

# *Tracee Stanley*

Author & Speaker  
Yoga Nidra, Tantra, & Meditation



Press Kit  
[traceestanley.com](http://traceestanley.com)

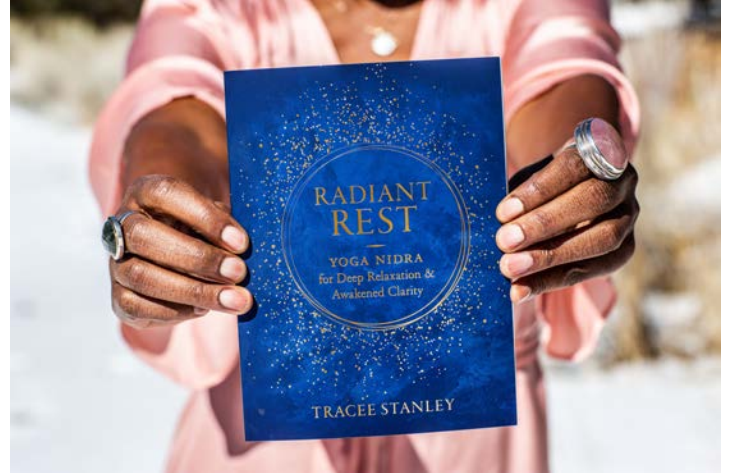
# About Tracee

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**Tracee Stanley** is the founder of **Empowered Life Circle**, a sacred community and portal of practices, rituals, and Tantric teachings inspired by more than 20 years of study in various Yoga and Tantric traditions, including Sri Vidya Tantra and the teachings of the Himalayan masters.

As a post-lineage teacher, Tracee is devoted to sharing the wisdom of yoga nidra, meditation, self-inquiry, nature as a teacher, ritual, and ancestor reverence. She is the creatrix of the Empowered Life Self-Inquiry Oracle Deck and host of the Radiant Rest Podcast, which celebrates the practices, teachers, and traditions that prioritize the rituals of rest, sacred dreaming, and self-care.



Tracee's best-selling book **"Radiant Rest – Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation and Awakened Clarity"**, published by Shambhala Publishing, is available everywhere books are sold. Her forthcoming book, **"The Luminous Self: Sacred Yogic Practices & Rituals to Remember Who You Are"** will be released in Oct 2023, also by Shambhala Publications.

Learn more at [traceestanley.com](https://traceestanley.com).

In "The Luminous Self," Tracee empowers readers to turn towards the essential question : Who am I? It includes practices, rituals, yoga nidra, and self-inquiry to reveal inner wisdom, and inspire us to rest in a place of remembered wholeness. Tracee shares the practices that have been most potent and transformative in her life, and gives suggestions for how to share in community.

Tracee is highly sought after for her in-person and online trainings and retreats. She serves as a faculty member at the Esalen Institute, Omega Institute, and Kripalu. She is the founder of the Sankalpa Shakti Yoga School and co-founder of Empowered Wisdom Yoga Nidra Training School.

# Praise for The Luminous Self

Shambhala Publications (October 2023)

“There are practices and teachings within this book that will change the course of your destiny. The Luminous Self is a portal to the inner realms where anything is possible”

–Kim Krans, artist and

creator of The Wild Unknown Tarot

“Tracee Stanley's book arrives in an age when people are thirsting for an authentic path to the true Self. This beautiful and deep book is the dip of cool water needed to slake that thirst.”

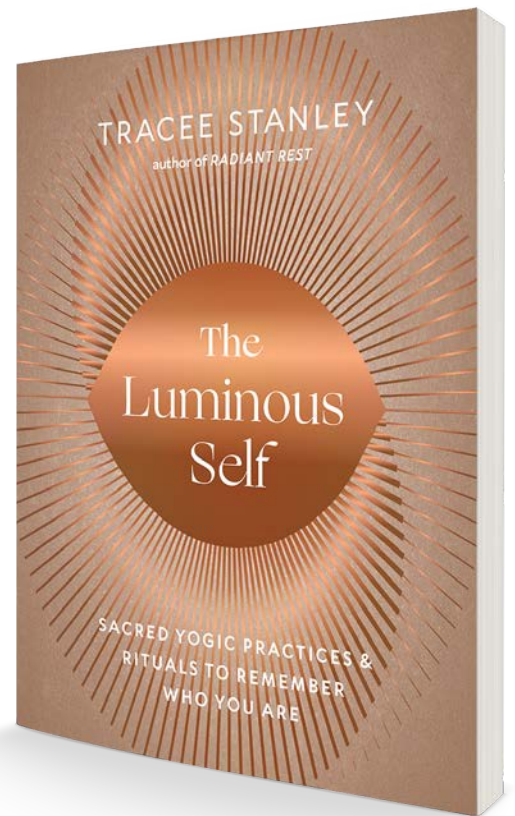
–Acharya Shunya, author of Sovereign Self

“It is time to collectively wake up and remember who we are before our forgetfulness causes any more harm to us, all sentient beings, and the planet. The Luminous Self is not only a book—it is already a good Ancestor who whispers to us, ‘This, this is the way.’ You are not lost; follow the ray that points toward The Luminous Self.”

–Octavia Raheem, author of Pause, Rest, Be

“This work of art speaks to the undoing that meets us all at our proverbial front door when we dive into an inquiry and practice how to heal ourselves and find peace amid a chaotic world and landscape. Tracee provides a soft container that feels like the wisest guidance for the unraveling and undoing as well as practices and tools for the journey back into wholeness and truth.”

–Michelle Cassandra Johnson, author of We Heal Together.





FEATURES

## NIGHTCAP: TRACEE STANLEY

THE YOGA NIDRA PRACTITIONER AND AUTHOR SHARES HER RADICALLY RESTFUL EVENING ROUTINE

**Tracee Stanley** *glows*, and you might say it's because she slept well last night. And the night before. And many nights prior to that, even; rest is a non-negotiable cornerstone of her routine. The yoga nidra expert and author of *Radiant Rest* knows **the power of a good night's sleep** and its profound impact on not just inner-outer beauty, but our sense of personal power and purpose. As a former Hollywood producer for over two decades, Stanley understands the hustle of burning the candle at both ends, but she's since moved to Santa Fe to bask in nature and dedicate her life to the self-healing techniques of rest. "Rest is radical because it is counter-culture. Our culture equates value with social status, material wealth and with the constant cycle of 'doing,'" Stanley says. "Once we understand that everything we are looking for is not outside—but inside—of us, we will be much more fulfilled and able to let go of striving for outer validation and forsaking our sleep, rest, and health to get it."

Read along to read her insights on body rhythms, sacred nighttime rituals, holding space to watch the sky, the *physical* books she thumbs through as she dozes off, and why stillness matters.

### ON BODY RHYTHMS AND MANTRA:

When our circadian rhythm senses light, it's telling you that it's time to stay awake. Even though it doesn't seem like it's a big deal, it really is. It's one of the reasons why every day I watch the sky as the sun is setting so that my body receives the message that it's time to start winding down. It's one of my go-to tricks that I do when I'm traveling because even if I landed in a different time zone, I would make myself stay up to watch the sunrise and sunset so my body felt what was happening.

When I observe the sky, I often play a mantra called the **Surya Gayatri Mantra**; it's a mantra that allows us to remember our own inner radiance. There are mantras that are said to diminish the darkness, and there are others said to expand the brilliance of the effulgent light—this one expands light. It's very traditional that you would chant this mantra at sunrise, and then again when the sun is at its highest at noon, and then again at sunset. It's a way of weaving ritual and weaving presence through your life.

The sunsets here [in Sante Fe] are pretty epic. It's one of the reasons why I moved here is because I wanted to be able to be in more connection with the sun and the moon and the stars. So, I watch the sunset and I chant Gayatri until the moment where I can no longer see the sun.

“

WE'RE NOT OFTEN PRESENT TO  
OUR BREATH, WHICH IS THE  
GREATEST GIFT THAT WE HAVE  
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WELL-BEING

# TRACEE STANLEY'S YOGA NIDRA MEDITATION

TUNE INTO THIS EXCLUSIVE RECORDING ANY TIME OF DAY TO BATHE YOUR BRAIN IN UPLIFTING THOUGHTS AND ACTIVATE THE PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

"This practice can be done any time of day or night. By day, it will rejuvenate you, leaving you feeling rested and energized. In the evening, this is a wonderful practice to lead you into a blissful night's sleep," Tracee Stanley says, yoga nidra expert and author of *Radiant Rest*. This 20-minute practice allows your parasympathetic nervous system time to activate, which is known as the "rest and digest" body system. By carving space in your day to stimulate the PNS, your body can tune into its natural self-healing capabilities. Brew yourself some Sakara Sleep Tea, draw up a bath, and settle into the true meaning of self-care.



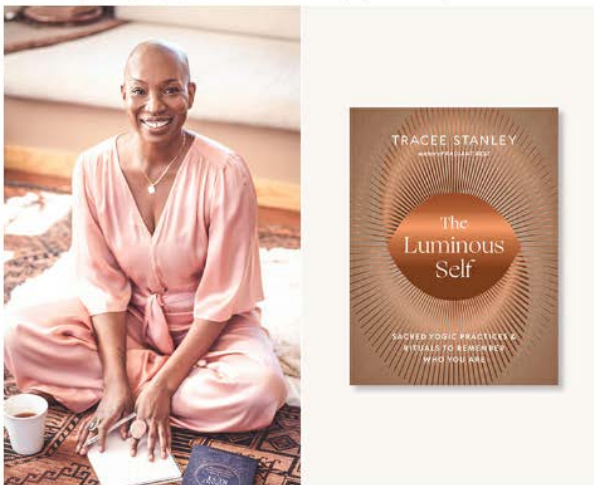
## Tracee Stanley Debunks 5 Myths About Rest – Bye, Grind Culture



6.5.23 | The Chalkboard Editorial Team, Chloe Crespi

**TRACEE STANLEY IS ON A MISSION** to make holistic wellness accessible for us all. Through yoga nidra, meditation and ancestral healing, the celebrated yogi and *Radiant Rest* author is dedicated to supporting friends and clients find a balanced and empowered approach to life. Pre-order her new book, *The Luminous Self: Sacred Yogic Practices and Rituals to Remember Who You Are*, coming this Fall!

Intentional rest as a practice has been growing in popularity in activism and wellness circles for the last decade. Now, corporations are hiring rest experts and guides to help facilitate company retreats and workshops to help employees embrace wellness through guided rest experiences.



Intentional rest is the practice of pausing daily life activities, letting go of “doing”, and reclaiming time for restful ease – for both the body and mind. In this day and age, we may need to reframe our relationship with rest so that we can begin to reclaim it as an integral part of our lives. Let’s explore the top 5 misconceptions about rest.

## Tracee Stanley On 5 Misconceptions About Intentional Rest

**01 REST IS A LUXURY** | The idea of rest is often seen as a privilege reserved only for those who have worked hard to earn it or who live a life of leisure supported by material wealth.

Here’s the truth: rest is your birthright. This idea is counterculture because we have been conditioned to believe that we are not worthy of a simple and life-affirming gift to ourselves. If we think that we are not worthy of rest deep down, we may also believe that we are not worthy of wellness. A rested mind and body are pillars of well-being. When we experience resistance to rest—whether it is a judgment of ourselves or others—it’s time to look deeper. Rest is vital to being in a state of remembered wellness and the auspicious action we need to move us away from grind culture.

**02 I DON’T HAVE TIME TO REST** | Time is the biggest adversary to rest and requires understanding how much time is needed to rest. Resting doesn’t require a 20-minute nap.

I suggest several 3-minute micro-rests throughout the day. If you can devote 3 minutes to close your eyes, lean back or lay down in a supine position in-between household responsibilities, picking up kids, and dropping them off to activities several times a day, before you know it you will have reclaimed 15-20 minutes of rest time.

**03 I’LL MISS OUT ON SOMETHING IF I TAKE A BREAK** | FOMO has bitten us all at one time or another. When the feeling of missing out arises, pause and ask yourself: What am I missing out on? What is this fear rooted in? Can I take this time to show up for myself and rest instead?

**04 I’M ALREADY GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP** | Sleep and rest are not the same. Sleep is a physiological need; your survival depends on it. But we could go an entire lifetime without intentionally resting.

Rest allows us to experience a sense of ease and spaciousness that helps us to improve our mental health, clarity, and experience joy. Our ancestors may have been denied rest because they were enslaved or indentured servants. Exploring how family history can inform our attitudes about rest is essential.

**05 ONLY SLEEP QUALIFIES AS REST** | There are many types of rest. Spend time contemplating different kinds of rest. Notice which ones you resonate with:

+ **Digital Rest:** Taking time for a digital detox from social media, news and email. You can try this for one day, a weekend, or a month.

+ **Creative Rest:** The intentional immersion into places that allow inspiration, creativity, and imagination to bloom without the need to “produce something.” Creative rest allows for daydreaming and wonder, and it supports creativity for the sake of expression and not extraction.

+ **Spiritual Rest:** Inspires pausing for self-reflection, solitude and stillness. We can experience this as a daily morning walk in nature or an extended personal retreat.

+ **Social Rest:** Reclaiming time for yourself and your family by declining social engagements for some time.

Read Next: [Learning To Let Go: How To Practice Yoga Nidra For Deeper Relaxation](#)

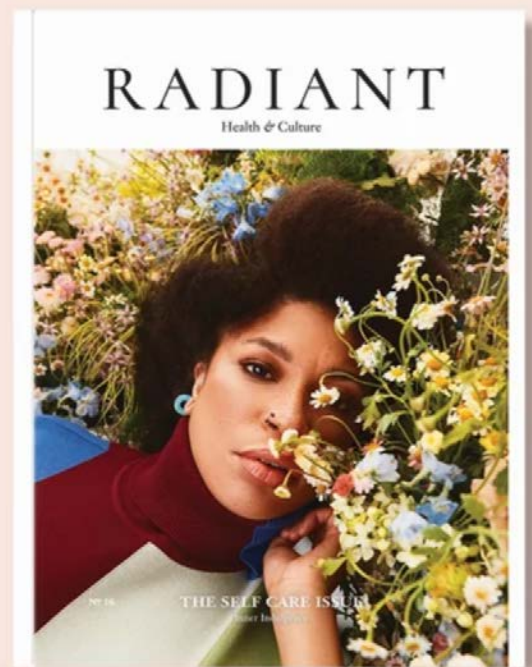
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# RADIANT

Health & Culture



## Radiant No.16 | Print The Self Care Issue



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# yoga journal

## Yoga Nidra for Releasing Grief

BY TRACEE STANLEY



Over the past several months, our lives have been upended as we've witnessed and endured loss, hardship, and injustice. This is a time of tremendous grief. The world's eyes have been opened to the truth of more than 400 years of systemic racism, while we grapple with personal loss and social isolation. We are in a time of great transition, and what we do in this space matters. We need to stay awake to everything that arises, especially our sorrow.

When we are weary from heartbreak, we must lie back and let the *tamas* (lethargy, inertia) of grief work on us in a different way—to get grounded and connected with the unconditional support of the earth. *Yoga nidra* can help us do this. As a technique, *yoga nidra* invites us to remain awake and aware while we experience different states of consciousness and the transitions between them. Practitioners are led through four stages of practice—diaphragmatic

breathing, systematic relaxation of the body, visualization, and resting in spacious awareness—to reach a place between sleeping and wakefulness. In this place, they are still receiving the rejuvenating benefits of non-REM sleep. While this experience can feel profoundly restful, it is not merely a chance to catch some Zs. It offers entrance into the heart center and provides awakening and connection with our true nature. It's a practice to wake us up to life. I think of it as a healing salve and believe it's the practice for these times.

This meditation is a journey through four stages of consciousness: waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and *turiya*, which is considered synonymous with *samadhi* (union). Research has shown that the theta brainwave state that's generated while practicing *yoga nidra* is one of deep inward awareness and healing. Delta brain waves—those that are present during deep sleep—are known to help our bodies naturally heal

and leave us feeling well rested. Studies show that advanced practitioners of *yoga nidra* are both simultaneously asleep and alert, which allows them to alternate between theta and delta waves. Over time, mastering this oscillation process enables them to transition to *turiya*.

What we need most when we are grieving is support. *Yoga nidra* offers a chance to practice deep relaxation and presence while being supported.

*Yoga Sutra* (1.36), *Vishoka Va Jyotishmati*, describes a state of sorrowless joy that resides at the heart, a place free of grief and suffering illuminated by an eternal radiant light unaffected by conditions. It is here we can rest when we're experiencing grief. By meditating on the heart and anchoring ourselves in gratitude, we can taste the radiance of this inner place, steady the mind, and understand that though we may be experiencing grief, joy is also present.

### PRACTICE:

Spend two minutes in each stage before moving to the next one.

#### 1. GET GROUNDED

Move into *Savasana* (Corpse Pose) or any comfortable position, using props as needed to fully support your body.

Establish an attitude of gratitude, giving thanks for all you have, beginning with your breath.

Remember that breath is a birthright, something we all have in common, and what connects us to the whole.

Practice inhaling into your belly and chest for 4 counts and exhaling for 8. Observe yourself being filled and cocooned with the frequency of gratitude.

#### 2. FEEL SUPPORTED

Notice your body resting on the floor and the earth holding you.

Inhale: Invite waves of nurturing support to flow into every pore of your body.

Exhale: Release heaviness and sadness, composting back into the earth for 2 minutes.

#### 3. OBSERVE

Let go of counting your breath and observe its natural flow in and out.

Notice waves of thoughts and emotions without attaching to them.

Practice perceiving the pause between your inhalations and exhalations.

#### 4. FOCUS

Count your breaths backward from 18 to zero. For example, think to yourself, 18, *breathing in*, 18, *breathing out*.

Experience more ease and surrender with each passing breath on your way to zero. If you lose your place, start again from 18.

Invite the earth to support you even more. Be effortless. Let yourself be held.

#### 5. DEEPEN YOUR AWARENESS

For three breaths, bring your attention to the base of your spine.

Then, for three breaths each, focus on the following energy centers: the womb or pelvic center, the navel center, the heart center, the throat center, and the third eye.

Return your attention to rest at the heart center.

Feel your breath moving in and out from your chest. Invite in gratitude and eternal radiant light.

#### 6. CLOSE YOUR PRACTICE

Deepen your breath. Move your fingers and toes, coming back to your body and the room.

Shift out of your meditation with gratitude, rolling to one side and pausing for a few breaths. If you'd like, close with a prayer or blessing for your healing and the healing of the collective.

Complete with 10 minutes of free-writing or journaling on your experience or anything your session brought up for you.

TRACEE STANLEY is a *yoga nidra* and meditation teacher. She is the author of *Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation and Awakened Clarity*, available for presale now (Shambhala Publications). Find her at [traceeyoga.com](http://traceeyoga.com).



#### LEARN MORE

For more about *yoga nidra* and Tracee's teachings, listen to her podcast with *Yoga Journal* at [yogajournal.com/yogasthrow](http://yogajournal.com/yogasthrow).

# yoga journal

## How Mental Health Professionals Use Yoga to Stay Sane

*Invaluable advice for anyone facing burnout and blurred boundaries.*

MARCH 13, 2021

TASHA EICHENSEHER

[Read the Article](#) in "Yoga Journal"

# BEST SELF®

Holistic Health & Conscious Living

## AN EXPLORATION OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND A YOGIC PRACTICE FOR HEALING

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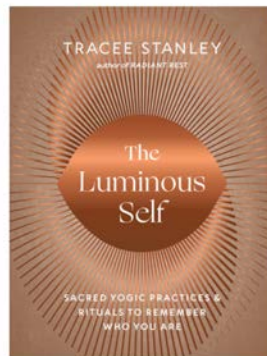
**H**ow did I find myself in my bathroom naked, covered in egg yolk, banging on a drum, screaming and shouting at the top of my lungs? I had just cracked a raw egg over my head. And I had never felt so powerful and fierce. As I stared at myself in the mirror, I saw clarity and resolve in my eyes. I felt free. I knew I had released a power in me that was ancient.

Years of doing spiritual practices led me to this point of self-initiation that marked the moment I resolved to take back my power. It was a ritual, a reclaiming of a part of me that I had forgotten. The power of my deepest Self was waiting to be revealed, renewed, and nurtured.

The face looking back at me in the mirror wasn't much different from that of the eleven-year-old who had stood in the junior high school bathroom in Huntington, New York, several decades earlier covered in broken eggshells, streaks of bright-yellow yolk dried against my dark brown skin. Three girls had just attacked me on the school bus. They didn't like the way I wore my hair, the way I spoke, or the way I dressed. They didn't like anything about me. And they had been diligent in making sure that I knew it every day of the school year.

*From the first day I put on my first pair of thick eyeglasses in the third grade, I had been bullied.*

[Excerpted from Chapter 1 of *The Luminous Self: Sacred Yogic Practices and Rituals to Remember Who You Are* by Tracee Stanley  
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Continue Reading in [Best Self](#).



Tracee Stanley photo by Chloe Crespi.

## The Householder's Flow: Incorporating Radiant Rest in Daily Life



Tracee Stanley photo by Chloe Crespi.

### Fifteen + Steps to Get into the 24-Hour Householder's Flow

1. Let go of the idea that your practice needs to be 15, 30, or 90 minutes long to be meaningful or valid.
2. Instead of one long practice, try 2- to 3-minute mini practice portals that you can weave throughout your day. You can set the timer on your phone to remind you when to practice. When you do have a few minutes of space to practice, notice how resistance to resting or practicing may show up. Be aware of what you feel called to do instead. Is it nurturing, supportive, or healing? Is your default mode moving you toward healing or toward distraction and staying stuck?
3. Use your least favorite chore as a portal to practice. Chant, sing, or follow your breath while washing dishes, doing your taxes, doing laundry, or mopping the floor. Use your resistance as a way to turn the mundane into the sacred. You will find suggestions for mantras in the resources, but any song or affirmation that is offered with devotion will work.
4. Leave a small space in your home—a chair, your yoga mat, a corner of a room, a closet, or even your car—set up and ready for your practice. Begin to see every seat as a potential meditation seat or yoga nidra nest.
5. Acknowledge your obstacles. Let go of being surprised and frustrated when they show up. Observe the barriers to practice that arise and the obstacles that you place in your own way. Be aware of which patterns keep showing up. How can you shift something to create a new outcome?
6. Remember that all the practices you do, no matter how small they may seem, are preparing you for deep relaxation, yoga nidra, and truth.
7. Decide what you are willing to commit to.
8. Connect to the desire in your heart to deepen your practice and let that be what guides you. Even when you feel like you cannot “do” a single thing, connecting to that longing with a sense of gratitude that the fire is burning within you will support you. Connect to it with gratitude, as opposed to despair and disappointment that the desire has not yet been fulfilled; know that you are moving toward it. Connect with your faith that things can change. Remember the cycles of nature where nothing is permanent. There is a season for everything.
9. Be creative. Look for the pauses, transitions, spaciousness, and silence. The day is full of natural transitions: sunrise, high noon, sunset, moonrise. Use these natural transitions to remind you to pause. When you pause, you create a natural void, so place a mantra, an affirmation, a bible verse, or a blessing for yourself in that space to empower yourself. These are the little nidra moments that will change your relationship to the practice.

Tracee's full article on LA YOGA's site:

<https://layoga.com/practice/yoga/the-householders-flow-incorporating-radiant-rest-in-daily-life/>



Tracee Stanley photo by Chloe Crespi.

10. Use every relationship as a mirror to understand more about yourself. Notice your reactions and what beliefs you hold on to. Be willing to see another point of view as a way toward understanding. Examine conflicts and ask yourself, Could I have created a more healing outcome for all involved? What am I not willing to admit about myself? What systems or conditions are present that prevent me from thriving and what resources are available to me for assistance?
11. Find at least one friend who is like-minded with whom you can connect to share insights and experiences. Even if it's a text to say, “I had a tough day today,” or “I meditated in my closet today,” or “I removed some apps from my phone so I would have more time to practice—I can't believe I didn't do it sooner.” Use technology as a way to support your practice instead of as a distraction.
12. Reframe your deep relaxations and yoga nidra practices as surrenders. Remind yourself, It's time to surrender instead of It's time to practice. Let go of the energy of doing. Yoga nidra is a practice of non-doing, and grace descends when you let go.
13. Set up an altar at home. Let it be a reminder to pause at least once a day and remember your commitment to yourself.
14. When you notice negative thoughts, replace them with kindness and compassion. Study and practice Yoga Sutra 2:33, translated by Pandit Rajmani Tiganait as “To arrest conflicting thoughts, cultivate thoughts opposed to them.” This is said to be a way toward a peaceful mind. It also helps us become aware of our thoughts.
15. As soon as you wake up, bring awareness to the flow of your breath for one minute. Even if you have a child who wakes you up, you have a moment to say to yourself, What is my breathing like? Let me bring awareness to my breathing, feeling my navel rise and fall, while I am also bringing attention to my child. Can I hold the feeling of inner peace while experiencing that a part of my attention is also being directed externally? Parents are the best multitaskers around. You can do this!
16. Be aware of the phases of the moon, taking just one moment each night to see the moon in the night sky. Remembering the phase from the night before, see if you can imagine the current moon phase in your mind's eye prior to looking up. Offer a prayer, a blessing, or gratitude for her cooling light. Notice how you feel at each moon phase; look for patterns and take notes.



### SELF-INQUIRY

1. Recall a time when you directed all of your will to one thing. What was it? How did it feel? How did it change you? How can you tap into that force of will within you to commit to reframing your practice to a twenty-four-hour Householder's Flow?
2. What do you have faith in? How can this help to shape and support your practice?
3. Is there someone in your household you can ask for support so you can take 3 minutes a few times during the day to do mini practices?
4. How are you careless or forgetful? When do you “check out”? Can you bring more presence and purpose into your daily activities?

# W A N D E R

LIVE WELL EAT WELL TRAVEL WELL

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO

## RELAX

— ? —

ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS I BECAME AWARE OF, AS I BEGAN TO PRACTICE AND THEN SHARE DEEP RELAXATION, WAS THAT IT'S DIFFICULT FOR MOST OF US TO "LET GO." YOGA TEACHERS OFTEN GIVE THIS INSTRUCTION WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST CONSIDERATION FOR HOW IT WILL BE RECEIVED IN A CLASS FULL OF PEOPLE WITH VARIED LIFE EXPERIENCES AND POSSIBLE TRAUMAS. AT THE VERY LEAST, LIFE CAN BE STRESSFUL, AND OVER TIME IT CAN CREATE THE TYPE OF TENSION THAT REQUIRES MORE THAN COMMANDING OURSELVES TO "LET GO" TO RELAX.

BY TRACEE STANLEY

23

wander-mag.com

## THE REWILDING ISSUE



IMAGES: (L TO R) © ANNA SHVETS, © BURST, © ELINA FAIRYTALE

**IT IS HARD TO LET GO OF THE TENSION AND CONSTRICTION IN THE BODY AND MIND THAT HAVE TAKEN MANY YEARS TO ACCUMULATE.**

Some people say that “our issues live in our tissues,” and Denise La Barre explains in her book, *Issues in Your Tissues*, what this means: “Issues in your tissues’ are emotions we haven’t allowed ourselves to feel fully, or thoughts with a heavy emotional charge. As energetic residue in the body, they accumulate and build over time, starting first as tension and solidifying into disease according to our reactions to our life experiences.”

Deep relaxation practices help us to relax systematically and to bring awareness to all the parts of ourselves that require loving attention. Because we are taking a journey through the subtle body as we practice, that awareness may extend to our physical body, our thoughts, and even our beliefs. Unfortunately, it is a common tendency to identify with and hold on for dear life to parts of ourselves, like thoughts and beliefs, that lead to patterns of behavior that do not support our thriving.

Remember the manomaya kosha. Because of our insecurities, fears, and biases, we may also hold on to ways of being that ensure that others cannot thrive, especially when we are in positions of power. This shows up as systemic racism, misogyny, or the mistreatment of others as a way to protect ourselves from perceived harm and scarcity.

Certain habits and thoughts may feel familiar and safe, and they can be reinforced by those around us, but that doesn’t mean they aren’t keeping us stuck. We may be scared that if we let go of these long-held ways of being, we will dissolve, even if they are causing us or others pain. The more we rely on what is familiar, the less we will grow. This recycling of suffering means that we have to learn the same lessons over and over again. This holding shows up everywhere in our lives, as tension in our bodies and our relationships and as an inability to move forward in life and in the collective as history repeating itself. If we can create an opportunity in our yoga nidra practice to create more awareness and ease within ourselves, it will be reflected outward in our lives.

**HEALING TRAUMA WITH YOGA NIDRA**

For many of us, the tension, stress, and emotional energy we’re holding on to can be traced back to distressing or overwhelming events, known as psychological trauma. Trauma survivors who have practiced yoga nidra attest to its efficacy, with regular practice over time, at helping to loosen the hold that such events have on them.

As mentioned in chapter 1, Richard Miller is largely to thank for the spread of yoga nidra practice outside of yoga studios. He’s

taken his iRest system into hospitals, military bases, prisons, and Head Start programs, to name a few, spurring interest in the research community to look for evidence to back up what anyone who has tried the practice already knows is true—that it works.

New studies continue to investigate yoga nidra's efficacy for those suffering from trauma, depression, and PTSD. A 2011 pilot study published in the *International Journal of Yoga Therapy* found that veterans with combat-related PTSD reported less rage, anxiety, and emotional reactivity and more feelings of relaxation, peace, self-awareness, and self-efficacy after eight weekly iRest sessions. PTSD and trauma are complex topics of ongoing research. But early results support the theory and yogic teaching that consistent

yoga nidra practice can help to improve the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of survivors.

If you are suffering from PTSD, depression, or trauma, it is important to investigate modalities and find teachers who not only understand and are educated in what you are experiencing, but who also promote agency and choice in your practice. The support of a therapist is invaluable when you are feeling overwhelmed, and many are now working on a sliding scale to make services more affordable for those in need. If you are a teacher of yoga nidra, it is important to educate yourself further about these conditions, address your own traumas, and begin with your own healing. You will find additional resources for this in the appendix. **W**

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## NINE WAYS TO FIND MORE EASE IN YOUR PRACTICE

If you feel restless or struggle to settle in for deep relaxation or yoga nidra practices, there are things you can do to invite more ease into your practice when you feel difficult feelings arising. If you are a teacher, please consider experimenting with the following modifications so you can offer them to your students and community when needed.

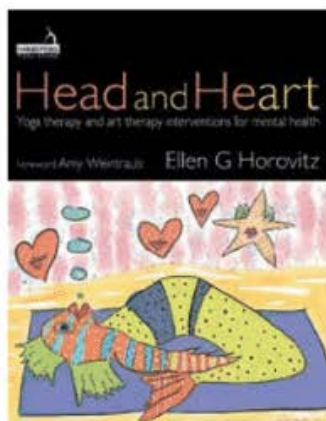
1. **Keep your eyes slightly open during practice.**
2. **Practice with a trusted person or pet in the room.**
3. **Physically touch or move the parts of your body** that you would like to relax. Let go of the idea that you must “remain perfectly still.”
4. **Practice standing up.** (Yes, you can.)
5. **When practicing in a group,** let the teacher know that you would like to find a spot in the room that feels safer for you instead of lining up or being contained in a circle formation.
6. **Try a weighted blanket.** It feels like a giant hug for the whole body. (Note: These blankets are said to ease anxiety, but they can also make some people feel confined, so test it out before making an investment.)
7. **If complete silence makes you feel uneasy,** experiment with adding sounds from nature, such as a rushing river or rain, soft wind chimes, crystal singing bowls, hang drums, or music you find soothing.
8. **If lying on your back does not feel comfortable** or sustainable over a long period of time, find a position that works for you, such as lying on your side or leaning against a wall facing the door with your eyes slightly open.
9. **Remember that you have choices.** Remember, you don't have to close your eyes if it feels uncomfortable. Leave the room if you need a break. You can also open your eyes with a soft focus and then return to the process. Work with a teacher on creating a safe place or inner resource. If something feels too uncomfortable, you can end the practice. Open your eyes and sit up as you mentally say to yourself, *I am choosing to end this practice now.* Try to take a few minutes to journal about your experience afterward.



Tracee Stanley is a noted and lineaged teacher of yoga nidra, meditation, and self-inquiry. Her practices are inspired by the tradition of Himalayan Masters and Sri Vidya Tantra, into which she was initiated in 2001. She is co-founder of the Empowered Wisdom Yoga Nidra School and created the Empowered Life Self-Inquiry Oracle Deck. Tracee travels internationally leading retreats, teacher training, and presenting at festivals and conferences including Oprah and Gayle's Girls Get Away. She has online classes available at Commune, Yoga Journal, Unplug Meditation, Pranamaya, and Wanderlust TV.  
**For more information, please visit [www.traceeyoga.com](http://www.traceeyoga.com)**

Book excerpt from *Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation and Awakened Clarity* by Tracee Stanley © 2021 by Tracee Stanley. Reprinted in arrangement with Shambhala Publications, Inc. Boulder, CO. [www.shambhala.com](http://www.shambhala.com)

# Om books



## Head And Heart: Yoga Therapy And Art Therapy Interventions For Mental Health

Ellen G Horovitz  
£37.50  
Handspring Publishing

This accessible and beautifully illustrated book, including the author's own artwork, outlines a distinctive method of working with patients and clients. The approach emphasises a concerted partnership in health, where the therapist co-creates with the client or patient, in order to bring about wellness. In a unique presentation, the author combines yoga therapy and art therapy in a sophisticated yet accessible manner, comprehensively detailing techniques – exercises, warm up techniques, breathing, assessments, prop usage and more - to effect positive client outcomes. She also shows how to track efficacy and change over time. A valuable resource for both art and yoga therapists as well as conventional mental health providers.

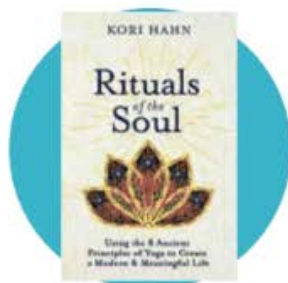
### Further reading:



## Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra For Deep Relaxation & Awakened Clarity

Tracee Stanley  
\$16.95  
Shambhala Publications

In Radiant Rest, you'll learn that Yoga Nidra is more than a technique; it is a state of consciousness and the nurturing quality of the goddess. When we embrace our birthright to experience deep dreamless sleep we open ourselves up to grace; we begin to see how we have been asleep in our lives and we wake up to our magnificence. In this book, Tracee Stanley guides individuals towards the door of awakening to their true nature: full of luminosity, truth, wisdom, and bliss. She offers heart-centred practices and techniques for everyday living, and ancient rituals for modern times.



## Rituals of the Soul: Using the 8 Ancient Principles of Yoga to Create a Modern & Meaningful Life

Kori Hahn  
£13.99  
New World Library

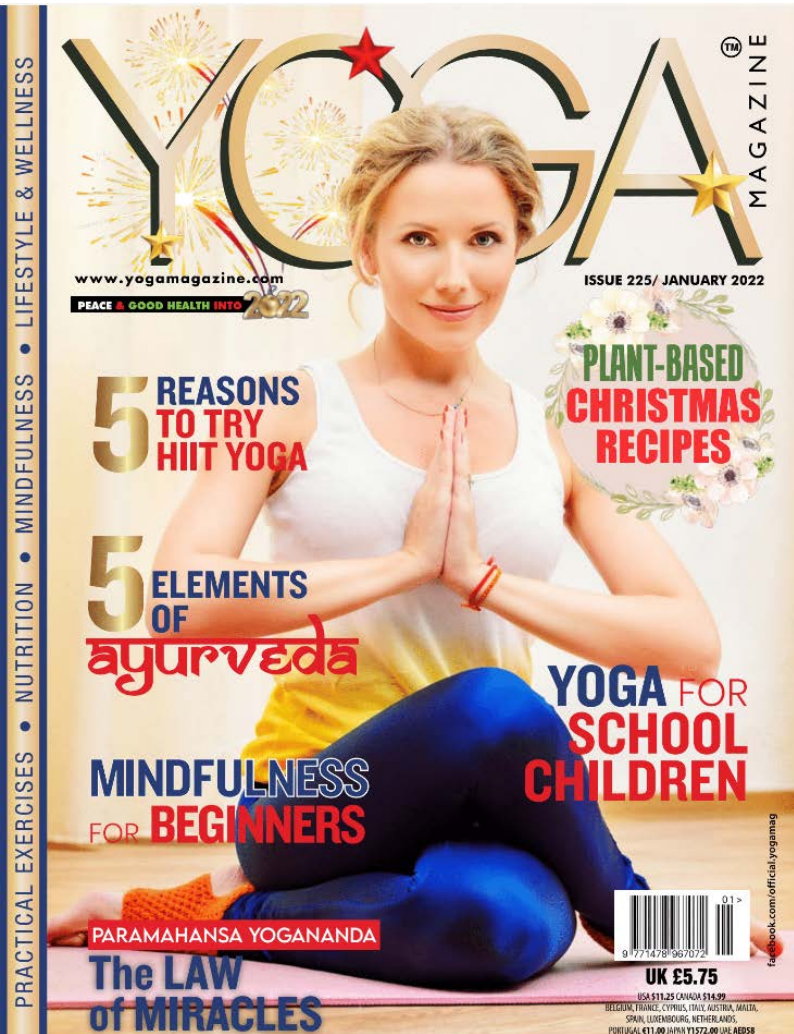
Rituals for the Soul empowers readers to create a customised yoga prescription that will help them hear and start acting on their intuition to realise the life of their dreams. The eight-step strategy the author offers is based on the teachings of the world's greatest (and oldest) yogis in an ancient text called the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, which can be challenging to understand in its original form. Hahn offers her own interpretations and real-life examples from her life as a yogi, bohemian, surfer, and mama to make each of the eight principles easier to integrate into modern life.



## Inner Harmony: Living In Balance

Jon Kolkin  
£35  
teNeues

This book is a groundbreaking collection of more than 200 stunning black-and-white and select colour images by award-winning photographer and physician Jon Kolkin. It explores how and why Buddhist practices have come to inspire and enlighten people worldwide, offering insight into the universally relevant principles that can enhance our ability to live a less stressful, more balanced life, regardless of one's spiritual path. For over a decade, Jon Kolkin photographed the everyday life of Buddhist monastics and laypeople throughout southeast Asia, revealing keen insight into the otherwise hushed world of meditation and mindfulness.



WHAT'S HOT / [yogamagazine.com](http://yogamagazine.com)

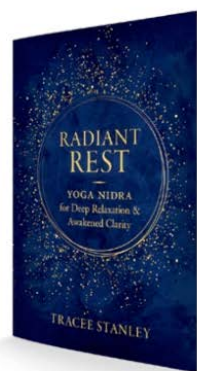
**YOGA ANIMALS: 32 POSES FROM THE WILD**  
By Emily Sharratt

This guidebook is a celebration of yoga written by yoga instructor Emily Sharratt and has amazing artwork by artist Jade Mosinski, as well as step-by-step directions for each pose. Many of the essential *asanas* (or positions) and breath exercises in yoga are inspired

by animals, as any yoga practitioner knows. So many animals have lent their qualities and shapes, as well as their names, to the practice of yoga, from camels to cobras and lizards to lions. You're part of an old and beautiful heritage, whether you're channelling the flamboyance of a peacock or the pride and power of an eagle.

This book follows the format of a complete yoga session, combining stretching, strengthening, energising, and soothing elements while incorporating a variety of yoga styles, from vinyasa flows to more static Yin positions. Yoga Animals is a lovely collection of poses inspired by nature that will show you how to incorporate this into your yoga session.

Price: £6.00  
Available at Amazon



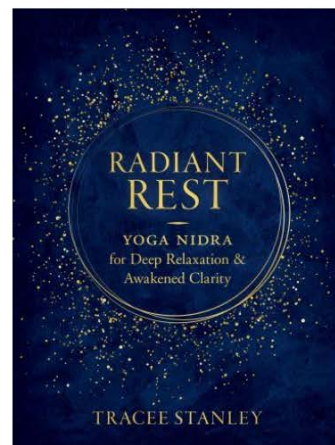
**RADIANT REST: YOGA NIDRA FOR DEEP RELAXATION AND AWAKENED CLARITY**  
By Tracee Stanley

Radiant Rest is a must-read for spiritual searchers who are interested in self-development and enquiry. The author takes readers beyond the technique of yoga *nidra* and into the depths, allowing them to experience deep relaxation and awaken to their own power. She shares sleep and wake-up rituals, as well as insights into some of the barriers to relaxation and the causes that contribute to our inability to achieve deep rest and spiritual awakening.

This easy book provides six essential practices grouped around

the *koshas*, the five subtle layers of the body: the physical, energetic, mental, intuitive, and joy bodies. It also provides shorter, more accessible practices for those who are short on time. Step-by-step directions are provided for each activity, which concludes with self-inquiry prompts. Additional guidance is provided by a set of guided audio meditations. As you deepen your yoga *nidra* practice and realise its actual potential, you will feel a stronger feeling of stability, calm, and clarity in all parts of your life.

Price: £11.76  
Available at Amazon



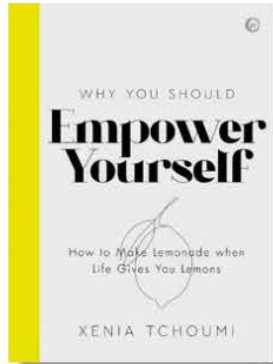
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### Empower Yourself

This no-nonsense guide by motivational speaker and digital entrepreneur Xenia Tchoumi shares how to be independent in a world of social conditioning. £14.99, available at all good book retailers and [watkinspublishing.com](http://watkinspublishing.com)



### Duchy Designs Home Spa

Gift a home-spa experience with this handmade range, which includes organic, cruelty-free aromatherapy, beauty and wellbeing buys. Enjoy 10% off with code Duchychristmas. From £2.50, [duchydesignshomespa.com](http://duchydesignshomespa.com)

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### Panache Wired Sports Bra

Famed for its bounce-reducing sports bras, Panache Sport offers the ultimate support for fitness fans, and has launched a new style: the Wired Sports Bra in Tie Dye Geo. £42, [panache-lingerie.com](http://panache-lingerie.com)



### Freya's Cauldron Witches Self Care Box

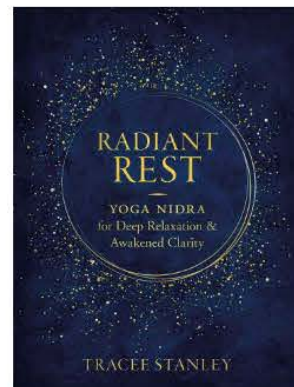
Celebrate your inner goddess with a Witches Self Care Box. Packed with goodies (think Power Cards and a Self Love Ritual Kit), this is one for the witchcraft curious. £29.99, [freyascauldron.com](http://freyascauldron.com)

*“Christmas isn't all about giving to others – what can you gift yourself to restore calm? For me, it's writing down what I'm grateful for”*

Holly Treacy

### Radiant Rest

This is a must-read for those interested in self-development and inquiry, guiding readers beyond Yoga Nidra techniques to navigate a spiritual awakening. From £11, [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)



Make Christmas Magical

This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival. —RUMI



**TRACEE STANLEY** is an author and yoga nidra and meditation teacher. Her new book, *Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation & Awakened Clarity*, is now available from Shambhala Publishing.

## Embrace the Transition

**WE ARE IN** a time of undeniable change, transition, and uncertainty. We are collectively asking the same questions: When will this transition be over? What's next? How will I withstand the changes that I am not ready for? Who will I be when this is over?

When we are in the midst of change, our power lies in learning to remain present. Within each moment of transition there is a drop of infinity, a moment of magic that exists between creation and re-creation.

What we do during the transition is everything. One of the most potent gifts that we can offer ourselves is to dedicate ourselves to dharmic practices that empower us to live in a way that helps us to reclaim our truth and power.

Here are my eight go-to practices in times of uncertainty to stay grounded, balanced, and gain clarity and peace. If done consistently, these practices have the power of transformation.

**1** Reframing your concept of rest is a gift in these times. Think of rest as part of your spiritual practice. Allow it to become a ritual that you carve out time for every day and that you approach with an essence of devotion and reverence. Set a rest alarm to remind yourself to rest twice daily. Take 10-minute rest breaks to lie down and do nothing. Notice the resistance that may arise from the feeling of not being productive.

**2** Yoga nidra is a practice sequenced to systemically relax the body while the student lies down in a supine position. Known as yogic or conscious sleep, yoga nidra is often described as sleep with a slight trace of awareness. It is a spiritual practice where you are guided towards resting in spacious awareness. Research has shown that practitioners of yoga nidra can reach states of consciousness that resemble deep, dreamless sleep while remaining conscious of their surroundings. Students of yoga nidra report feeling deeply rested and rejuvenated after practicing for as little as 20 minutes.

## Within each moment of transition there is a drop of infinity, a moment of magic that exists between creation and re-creation.

**3** Self-inquiry is one of the most powerful tools of spiritual practice despite often being overlooked.

Self-inquiry asks you to unpack the beliefs that you hold dear, to dig deep and examine the motivations behind your actions, to ask the questions that lead you to the truth of who you are. That means you must first peel off the layers to discover who you are not.

You may start by asking:

- What stories am I repeatedly telling myself that keep me in a cycle of suffering?
- What lessons am I tired of learning?
- What can I start doing or stop doing to change negative patterns?

**4** Creativity represents the full cycle of life. The process allows us to flow within the transitions and approach them with a sense of curiosity and play.

Let go of a plan, let go of perfection, and tune into what inspires you: music, poetry, nature, dance, painting, writing. Get started by exploring these nine emotions: love, joy, fear, disgust, awe, peace, sorrow, anger, and courage. Spend two minutes expressing the emotion on paper as a poem, through movement, or as a piece of art. Then pause for one minute and be perfectly still; feel into the stillness. Then proceed to the next emotion until you are complete.

**5** Embrace sacred dreaming, because the space between waking and sleeping is a powerful transition that is full of magic. Keep a dream journal by your bedside. Take a few minutes in the space between sleeping and waking to write down your dreams, writing whatever you remember, including images, fragrances, and words. You may want to explore lucid dreaming practices.

**6** Breath awareness practices ask us to be aware of our breath. They can help us to observe transitions within. Lying on our back or in crocodile pose while practicing diaphragmatic breathing can be very revealing.

Try 1:1 ratio breath, with the inhale and exhale taking the same amount of time. Make the breath even on inhale and exhale. Smooth out the hitches and breaks in the breath. Feel the breath becoming smooth, quiet, and deep. Next, begin to notice the transition between the inhale and exhale. Gently start to eliminate the pause between the inhale and exhale until the breath becomes continuous, flowing in an unbroken stream. After five minutes, release the practice and remain still as you notice the effects.

**7** Forgive, because when we hold back our forgiveness we find ourselves stuck amid transition, not being able to cross over. The lessons of our experience may remain undigested, leaving us unable to receive the wisdom that empowers us to move forward. We

must cultivate more clarity, love, and discernment; forgiveness frees us from a self-imposed prison.

To get started: Decide who you most need to forgive. You may choose anyone, living or deceased. In a handwritten letter, detail what you forgive them for and explain why it is essential to forgive them. You do not require a response from the person you are forgiving. Decide if you would like to mail your letter or burn or bury it. Once you release this letter, you let go and step across the chasm to the other side. You can repeat this practice as many times as you need until you feel a shift.

**8** Gratitude is the practice that amplifies everything in life. In every experience, in every moment, there is something to be grateful for.

In the direst of times, gratitude can buoy our spirits and remind us of the sacredness of life. To get started:

- Write a list of five things that you are most grateful for today.
- Include a few positive things that have emerged as a direct result of your most challenging transition.
- Remind yourself to tell those who you are thankful for in your life how much you care about them.

...

What does it mean to be in transition? When we are in the midst of change, the only real answer is: We'll see when we get to the other side. But the space between can be a portal to awakening. **S&H**

# VOGUE

CORONAVIRUS

## 3 Wellness Experts of Color Weigh In on Coping Amid Coronavirus

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Ash follows a wellness routine while in quarantine that is “one to inspire, not prescribe,” she emphasizes. “I encourage everyone to shape their days as they *can* within the energy of their own particular intentions.” Ash begins her day with an in-bed meditation from [Tracee Stanley](#). She follows it with 15 to 20-minute coconut oil pulling while journaling. “I’ve been leaning into the intensity of this moment we’re in and using that energy to fuel my healing and wholeness journey into depths I’ve not yet known.” After journaling, she makes time for prayer, affirmations, and a “fire-fueling” workout. She drinks her immunity herb tea, from [Alla Herbs](#), before getting started on her daily work for BGIO. “Making meals for my family, which I do almost every day for each meal of the day,” has brought her deep comfort as well.

[Read the Full Article](#)

# BLACK GIRL <sup>IN</sup> OM

## Radical Self-Inquiry Through Yoga Nidra with Tracee Stanley



In this episode of the Black Girl In Om Podcast, author and lineaged yoga teacher Tracee Stanley (she/her) joins BGIO Founder Lauren Ash (she/they) in conversation around why Yoga Nidra is the powerful healing practice the world needs. When we give ourselves the tools of rest, we build upon our strength, peace, and ability to focus on what matters. Yoga Nidra offers tools that allow us to hold space for ourselves fully first. From that place, we are able to truly hold space for others also. Lauren and Tracee discuss how paying homage to lineage in our yoga training and practice provides us with key context that positions us to connect more profoundly to source, and to find our own voices within long-standing traditions. Tracee encourages that bringing self-inquiry to everything we do can help us peel back layers of conditioning and experience to reveal our purpose and essential life force. She describes how nurturing a relationship with nature in our spirituality practice can open us up to further power and self awareness. This conversation is filled with nourishing gems, so get your journals ready!

As Tracee says, “You are your most beloved. Lift yourself up like you’re your most beloved!”

[Listen to the Podcast](#)

# CTZNWELL

## Rest is Revolutionary: Tracee Stanley



[Listen to the CTZNWELL Podcast](#)



[Read the Radiant Rest Feature](#)

This season, we're exploring the theme of recovery and repair on CTZN Podcast. We'll be talking to some amazing leaders in healing who are inviting us to rest, to embrace grief, to look at our trauma and suffering with a more curious and compassionate eye; so that we can stay connected, stay in the conversation and stay in mutual care as we keep going.

Because we need to keep going. There is so much more to be done to heal the past and fight for the future.

Kicking off this season is the powerful [Tracee Stanley](#), yoga teacher, author and who's new book [Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation & Awakened Clarity](#), has been a lifeline for me in the last couple months.

In the book, Tracee says that rest is our birthright, and when we are able to embrace that - we begin to see how we have been asleep in our lives. It is an essential practice in a moment when dominant culture is telling us to get back to normal and perform being woke. We practice rest so that we can remain awake - awake to the reality of our interdependence and collective survival.

# The Power of RADIANT REST



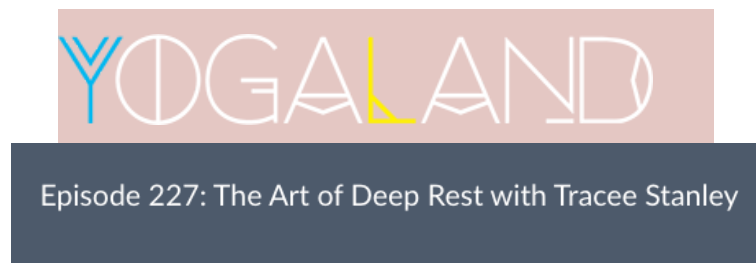
Watch and Listen to the Talk on The Kingdom's Youtube Channel



Listen to the Hey, Girl. Podcast



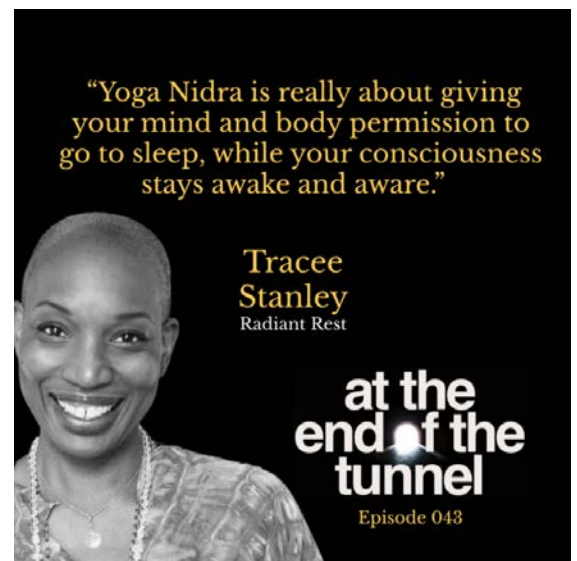
Listen to the Practice of You Podcast



Listen to the YOGALAND Podcast



IG Live Series on @iamwellandgood



Listen to the At the End of the Tunnel Podcast

8.45-9.15pm: Prep your body for bed with Yoga  
Nidra with Tracee Stanley

# STYLIST

A portrait of Tracee Stanley, a Black woman with a shaved head, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark blue patterned top. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

## Stylist Restival 2021: learn how to finally get a better night's sleep with an evening of expert talks

POSTED BY EMILY EVANS FOR SLEEP

Tracee Stanley closes the evening with a meditative Yoga Nidra practice.

Join Tracee Stanley for a yoga session designed to relax the body and mind for a deep and peaceful sleep. Yoga Nidra, also referred to as yogic sleep, is a transformative practice that aids sleep through meditative exercises. For this session, have your blankets, pillows and comfy sleepwear ready, and prepare to receive the rest you deserve.

[BOOK YOUR PLACE AT THE STYLIST RESTIVAL HERE](#)

[Read the Article](#)



# yoga journal



## 7 Rituals to Transform Your Day Into a Sacred Practice

*In this excerpt from her upcoming new book *Radiant Rest*, Tracee Stanley reframes how we approach the practice, so we can experience the quality of radiance in our daily lives.*

FEBRUARY 25, 2021  
TRACEE STANLEY

## 7 Rituals to Transform Your Day Into a Sacred Householder's Flow

- 1. Instead of one long practice, try 2- to 3-minute mini practice portals that you can weave throughout your day.** You can set the timer on your phone to remind you when to practice. When you do have a few minutes of space to practice, notice how resistance to resting or practicing may show up. Be aware of what you feel called to do instead. Is it nurturing, supportive, or healing? Is your default mode moving you toward healing or toward distraction and staying stuck?
- 2. Use your least favorite chore as a portal to practice.** Chant, sing, or follow your breath while washing dishes, doing your taxes, doing laundry, or mopping the floor. Use your resistance as a way to turn the mundane into the sacred. Any song or affirmation that is offered with devotion will work.
- 3. Leave a small space in your home—a chair, your yoga mat, a corner of a room, a closet, or even your car—set up and ready for your practice.** Begin to see every seat as a potential meditation seat or yoga nidra nest.
- 4. Acknowledge your obstacles.** Let go of being surprised and frustrated when they show up. Observe the barriers to practice that arise and the obstacles that you place in your own way. Be aware of which patterns keep showing up. How can you shift something to create a new outcome?
- 5. Decide what you are willing to commit to.**
- 6. Connect to the desire in your heart to deepen your practice and let that be what guides you.** Even when you feel like you cannot “do” a single thing, connecting to that longing with a sense of gratitude that the fire is burning within you will support you. Connect to it with gratitude, as opposed to despair and disappointment that the desire has not yet been fulfilled; know that you are moving toward it. Connect with your faith that things can change. Remember the cycles of nature where nothing is permanent. There is a season for everything.

[Continue Reading](#)




# The GMA Inspiration List: Who's making Black history in 2021?

*Influential Black Americans nominated these these trailblazers.*

By **GMA Team** via [GMA](#)

February 1, 2021, 1:04 AM • 141 min read



 ABC Photo Archive, ABC News Photo Illustration

## Carla Hall nominates Tracee Stanley

As a career-changer like me, Tracee Stanley has found her true calling. She embraces yoga not only as a practice, but a way of life. In fact, Tracee says that yoga found her. I deeply admire her, because she lives her life promoting healing while

creating a space for relaxation and a greater connection to self. She is very deliberate and intentional with her practice and how she delivers it to the world at large. While Tracee may be known in the yoga community, her work is vital to the physical and mental health of the Black community and communities of color. Tracee has drawn upon her 20-plus years of experience and practice to guide and train others to spread this much needed healing. This is invaluable, because mental and emotional health is not a topic that is discussed freely. She is healing these communities by drawing upon tantric practices and teachings to help people address trauma. With mental illness on the rise, the healing power that Tracee provides is needed even more and to a broader audience. She's the author of "Radiant Rest," to be released in March 2021, and the creator and host of a podcast of the same name.

[Read the Full Article](#)



OM meets...  
Tracee Stanley

**P**rominent yoga nidra teacher Tracee Stanley has received praise from leading figures such as Arianna Huffington and Oprah Winfrey. Here, she tells OM about her work, which is rooted in helping individuals activate their inner radiance to make wellness and empowered living accessible for all.

### How did you first get into yoga?

When I was living in South Africa in my 20's, I had a moment of spontaneous meditation while watching a sunrise. Something happened at that moment that I had no words for, but I understood that there was a place within me that was full of clarity, peace, and bliss, and I wanted to know this place. After speaking to a friend about my experience, he guided me to several books on meditation, yoga, and spirituality. My journey began with yoga's philosophy, and then later, I was introduced to yoga asana and kriya through Kundalini Yoga.

[Read the Full Feature](#)

## How To Do a Body Scan Meditation for Head-To-Toe Tension Release



Jessica Estrada · December 1, 2020

### How to do a body scan meditation in 6 steps

There are different body scan meditation variations, but the general premise is always the same: Scan the body and release tension, starting from the feet to the top of the head. Below, learn a step-by-step process for practicing it, recommended by [Tracee Stanley](#), a yoga nidra teacher and author of the forthcoming book [\*Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation & Awakened Clarity\*](#).

#### 1. Find a comfortable position

Start by finding a comfortable position. You can do the body scan meditation lying down on your back or side, in a reclined position, or in another position that feels comfortable. The key, Stanley says, is that you feel fully supported and safe.

#### 2. Observe your breath

Allow your body to be still for a moment. Release control of your breath and just observe it as it moves in and out, Stanley says. Do this for about two minutes.

#### 3. Bring your awareness to your feet

To start the body scan, bring your awareness to your feet. “Notice where they may be feeling sore or constricted, and then consciously relax the feet,” Stanley says. “You can mentally say to yourself: ‘feet, relax.’”

#### 4. Scan the front of your body

“Begin to let self-awareness travel up the front of the body, touching the ankles, shins, knees, thighs, groin, belly, chest, throat, shoulders, arms, hands, jaw, eyes, temples, and crown of the head,” Stanley says. “Slowly relax each body part. Let go of judging the body or the experience. Feel a wave of relaxation bless each body part as your self-awareness travels and scans through the body.” This process takes two to five minutes.

[Read the Full Article](#)



Photo credit: Robert Sturman

# YOGA NIDRA

## A TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICE

### That We've Never Needed More

Words: Tracee Stanley

Yoga Nidra was already becoming one of the buzziest types of yoga at studios, festivals, and conferences before the pandemic hit and illuminated for even more people just how much they had been missing time to rest and relax in their regular daily life. Many have since discovered that the practice of Yoga Nidra is perhaps the ultimate tool to handle the pervasive stress of this global health crisis and incorporate some necessary self-care into their reinvented lifestyle at home.

So what is Yoga Nidra? If you've heard it defined as "yogic sleep," you might have the impression that it's nothing more than a nap on your mat. But nothing could be further from the truth. First and foremost, that "sleep" is actually a state of consciousness very close to samadhi. Yoga Nidra is also the technique that gets you there and a full system of yoga in and of itself. It is both the means and the end.

One of the best things about this practice is that it is both accessible to

and beneficial for everyone from those new to yoga to long-time practitioners. Because the practice is generally done lying down in Savasana or another supported position, it doesn't matter if you're able to backbend or handstand to receive its benefits. The keys are to allow yourself to be guided through conscious breathing, systematic relaxation, withdrawing your awareness from the external world into the internal universe within you and eventually resting in spacious awareness.

# YOGA<sup>TM</sup>

## MAGAZINE

### THE MANY BENEFITS OF YOGA NIDRA PRACTICE

Yoga Nidra is a generous, abundant and healing practice. Devotion to a consistent practice is where the magic is revealed. Here are some of the many benefits that come with committed Yoga Nidra practice:

#### Deep rest

The practice of Yoga Nidra offers a deep, healing rest for the body and mind that can be just as restorative as a good night's sleep. It leaves you with a sense of ease in your body and mind, soothing your heart and fostering contentment.

#### Healing

Everyone knows good sleep is essential to good health, and Yoga Nidra is a deep journey through the states of consciousness (waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and the fourth state, called turiya) and brain waves. Theta and Delta waves are particularly rejuvenating. The Theta state, normally occurring during deep relaxation, deep meditation, daydreaming, and sleep dreaming, is where you learn, remember, and intuit. The Delta State rejuvenates the body, revitalises the brain, and strengthens the immune system. Theta and Delta brain waves are produced in the deepest states of Yoga Nidra.



#### Stability

Through the quiet practices of yoga, we learn to observe the fluctuations of the mind. In Yoga Nidra, conscious breathing and intention help you to begin to steady the mind and consciously release tension in the body. This will help to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, the body's rest and digest response. Learning systematic relaxation will help you to become more resilient, preparing you to respond to life's challenges with more steadiness and clarity.

#### Presence

Yoga Nidra practice cultivates the kind of deep relaxation that promotes enhanced awareness of what arises in the moment. You can practice allowing yourself to explore whatever comes into your field of awareness with acceptance. This can help us to recognise that emotions and sensations ebb and flow, allowing us to create space from identifying with them and fostering healing.



#### Creativity

As your mind becomes accustomed to getting quiet and present on a regular basis, creative ideas and flashes of inspiration may begin to seem like they're coming to you more often. Maybe they are or maybe you're simply more tuned in and attentive to them. The key to harnessing these creative benefits is to practice feeling and staying aware in that liminal, dreamy space of transition in Yoga Nidra practice. Journal, draw, or create directly afterward to capture new ideas and inspirations before they slip away.

#### Transformation

Yoga Nidra is a process of dissolution. As the mind becomes more clear and you learn to stay awake and aware during the practice, you become more awake to your life, cultivating greater discernment, creativity, clarity, and steadiness. If you stay curious, the practice can offer self-discovery, growth, and expansion. Ask yourself, Who am I really? What is my life's purpose? What truth has this practice revealed to me about myself or the me about myself or the nature of reality that I did not know before? nature of reality that I did not know before?

## EMBARCKING ON A YOGA NIDRA JOURNEY

If you're inspired to try Yoga Nidra, here are a few components of the practice to know about before trying it.

#### Setup

Setup is very important. For deep relaxation practice, you want to prepare a practice space that provides your body the ultimate support and comfort. Yoga props like blankets and bolsters are useful. An eye covering can help you drop in. And a weighted blanket may be soothing to those who suffer from anxiety.

#### Effortless Breathing

One of the essential components of Yoga Nidra is diaphragmatic breath. This breathing technique focuses on smooth, even, quiet, relaxed deep breaths through the nose to expand the diaphragm below the lungs. So instead of shallow breaths that lift your chest, these deep breaths expand your middle torso outward on inhalation and collapse it on exhalation. Breathing this way stimulates the vagus nerve and activates the parasympathetic nervous system. If this way of breathing is new to you, spend some time exploring this simple and effective breath that is the key to learning effortless breathing.

#### Commitment

I recommend committing to a Sadhana, or consistent practice, of Yoga Nidra for anywhere from 7 to 40 days. Especially during times of uncertainty, daily rituals give life structure, build discipline, and cultivate resilience. Every time a habit or desire to do something other than the practice you've committed to comes up, notice it. Practice letting go of the resistance by remembering your commitment. You are tapping into the heat of friction (tapas) that comes from going against the grain. Tapas has the power to transform you, just like fire can change the nature of an element into another form.

#### Self-study

I offer Yoga Nidra with an emphasis on allowing time directly after the practice for journaling or self-inquiry. Allowing the spaciousness for self-study is unique to my teaching but one of the most important elements of the practice in my mind. By coming out of the stillness and listening to yourself this way, you can take advantage of the clarity that comes from practice to integrate and process the experience as well as keep track of your journey.

#### Resources

When you're ready to get started, you can practice with me online through my five-day **Commune Deep Relaxation class**. And when you're ready to dive deeper into the mystery and potential of this practice, pre-order my book **Radiant Rest: Yoga Nidra for Deep Relaxation and Awakened Clarity**, forthcoming March 2021 from Shambhala. If you are interested in self-inquiry, check out **Empowered Wisdom Self-Inquiry Oracle**.



Tracee Stanley is an author and radiance advocate on a mission to help people explore their birthright to deep rest and awakened clarity that comes from the spiritual practice of Yoga Nidra. As a lineage teacher with over 20 years of experience, Tracee shares ancient teachings sourced from years of study in the tradition of the Himalayan Masters, Sri Vidya, and Tantra. It is her passion to create and hold space to transform, inspire, and empower utilizing the practices of Yoga Nidra, Self-inquiry, Perfect Sankalpa, Meditation, Kriya, Mantra, and sacred movement.

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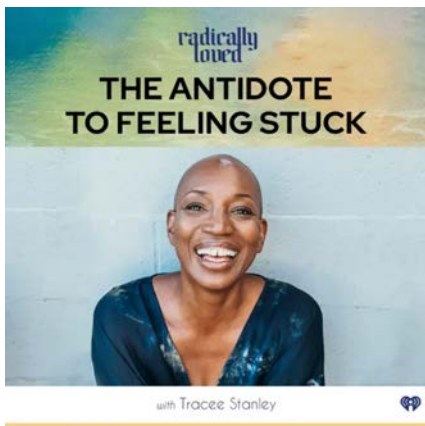
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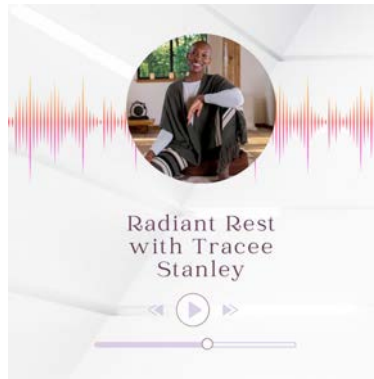
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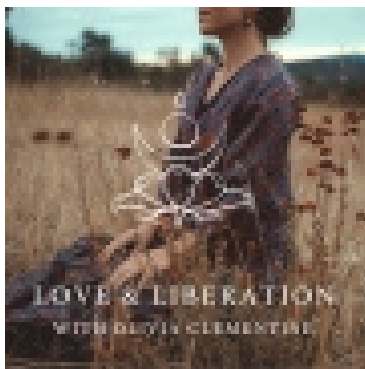
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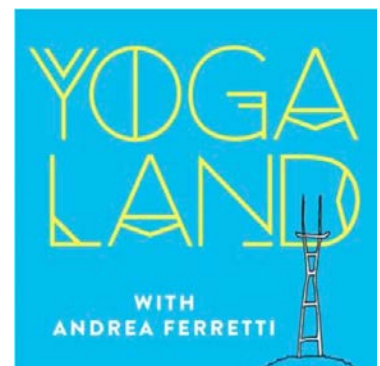
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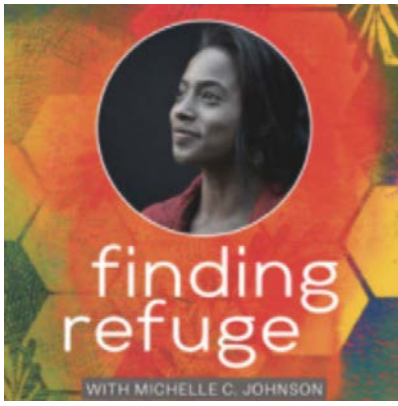


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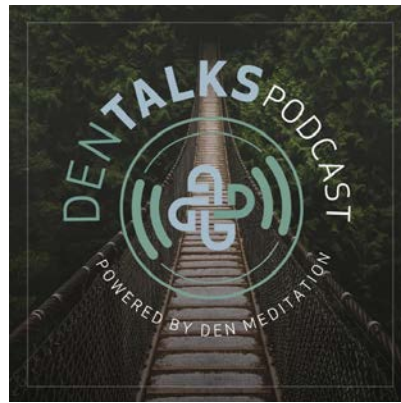
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