring how breathing and movement mechanics and perception and pain all interreact.

It's an embodied training, embodied learning. You're moving, you're teaching, you're receiving feedback. You're noticing what changes and what doesn't. Really significantly, the work adapts to you. So whether you come from yoga and bodywork or physical therapy, fitness, or other modality, the principles integrate with what you already do.

It's not about replacing your skills; it's about being additive and giving you a clear lens for applying them.

Many people take the Intensive as a standalone experience, and that is absolutely 100% intentional because it's designed to give you something that you can integrate immediately into your teaching, into your practice, and into your understanding of bodies. In fact, what I often will suggest to people is how to integrate this right away in eight weeks with private clients right outta the gate, in addition.

It's also the first step towards full IOYT-accredited Yoga Therapy Certification. Both paths are entirely valid. It just depends on what you're seeking and to determine and really to discern if this is for you. The Therapeutic Yoga Intensive is ideally designed for people who work with bodies and pain and who want more clarity.

For people who are curious rather than rigid, who want discernment rather than dogma, and who are willing to slow down in order to see more. This is not about me preaching a system. I'm not creating a whole bunch of mini me's. I don't have any lineage identity, and there's no single right way to do a pose.

Rather, this process supports you in developing confidence in your own perception so you can truly respond to the person in front of you rather than defaulting to a script. So some people who are coming into the Intensive are coming for their own bodies because they know that the process is about embodiment.

They are professionals. They really wanna feel it in their own bodies. Others are coming primarily to support their clients more effectively, to take their professional training up a notch. And then others come because they're at a professional crossroads. They're wondering if they wanna integrate yoga therapy with, say, occupational therapy or physical therapy, or becoming an integrative fitness professional.

Or it could be all of the above. The key is that each of these reasons is totally valid, and we welcome all of it.

So why does this matter? Why have I been doing this for almost 25 years? This very specific program, the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive, because I believe healing is possible. I fundamentally can't ignore the changes that happen with each person I work with, the trainees that I work with, who apply the principles I'm teaching and what happens in their bodies and minds.

I've seen incredible experiences with people who have standard-issue back pain to people with autoimmune conditions and flares have fundamentally different experiences of how they live in their bodies. Ultimately, symptoms, whether they are autoimmune flares or pain or something else, they're not simply physical experiences only.

They're opportunities to learn. Those sensations, those symptoms, are messengers. And when someone learns how to move differently, how to really improve that motor control and coordination, and how breath, movement, and load with less vigilance, how that interweaves the change ripples not only outward but more deeply inward, not just in their body but in how they trust themselves, and that is what is fundamental to true healing.

That's what we do with the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive. It's all about supporting that kind of change quietly, clearly, and without force.

If you're listening to this and thinking, "Oh yes, this is where I am at. This is what I want," the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive could very well be the next step for you, and you can read more about it over at **functionalsynergy.com/intensive**. Early bird registration is on now. And if you're interested in the asynchronous version of the training, then connect to us through our website at **functionalsynergy.com** and we'll talk more about how the async program can work for you.

Here is to helping people out of pain. Here is to helping people heal. Here is a pathway from pain to possibility. I look forward to seeing you on the inside.

--

Did this episode resonate with you? Are you really keen to become adept and skilled at utilizing therapeutic yoga? The Therapeutic Yoga Intensive is happening this April, 2026, and all the details are over at **functionalsynergy.com/intensive**. Looking forward to seeing you there.