

## **Adapting Yin and Yang Yoga Poses in a Functional Way: Course outline**

### *Day 1*

#### **Introduction (29 min)**

Hello and welcome! During this course we'll explore the purpose of Yin and Yang yoga asana and learn how to practise in a functional way. This essentially means adapting poses to serve your body, rather than forcing your body into a (perceived) 'ideal' shape. We'll look at the differences between Yin and Yang practices and the distinction between tension and compression. You'll gain insights into how to practise yoga in a more open-minded, experimental way, with respect for the uniqueness of your body.

#### **Functional stimulation (22 min)**

In this session, you'll learn what you want to feel, and don't want to feel, in a yoga pose. You will discover how much Yin or Yang yoga - or any kind of stimulation - is good for you. You will also learn about the various effects of Yin and Yang yoga asana practices.

#### **Where should you feel it? (19 min)**

Here we look at the different target areas of the leg, torso and upper body. You'll discover how to strengthen and/or stretch them using specific movements - the idea being that if you know which movement strengthens or stretches a particular area in your body, you are better equipped to notice whether you experience the intended stimulation. If not, this is an invitation to adapt the pose.

#### **Skeletal movements (14 min)**

In this session, we look at the possible movements of each joint in the body. This will give you insight into your own ranges of movement and familiarise you further with the difference between compression and tension. You'll also learn how to adapt poses to move around areas of compression while continuing to stimulate the desired target area.

#### **Teaching functionally (12 min)**

This class is for those who teach Yin or Yang asana classes, but will also offer insights to those who are looking to deepen their own practice. You'll learn what the responsibility of a teacher is and how to give functional cues while teaching Yin or Yang classes.

#### **Adjusting functionally (9 min)**

Here you'll learn some concepts and tools to enable you to offer verbal and manual adjustments to your students based on a functional approach. If you are not teaching, you can use this session to explore functional adjustments for yourself by applying the same concepts.

#### **Wrists, elbows and the shoulder girdle (1h 07min)**

In these classes we'll look at how the movement possibilities of the wrist, elbow and arm (flexion, abduction and adduction) influence how you do Yin and Yang poses. We test the range of movement

of different joints, discover whether compression or tension restricts movement, and learn how to functionally adapt the poses if this happens. We also discuss the difference between an aesthetic and a functional practice.

### **Yin and Yang functional practice (1h 25min)**

In this session, we practise a Yin and Yang functional yoga class which focuses on the wrists, elbows and shoulders. José offers variations for the poses in order to avoid painful compression or unwanted tension in these joints

#### *Day 2*

### **Arm extension and shoulder blade retraction (50 min)**

Learn how the movement possibilities of the arm (extension) and shoulder blades (retraction) influences your ability to 'open' the chest. We explore how to avoid compression and create the desired opening in various Yin and Yang poses.

### **Arm rotation and shoulder blade protraction (1h 04min)**

Discover how the torsion of your arm bone affects the amount of arm rotation and/or shoulder blade retraction you need in various Yin and Yang poses. Then we look at how arm rotation affects the shoulder, chest or upper back opening and explore pose adaptations.

### **Ankles and toes (1h 05min)**

Here we look at how the range of movement in the toes (extension) and ankles (flexion) influences the way you perform Yin and Yang poses and whether or not you experience opening, strengthening or painful compression. We try out various options to create an opening in the soles of the feet and backs of the toes in various Yin and Yang poses while avoiding compression.

#### *Day 3*

### **Knee and leg rotation (1h 40min)**

In these classes you'll learn how knee rotation and extension and femur rotation influences the way you do Yin and Yang poses - and whether or not you experience an opening, strengthening or painful compression. We test ranges of movement in these areas and notice this affects the stretch in the buttocks or quads. We'll then explore some functional adjustments so you gain the benefits of the poses without experiencing pain.

### **Yin and Yang functional practice (1h 11min)**

A Yin and Yang functional yoga practice which focuses on the arms (flexion, extension, rotation), toes, ankles, knee and thigh rotation.

#### *Day 4*

### **Pelvis (2h 26min)**

In this session you will learn the purposes of various Yin and Yang poses and discover how different leg positions (flexion and abduction) affect the pelvis and back when practising certain poses. We'll

then functionally adapt the poses to prevent 'falling back' with the hips or 'hanging' in the lower back. In some cases, we'll also consider reclined variations.

**Neck and lower back (55 min)**

We look at how different leg positions affect the amount of compression in the lower back, and how different arm positions affect the amount of compression in the shoulders, upper back and neck. You'll learn how the amount of flexion in the neck, and flexion and extension in the lower back, can affect your inverted or backbending Yin and Yang poses. We will test the range of movement in the neck and explore adjustments to avoid strain or pain.

**Proportion and orientation (10 min)**

Here you will learn how the orientation and proportion of our bodies can affect Yang poses such as Dandasana, Tolasana, Ardha Matsyendrasana, Parivrtta Parsva Konasana, Utthita Trikonasana, and Ardha Chandrasana, along with some functional adjustments.

**Yin and Yang functional practice (30 min)**

We practise a Yin and Yang functional yoga class which focuses on poses with various leg movements that either strengthen or stretch the legs and torso.

**A final word (1 min)**

We round off the course with a final word from José.