

Yoga Swell

A Stepping Stone toward the Promotion of Personal
Revolution

Communication Studies Department

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The Journey

[This section will discuss the experiences that I was faced with that lead me to an interest in yoga and promoting a yoga business.]

College is more than furthering your higher education. It is more than your possible last four years of schooling. It is more than living without your parents, and more than partying with your fellow students. College is a period of time for exponential growth within. It is that period where you're stuck in "limbo." Until this time away, most students have lived at the discretion of their parents, under their ruling, and locked within limits and boundaries. Being on your own suddenly allows the opportunity to unlock and experiment. Exposure to new ideas, new lifestyles, and new sights suddenly begins to re-shape your world. My own experience of this process was like riding the waves of the ocean; some days were stormier than others, but nevertheless, I learned to surf.

I began college at Cal Poly anxious, excited, nervous, and vulnerable. The possibilities seemed limitless. What would I do? What should I do? Would I make new friends? Would people like me? My well-known daily routine was becoming a glimpse of the past. As an uncertain outcast, I dived in with no grounding as to who I was and who I wanted to become. The temptation of physical pleasures surrounded me, and my mind was constantly fed with information that would end up throwing into question all that I had grown up believing to be the ultimate truth. My mind was a whirlpool of knowledge and emotions, and I seemingly was lost in a dark pit struggling to find my way out into a path that felt true to me. I no longer did the things I loved, and my mind was constantly filled with stress, judgment, and attachment. I was living by my ego.

That is when it presented itself. I was wandering the streets of Shell Beach and I stumbled upon a hole-in-the-wall coffee shop. I walked in and found a wall covered with ads from local businesses promoting their best assets. However, my eyes instinctively focused on one particular ad that read, “40 Days to Transformation.” “That sounds like exactly what I need,” I said to my fiancé. We decided to go to the location that was promoting such an ideal quest. As we pulled into the desired address, it came into focus. It was a large log cabin building by name of “Harmony House Yoga.” I had always heard about yoga, and I had heard people rave about its benefits, but to me, it just seemed like a waste of time to sit and stretch for an hour. In the back of my mind, as I was standing outside this studio was one of my closest friends, Mary, whom I have now aided in beginning her own yoga business. Mary lived a lifestyle I had always admired, and the one word that came out of her mouth everyday was “yoga.” With this in mind, then, I stepped into the studio.

I instantly was welcomed by a warming loving voice, “Hi! How are you?” This was Kelly, the owner. I told Kelly I had seen her flier and she explained the benefits and process of this program and I impulsively signed up feeling in my gut that this is what I needed as I approached adulthood. The forty days to transformation included a daily routine of yoga, journaling, meditating, healthy diet, and reading. The first day of yoga I struggled by gazing around the room to verify that I was doing the posture correctly. I was insecure as I saw yogis doing amazing poses with their bodies, while I could hardly touch my toes. However, something kept me determined. I kept coming back day after day and soon it became twice a day. I noticed, just after the first two weeks, that my gaze was on no one. In fact, my eyes were closed during the whole practice, I trusted my body to do the pose how it felt right to me despite how anyone else was doing it. I grew deep in meditation day after day and felt the warmth of my own inner

light burning brighter as I re-established who I was according to what I want. I began to appreciate every one surrounding me for their own light as well. I was filled with love, with passion, with acceptance, and purity.

Yoga was not simply a stretching routine. Yoga, in and of itself, is nothing truly physical at all. It is a practice to tune into mind, harness it, and look deep inside to what you truly value, aside from all of the outside influences that surround you. When we tune into this inner voice, or third eye, we find hope, trust, and revolution. After this epiphany, I knew I had to call Mary. We talked for hours, laughing with joy that we shared such an uplifting lifestyle. I asked Mary to tell me more about her hope for the future and that is when she presented her idea of a yoga business. I asked if I could share this journey with her, and that is when my business began with her. Since then, I have deeply explored yoga in hopes that I can inspire others to find their inner light and love life for all of its gracious gifts.

In this paper, I will outline the business plan that Mary will put into action upon graduation, I will explore the history and philosophy of yoga, and I will relate the study of communication to the practice of yoga. Communication studies essentially reviews the history and the power of words. The study of yoga yields methods with which to harness the mind as it wanders through these paths of new symbols, words, and ideas that we are exposed to everyday, and it teaches us to focus on the words that serve our individual growth and ultimate well-being in the highest light. The primary goal of this project and my paper is to further the reader's knowledge of the mysticism and the benefits that yoga may produce. I want this project to serve as more than an eye-opener. This paper will combine elements of applied business planning, research, and insights about different forms of communication. I want it to excite the readers to

begin researching and partaking in the practice of yoga which will hopefully promote Mary's newly found business as a resource.

Yoga Swell's Business Beginnings

[This section of the paper lays out the business dynamics of Mary's business.]

Originally, when discussing a senior project, Mary and I had come together with one other group member. The three of us felt we could create a temporary yoga business, outside of Mary's personally envisioned business, that would offer local donation-based yoga classes to San Luis Obispo residents. I adopted the position as the Marketing Manager and immediately began creating fliers, a poster board explaining our hopes for the business, event cards with information about when and where yoga workshops would take place, as well as a Facebook page and a decorated donation jar. We met a few times weekly and discussed matters via e-mail and phone on a daily basis, in terms of how we would organize and get the word out so that this temporary business would hit the ground running. After the third workshop took place, and we had only a few participants, we realized our expectations may have been too high. There simply was not enough time to create a booming business within a couple of months. Shortly after, Mary fell ill, and the business faded out.

Because Mary and I had been friends for so long, I spoke with her personally during her time of absence to monitor her illness. I felt her passion for yoga could not be left unseen and undelivered. Mary and I thus began meeting weekly to discuss her visions. Slowly, we began to work together to reassert those visions into words and reality. Mary's main goal in this business is to bring yoga to her clients at their convenience. As a graduating college student, funds are

limited, and so an online-based company is an ideal way for Mary to not only reach her goal of saving money, but also to provide a business where she can completely benefit the client for their ultimate yoga experience. Mary feels that every individual deserves a yoga experience in order to potentially re-polish their inner wisdom. In other words, yoga philosophy states that every individual holds their own voice within, which we often refer to as our “gut” or intuitive responses, and that we already naturally know most of the knowledge we constantly seek. Yoga Swell will hold this philosophy as the foundation behind Mary’s physical teachings.

Her mission is to provide a free-lance style to reach those who normally do not have the opportunity to attend a yoga class. This entails a co-design approach to the practice. Clients will be able to choose the style of yoga they would prefer and work on things that they feel they would like to strengthen and fulfill. Sessions can be group or private. However, either way, Mary’s business will be run without the stress, or perhaps even the competitive nature, of being within a classroom. This will allow students to fully breathe into the benefits of coming more and more in tune with the higher Self.

The objective of her business is to begin with five hour-long sessions of yoga per week. It will be difficult to get the word out initially, and so as each consecutive year passes, Mary hopes to provide an additional hour-long session per day. Essentially, this entails ten classes per week after the starting year. This will provide Mary an estimate of over \$40,000 after the fourth year if the expected income at the hourly rate is \$50.

Because Mary’s company is unique through its free-lance style, she hopes it will hook clients quickly. Marketing will be geared towards the client’s gifts to create their perfect yoga experience. It will seek to fulfill those who need it most, but are unlikely to afford or find a class setting in which they feel comfortable. Yoga Swell thus focuses on assisting the individual on his

or her own beautiful journey through life. Every individual is unique in his or her way and therefore no general yoga class can fully fulfill each person's individual needs. Furthermore, the marketing will advertise the "I come to you" setting of Yoga Swell. Because of this, there will be no official location for the business. Yoga Swell, then, is a one-of-a-kind nomadic business that will hold its services in any number of places, whether on the sandy beach, at the neighborhood park, or in the comfort of the client's home or back yard.

The beginning of this company will require expenses for equipment as well as marketing materials. These include bolsters, straps, blocks, and blankets for the clients, as well as fliers, stickers, t-shirts, business cards, and stationery for the marketing aspect. Marketing objectives will be derived primarily from word of mouth, however, it will also be advertised through bumper stickers, clothing, flyers, business cards, and the website. This method of advertising will be less expensive which is ideal for Mary since she will just be finishing college with minimum funds. The company will also be promoted via social media, including Facebook, as well as through flyers and business cards left at coffee shops, natural food restaurants, boutiques, and dress shops.

Yoga Swell will promote services for private lessons, set-up lessons, group lessons, yoga for couples, yoga for brides to be, and yoga with co-workers. To illustrate the benefits of this approach, advertising in dress shops, for example, will be quite helpful. Brides to be may view Yoga Swell in a perfect time of need: to relieve their wedding jitters. Furthermore, the services offered for private and set-up lessons promote individual care and creativity. Students receive all of Mary's attention and all of Mary's dedication to heal his or her individual needs and reasons for turning to yoga. Group lessons, or lessons for co-workers or couples, provide the ease of practicing with in the comfort of the client's friends. Practicing yoga may also naturally bring the

individuals closer together as they look inward toward personal growth, contentment, and happiness together.

Yoga Swell will advertise material items for sale as well via the website. These items will include art work, t-shirts, and yoga training aids. Mary's original pieces of artwork will be sold to raise money for a charity of the buyer's choice. Tank tops or long sleeve t-shirts with the Yoga Swell logo will be sold for the buyer's enjoyment which will also aid in the marketing of Yoga Swell. Finally, yoga training aids include: DVD's of a routine Mary has put together for clients to follow, CD's filled with flow or meditation playlists for clients to practice with on their own, as well as flow charts listing the plethora of yoga poses and with which clients can create their own sequences.

In the twelfth volume in 2008, the magazine *Yoga Journal* released a study claiming that over 16 million Americans practice yoga. The study indicates that 6.9% of U.S. adults, or 15.8 million people, practice yoga. Of current non-practitioners, nearly 8%, or 18.3 million Americans, say they are very or extremely interested in yoga, triple the number from the 2004 study. And 4.1% of non-practitioners, or about 9.4 million people, say they will definitely try yoga within the next year" (pp 125-130). In the last four years, participation in yoga has further grown, due in part to scientific studies revealing its incredible health benefits. Because of this growth, yoga studios may become overly crowded. Overly crowded studios make it difficult for yogis to fully immerse in their practice due to limited availability of space for body movements. This then may leave many yogis feeling uncomfortable without the freedom of space in class, and it may also leave potential yogis outside of a classroom because of intimidation factors.

Yoga Swell, then, can provide the outlet for these sorts of clients. Because of Mary's background in teaching yoga for a variety of age groups as well as her Communication Studies

degree, she has skills that allow her to work comfortably with people of all personalities. She has exceptional people skills and has been practicing yoga for over thirteen years. Throughout college she has been subbing yoga classes at four different local studios, and she also acquired her 200-hr Yoga Teacher Certification from the Nosara Yoga Institute in Costa Rica. She can relate to people on many levels—which will likely make her successful at teaching both private and group lessons. The key to any good yoga business is the quality of the instructor. Mary’s history, experiences, and true passion for the well-being of human beings thus make her unique and worthy for this business to succeed.

The Yoga Philosophy

“The entire universe is the creation of thought. The play of the mind is just a creation of thought. Abandon the mind which is only thought. Take refuge in the changeless... and surely find peace.”

Hatha Yoga Pradipika 4:58

In order for the understanding of Mary’s motives to create a yoga business as well as the nature of senior projects, this section will explore the history and philosophy that modern yoga stands on. The practice of yoga has proof of history far beyond many of the modern day fitness routines and a philosophy that resides in uplifting benefits that are a result of the postures taught. I hope to outline the backbone of yoga in this section in hopes to further promote Yoga Swell and the positive yogi lifestyle.

Rajiv Gulati and Sharma Abishek reveal information on the origins of yoga in an article on the fitness of yoga in their journal, *Ovidius University Annals*. “Earliest archaeological evidence of Yoga's existence could be found in stone seals which place Yoga's existence around 3000 B.C. Most anthropologists agree that an oral tradition existed long before a literary tradition which gradually set in from about the second century BC” (120). Human beings had an organic

desire for greater personal freedom, better self-understanding, and heightened health for a longer life. Individuals sought ways to achieve these desires, and as individuals discovered successful journeys, they became teachers and passed down their knowledge to students. Thus, yoga has informally been passed down through oral as well as physical demonstration. According to the Sanskrit language dictionary, yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root yuj, which means “to bind, join, and yoke.” The name of the practice itself gives it its meaning: to join the body and mind into one blissful life experience. As human beings, one the greatest questions that we all contemplate is the meaning of the life and the reason for our existence. Yoga provides the fulfillment we naturally desire within ourselves.

Yoga’s history can be divided into four periods: the Vedic Period, Pre-Classical Period, Classical Period, and Post-Classical Period. Vedic period. “The Vedas contains the oldest known Yogic teachings and as such, teachings found in the Vedas are called Vedic Yoga” (Gulati 120). Gulati’s article goes on to describe that the Veda period became the first period of group practicing. The Veda is named after the sacred scripture of Brahmanism- which became the basis for Hinduism. The Veda is a collection of hymns that praise a divine power. During this time period, people sang these hymns and practiced the teachings within the lyrics. Thus the Vedas projected the oldest known yogic teachings through their intensive encouragement of spiritual practice and of living in the divine harmony. During the Veda period, people practiced rituals and held ceremonies that strived to surpass the limitations of the mind- the basis of yoga philosophy.

“Yoga can take many forms and its practice can best be described as a philosophy that places spirituality at the centre of existence” (Jaloba 20). The philosophy of yoga shares some characteristics not only with Hinduism but also with Buddhism. During the sixth century BC,

Siddharta Gautama, or Buddha, began teaching Buddhism, which stressed the importance of meditation and the practice of physical postures in order to train the power of the mind away from physical temptations and into a realm of spirituality and enlightenment. Because of this, yoga began as more of a religious practice in ancient India.

However, according to the American Yoga Association, the Classical Period, around first or second century B.C., overrode some of Buddha's teachings. The Yoga Sutra, written by Patanjali, an ancient yoga guru, during this time, was the first attempt to standardize and define this spiritual lifestyle and create a vision for holistic living. "The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali is a classic Sanskrit treatise consisting of 195 'threads' or aphorisms describing a process of liberation through yoga" (Tuma 1196). The eight limbs of the Yoga Sutra include:

1. Yama, which means social restraints or ethical values;
2. Niyama, which is personal observance of purity, tolerance, and study;
3. Asanas or physical exercises;
4. Pranayama, which means breath control or regulation;
5. Pratyahara or sense withdrawal in preparation for Meditation;
6. Dharana, which is about concentration;
7. Dhyana, which means Meditation; and
8. Samadhi, which means ecstasy.

When Patanjali created these eight limbs, he made it clear that human beings are composed of matter and spirit- two separated parts. In order for the spirit to be cleansed, it must be separated from the body. Because this differed from the Vedic period where soul and body were one, yogis began to focus more on meditation. As the Post-Classical Period approached, the body was seen more as a temple and therefore the asanas, or poses, of yoga began to raise with

importance. The spirit resides within the body and thus most yogis today feel they must treat their body with the utmost respect, health, and balance in order for the spirit to reach happiness and enlightenment.

Modern yoga teachings were introduced to the Western world in the nineteenth century and to the United States in the 1800's (though, it would not become widely known until the 1960's). However, Lisa Miller, in her article in Newsweek, comments, "In its American version, yoga is a mishmash: Zen and Tibetan Buddhism, 12-step rhetoric, self-help philosophies, cleansing diets, exercise, physical therapy, and massage." Mary is going to take the step back from modern teachings and focus more on the historical focus which is living in present moment. Miller further remarks, "Americans rarely acknowledge that yoga is, at its foundation, an ancient Hindu religious practice, the goal of which is to achieve spiritual liberation by joining one's soul to the essence of the divine." Through a combination of five principles: savasana (proper relaxation), asanas (proper exercise), pranayama (proper breathing), proper diet, and dhyana (positive thinking) with meditation, yogis are bound to continue the journey closer to the harmonious balance between body and spirit despite the hardships of daily life. With a regular practice of healthy diet and exercise, breathing, and meditation, the practice of Yoga produces a "clear, bright mind in a strong, capable body."

"One key innovative teaching of the Buddha was that meditative absorption should be combined with the practice of mindfulness" (Gulati 120). Practicing mindfulness begins to come naturally as yogi's become more deeply involved in their physical practice. The exercise aspect of yoga is designed "to put pressure on the glandular systems of the body, thereby increasing its overall efficiency and total health" (Lipton 34). Each individual pose targets an organ in the body to "wring out" and cleanse. Holding the pose challenges the mind as the ego tells us to break free

of what makes the body uncomfortable. However, yoga trains the mind into believing that holding the uncomfortable makes space for transformation. The various yoga postures are based on clearing the seven charkas of the body, or whorls of energy force centers. There are seven chakras that yoga postures were created to cleanse- the root chakra (located under the last bone of the spinal cord), the sacral prostate (located on the ovaries/prostate), the solar nexus chakra (located in the navel area), the heart chakra, the throat chakra, the third eye chakra, and the crown chakra (located on the top of the head). When we experience unbalance- whether it be due to being stressed, depressed, mentally blocked, ungrounded, insecure, or scared, we are experiencing blockages within our energy channels that center at the chakras through out the body. Yoga postures twist and work the body in so many ways to clear these blockages so that we leave the yoga class feeling a sense of balance again (Main 50-57).

Prana means life force, or vital energy, and ayama means the breath, therefore, the breath work, or pranayama, of yoga is the link between the body and the spirit. “Pranayama includes the circulation of blood and is capable of producing very high pressure in the lungs and in the thorax. Pranayama is the one of the first exercises for a weak heart and weak lungs. If its physiology is properly known and if it is judiciously administered, this exercise is capable of giving wonderful results” (Tomar 138). Baron Baptiste, the founder of The Baptiste Power Yoga Institute and writer of the program, *40 Days to personal Revolution*, outlines specifics of yoga breath, “Your breath is pure life force that regenerates you with every inhalation and cleanses you on every exhalation. Your breath links your mind to your body, and you to the present moment” (53). If we simply control our breath through various breathing techniques, and stay focused on it in every present moment, our emotions and reactions will suddenly be more at ease in regards to being able to handle all that is thrown our way. Most yoga sessions begin and end with the

concentration being solely on the asana breath which is called “ujjayi pranayama”. “It is done by contracting the whispering muscles in your throat to create a long, hairline thin breath. You do not breathe all the way down into your abdomen, but rather into your chest, lungs, and back” (Baptiste 53). This flow of breathing is designed to keep the yoga students calm amidst holding tough poses. This eventually can resolve mental tension and resistance. And ultimately, breathing exercises begin to lower the metabolism and focus on the mind

The meditation aspect of yoga frees the mind. It can be the most challenging part of yoga because today, we are consumed in this habit of multi-tasking. Our mind can only handle so many decisions and storage for one day. Meditation releases all the knowledge we have built up for an extended period of time. “The basic focus of this technique is to stay present and aware of your body, your breath, and your surroundings. When thoughts arise, which they invariably will, we will just notice them and let them go, coming back to your awareness of your body, breath, and surroundings” (Baptiste 55). Meditation allows thoughts to come into your mind as a television show, however, we simply acknowledge their arrival, but do not attach any emotion to the thought. It can be practiced in any place and in any position- what ever is most comfortable for the individual. Meditation is meant to simply, not react. When we resist, we react, get angry, worry, and hold resentments. However, in meditation, “we let those emotions arise without aiming them at an external target” (Baptiste 55). There have been quite a few studies revealing the benefits of meditation. Lisa Diamond, in her article on “The Benefits of Yoga...,” states, “meditation at a person's desk each day, along with a one-hour weekly group class, lowered stressful feelings by more than 10 per cent and improved quality of sleep” (16). Baron Baptiste refers to a prison in India where a superintendent was hired to reform a new system. She instituted an awareness based meditation program and over the course of ten days, noticed an

exponential positive change in the inmates attitudes- transforming their hearts and minds. The benefits of meditation further the overall rewarding feeling of a yoga experience.

As the benefits of yoga became proven through science and more widely advertised, the practice has become extremely trendy today. Recent research taking place in the United States, for example, found that “patients with breast cancer and undergoing radiotherapy who practiced yoga experienced lower stress levels than people who did simple stretching exercises” (Lipton 34). However, yoga can reduce more than just stress. Yoga practitioners believe the practice to aid in the reduction of anything, from the common cold to digestive issues to anxiety levels to high blood pressure. The concentration on “breathing triggers the relaxation response, which provides benefits in controlling heart rate, lowering blood pressure and producing healthy biochemical responses” (Jacoba 20).

In the United States today, “Americans become increasingly interested in the preventive and therapeutic benefits of alternative and complementary medicine, researchers are responding by attempting to quantify the role of yoga in the treatment and prevention of specific diseases and health conditions” (Lipton 34). Yoga has evolved from ancient India as a practice that was passed down orally to a worldwide practice that now has numerous books written about it, studios to practice in, and individuals craving more. America seems to constantly be searching for cures in the vast array of diseases that exist today, however, yoga has been passed down for generations as a natural remedy for human troubles. As enlightened individuals have preached first-hand yoga’s healing effects, it seemingly has caught the eye of the general public today. Mary and I hope that this is why Yoga Swell may become a thriving business.

Yoga's Own Language

[This section details distinct communication techniques that the practice of yoga utilizes]

It can be plausibly argued that there is a combination of verbal, nonverbal and introspective communication aspects to yoga, and that these facilitate its overall effectiveness on an individual's journey toward a serene life. The communication of yoga is revealed through the interaction between teacher and student, the nonverbal communication revealed through the setting of a yoga practice, and the intercultural communication within the Hindu culture.

Throughout working on this project with Mary, as well as attending my yoga classes at Kelly's Harmony House, I noticed the inspirational and motivational role that yoga instructors adopt. Because most yogis experience spiritual growth and personal revolution amidst their practice, many times the instructor becomes attributed to "the reason" a yogi found contentment. Many yogis do not realize that their instructor is not only a yoga master- this is simply a role they play throughout their daily routine. We are all actors on the stage of life, and because Mary and Kelly teach yoga, they are not only yoga teachers. "Just as the actors of a regular play are only playing roles and will let go of their characters when the play ends, so will it be with lila. When our roles are done we will return to the awareness of Atman within" (Main 31). Lila is the human role we all live day to day, and Atman is the yogi term for the spirit that resides within all living things. This explains the idea that we all are different actors through out the day, but at the end of the day, we listen to our inner wisdom, or spiritual voice, when no one is around. This being the case, the reason for personal breakthrough during yoga practice, is a result of the individual's focus on the love of the present moment with no attachment. Yoga teachers are a

resource, and are relied upon to aid others on their journey, but not the sole reason for the benefits of practicing yoga.

Furthermore, during yoga practice, it is common for yogis to close their eyes throughout the practice. The purpose of this lies in the assumption that closing the eyes rids one of the visual sense and therefore takes the mind out of the pose. Thus, words become an extremely powerful tool for yogis. The motivational speeches that are given by the instructor throughout the practice and throughout the meditation, which is done at the end of each session, empower individuals. The line of communication I noticed between the yoga instructor and their students was the sense of calmness and serenity that the teachers maintained as they preached the routine. Without a tranquil attitude, students may find themselves further stressed. Instructors thus have a vital responsibility to prepare yoga routines in such a way that they flow smoothly for students to follow without a need for looking at the teacher for a demonstration of the pose they should be doing.

Another important line of communication that is present within yoga is nonverbal communication. The nonverbal communication in yoga is revealed through proxemics. According to anthropologist Edward Hall, in Paul Preston's article in the *Journal of Healthcare Management*, proxemics refers to "the study of how humans construct and manage "microspace," or the distance between people in the conduct of everyday transactions, the organization of space in their houses and buildings, and the design of their towns" (151). "Humans' use of space can be thought of as a specialized elaboration of culture" (Preston 151).. The ways in which space and movement is used and interpreted during yoga practice is very inspirational. This is revealed not only through the artistic movements of the body during a yoga practice, but also through the positive lifestyle a yogi leads. The setting within a yoga studio

provides the example of the aspect of how space is used. Studios are typically decorated in a “zen” manner. Bamboo shades, portraits of nature views, lavender scents, and candles are very commonly seen in a yoga studio. The goal is for an individual to feel an instant sensation of relaxation. Similar to day spas, studios feel as if you are in a whole new world- in a serene, natural land. With out speaking, the ambiance of practicing yoga, further instills it’s philosophy of peacefulness, spirituality, and the organic self.

Furthermore, Ekman and Friesen constructed the nonverbal theory of kinesics. This theory proposes three ways to analyze nonverbal behavior, however, I want to focus on the usage section which focuses on what behavior does and how does it convey information. The lifestyle that yogis promote is that of kindness, gentleness, and truthfulness. Their lifestyle is truly admired by others in the midst of our busy schedules, and therefore subtly promotes the art of yoga. For example, as I mentioned at the beginning, I honored Mary for her constant love and passionate happiness, and never really understood how she was able to maintain her calmness throughout daily activities. Once I was introduced to yoga and began training my own mind, I realized that it was the yoga that allowed her to simply “stay” in every situation just as she would “stay” in a pose or in a meditation state, no matter the discomfort level. Bringing the practice of yoga off the mat and into daily life grasps the attention of others, and often persuades them to act in the same manner. This can be paralleled to a fortune from a fortune cookie that I have saved for many years- “Life is a mirror- if you frown at it, it frowns back. If you smile at it, it returns the greeting.”

The greatest line of communication within yoga practice is the communication that comes from the mental voice we all listen to within ourselves. Darren Main, in his novel *The Path to the Urban Mystic*, claims, “If we quiet our minds enough, we can see Spirit

masquerading as plants, animals, planets, stars, etc.” (31). Yogis refer to this line of communication as living through the third eye and disciplining the mind long enough in order to overcome temptations. “It is always present if we are able to listen. It is that small voice within you that knows exactly what you need in any moment. When we listen to this voice, blocks in our consciousness get removed- sometimes gently, sometime forcefully, but always for our greater good” (Main 51). However, this communication in yoga has roots in the disciplined intercultural communication of India. Nirmala Adhikary notes in an article from the *China Media Research* journal that Hindu society has used yoga to form ““Patterns that inform management of speech apprehension, class structure, ethics, and self (student) awareness” (76). Her article comments on the fact that Hindus have had a distinct cultural identity for thousand of years, and thus their communication tradition both in theory and practice are quite unique.

Thus, Kramer’s Cultural Diffusion Theory, outlined in Richard Wiseman’s *Intercultural Communication Theory* textbook, can define the modern communication aspects of yoga intertwined with the original orderly and strict version that was founded in ancient India. This theory argues that the old is not lost but is presumed and is necessary for integrating the new and as new information accrues the individual and the community is enriched. America has become enriched by the orally passed down practice of yoga. We have not only integrated the traditional principles of yoga, but have also added the modern needs(as I described in the Post-Classical section of the history of yoga) and wants in today’s society for furthered cognitive growth. It is an obvious statement to say that our culture today lives in much different environments than human beings did thousand of years ago, and so although we hold onto foundational teachings of yoga, we must promote and add our own culture’s twist to the practice in order to maintain benefits that relate and appeal to the community today.

Society in America today is filled with peer pressure, and outside influence that unconsciously deter our minds from our inner voice. However, if we completely surrender to the inner teacher that dwells within us all, “we can have moments of great revelation that change us forever” (Main 60). Yoga’s communication techniques discipline our mind to take a step into inner peace. The aid of yoga instructors, a serene environment, and an understanding of ancient Hindu communication obedience, creates the perfect communication setting for yogis to reach their destination of enlightenment and inner peace.

Concluding Remarks

The Dalai Lama, when asked what surprised him most about humanity, answered: “Man. Because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health. And then he is so anxious about the future that he does not enjoy the present; the result being that he does not live in the present or the future; he lives as if he is never going to die, and then dies having never really lived.”

Being a highly active individual in a fast-paced society, I have found that yoga has re-established the sense of freedom, peace, and contentment that every individual deserves to feel. There is a seemingly endless amount of violence, injustice, homelessness, loneliness, and depression that lurks in our world today. Because of this, I feel the promotion of a yogi lifestyle is vital in order for individuals to redefine their life, hopefully find love for themselves, and, ultimately, love for others. Although Mary’s business is one small aspect in the world today, one step at a time we must, as Ghandi said, “be the change [we] wish to see in the world.” I know I am not the only one who has felt a sense of worthlessness, anxiety, and incompetence in the competitive world we live in today. Yoga allowed me to introspect, redefine the unique and

valuable life that I lead, and ultimately, to breathe again. Since I have practiced yoga, I have cherished each and every moment as it has presented itself, with out worrying about what has already happened and what will happen next. I hope that Mary's business reaches out and finds other individuals who are in need of this heart-warming form of communication that speaks to the soul.

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Appendix A

Website

<http://www.yogaswell.com/>

Appendix B

Business Plan



Yoga Swell Business Plan

www.yogaswell.com

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1.0 Executive Summary

Yoga has become very popular and trendy among the wealthier individuals of the Western World. It is a promise of 60 minutes away from a screen, from deadlines, and from stress. It is time where the individual can be reminded of the peace derived from stillness and of the love that is inherent in his or her heart. People get hooked on yoga because it is time of free expression, a time to settle and sit with your Self. And, it feels good! Yoga, time and time again, will allow you to walk off your mat feeling ten times lighter.

Many different styles of Yoga have blossomed throughout the world. There are thousands of unique approaches to this ancient practice and all of them are correct. The name yoga stems from the term “yoke” or to “unite”. It is the practice of uniting with the divine by first uniting the physical, mental, and spiritual bodies. What begins as a practice slowly turns into a lifestyle, as the practitioner soon finds the key to bliss is in the life that is lived by being simply, freely, and truly themselves. There is nothing forced, but a practice of surrender will lead you to your truth.

Through the practice of yoga, you are able to come home to your Self, and to live by the light of love shining from within.

Yoga Swell is an extension of my personal practice and experience. The style derives from Me. Through my practice, I seek to experience the harmony in life by learning to trust and let go. There is an element of hard work matched by an equal element of surrender. Yoga, like life, is nothing to be taken too seriously. I believe in the importance of non-judgment and the freedom to experience life, as-is. Smiling and laughing are always welcome to the practice, as it is intended to be one of warm welcoming to the Self and others. Yoga is a personal practice and different for each individual, when I teach, all I ask is that the student stay true to his or her needs.

Yoga Swell is a free-lance styled business. Due to lack of funds, there is no set location, but the hope is to open a studio in the future. The current focus is on Private and Group lessons, as well as philanthropic ventures.

Like the ocean swells, Yoga might come into your life in a time of stormy circumstances and chaos. But as your yoga progresses, it changes your shape, your form, your being- and turns your original storm into the start of something beautiful. This transformation, which you begin within yourself, is just the start... Your personal yoga experience has the power to grow and to swell, carrying your inner light and inspiration into the ocean that is the world.

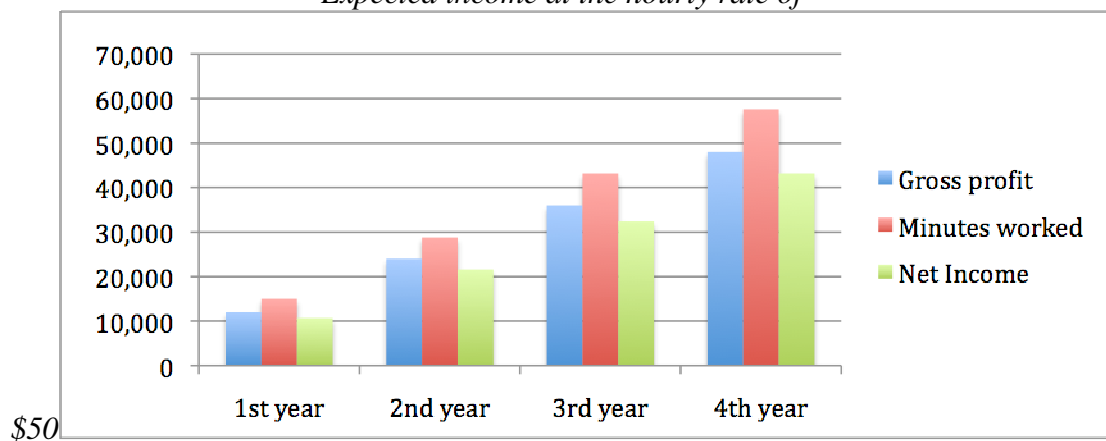
-Mary Fischer, Owner of Yoga Swell

1.1 Objectives

The objectives of Yoga Swell are the following:

- Hold at least five, hour-long sessions/week the first year
- Increase by one, hour-long session/day, each day, for each consecutive year.
- Achieve Net-income of over \$40,000 by the end of the fourth year of operation.

Expected income at the hourly rate of



1.2 Mission

The mission of Yoga Swell is to reach those who would normally not have the opportunity to attend a yoga class. The free-lance style allows the student to choose the space for practice, while the co-design opportunity ensures the student's perfect lesson. Seeing that Yoga is an individual practice, private lessons allow that practice to fully flourish. Without the stress or competition in a packed classroom, the student can more easily breathe into his or her Self.

2.0 Company Summary

Yoga Swell is a free-lance business, offering private and group yoga lessons. Yoga Swell is unique in that it allows the client to co-design each lesson so that he or she receives his/her perfect yoga experience. Yoga Swell seeks to bring yoga to those who need it most, but are unlikely to find it in a class setting. Yoga Swell focuses on assisting the individual on his or her own beautiful journey; whether that's a journey towards health, comfort, or peace. Whatever the need may be, Yoga Swell will rise up to meet it.

Yoga Swell has no official location. It is open to hold lessons anywhere in nature or at the client's home. Neighborhood parks, sandy beaches, or a peaceful backyard are recommended.

Yoga Swell will operate as a sole proprietorship.

2.1 Company Ownership

Yoga Swell, is owned by Mary Fischer.

2.2 Start-up Summary

The start-up expenses for Yoga Swell are focused primarily on equipment as well as advertisement and marketing. Mary will Invest \$800 for initial start-up needs.

Start-up Requirements and Expenses	
Insurance	\$179/year
Website Domain	\$108/year
Equipment	\$150
Stickers & Shirts	\$150
Stationary	\$25
Fliers	\$100
Business Cards	\$5
Total Expenses:	\$717
Start up Assets	

Cash Required	\$800
Start-up Inventory	\$70
Other Current Assets	\$0
Long term Assets	\$0
Total Assets:	\$70
Total Requirements:	\$800
Start-up Funding	
Start-up Expenses to Fund	
Start-up Assets to Fund	
Total Funding Required	
Assets	
Non-cash Assets from Start-up	
Cash Requirements from Start-up	
Additional Cash Raised	
Cash Balance on Starting Date	
Total Assets	
Liabilities and Capital	
Liabilities	
Current Borrowing	
Long-term Liabilities	
Accounts Payable (Outstanding Bills)	
Other Current Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	
Capital	
Planned Investment	
Mary Fischer	
Other	
Additional Investment Requirement	
Total Planned Investment	
Total Capital	
Total Capital and Liabilities	
Total Funding	

2.3 Company Locations and Facilities'

Yoga Swell has not current Location or Facility. It is open to operate at any area open to the public. The Location is primarily dependent on the client's preference.

3.0 Products and Services

Services:

- **Private Lessons**– Private classes are great for people from all levels of practice. The private lessons are designed specifically for you– from the setting, to the moves, to the music– with Mary, you can co-design your perfect yoga class!
- **Set-Up Lessons**–Set-up lessons are Privates... with a purpose. Like private lessons, Mary and you will co-design your perfect yoga class. Unlike privates, set-ups are designed so that you learn the flow in order to do it on your own.
- **Yoga for Brides to Be**–Yoga for Brides to Be is designed specifically to keep your mind calm and your heart open so that you can meet that special day with grace and ease. Like all privates, these sessions are co-designed, but Mary likes to keep a special emphasis on the love.
- **Group Lessons**–Group lessons are great! They share a lot in common with privates– the same price and the same offer to co-design your class. The advantage here is that you get to split that price and share that time with the people you love!
- **Yoga with Co-Workers**–Yoga during lunch breaks is not only a great tool for team-bonding, but it will also help you and your co-workers overall efficiency and moral!
- **Yoga for Couples**–These yoga sessions are designed specifically to deepen the bond between you and your significant other. Studies have proven that couples who play together, stay together! With yoga, you are engaging in a mind, body, and spiritual practice. It is a tool to help deepen the connection within yourself– and when done with a loved one– can help to build an even healthier union.

Products:

- **Art work:** Primarily sold for charity. The buyer gets to choose what charity to contribute to.
- **T-shirts:** Tank tops or long Sleeve with the original Yoga Swell Logo.
- **Yoga training aides:** Flow Charts, DVDs, CDs.

4.0 Market Analysis Summary

In 2008, the Yoga Journal released a study claiming that over 16 million Americans practice yoga, and that the industry brings in billions of dollars annually. In the last four years, the popularity of yoga has greatly increased as the incredible benefits have become supported by Scientific Studies. Recently, yoga, was approved to be covered by health care for patients suffering from heart disease. Yoga has become more than just a trend. There is nothing like the benefits of a yoga class, it is truly addicting.

Studios are becoming more and more crowded, and for those people who would like to try yoga, but don't feel comfortable diving straight into a class, private and group lessons will be a

wonderful alternative. Mary feels very comfortable connecting with people from all age groups, and her communication degree has given her the skills she needs to relate and work with people of all personalities. With Mary's strong yoga background and people skills, she'll be very successful with teaching both private and group lessons.

4.1 Market Segmentation

For primary profit, Yoga Swell will focus on main Group.

-Upper Income : the upper income customer is the primary target group. Their demographic characteristics are the following.

- **Ages:** 40-70
- **Sex:** 30% male, 70% female.
- **Family Income:** \$60,000 +
- **Health/Lifestyle Issues:** Active individuals that are focused on healthy food and dieting Over 90% of this group are members of gyms.
- **Social Pattern:** Will more likely participate alone.
- **Yoga Swell's selling point:** Comfortable and convenient. Each session will meet your exact needs.

Additional groups to focus on, consist of:

-Middle Income Urban Professionals: This group is the secondary target group. Their demographic characteristics are the following:

- **Ages:** 26-40
- **Sex:** 30% male, 70% female.
- **Family Income:** \$30,000-\$50,000
- **Health/Lifestyle Issues:** Active individuals that are focused on healthy food and dieting. Over 70% of this group are members of gyms. Approximately, 40% of potential customers have taken yoga classes before.
- **Social Pattern:** Will more likely attend as part of group.
- **Yoga Swell's Selling Point:** Fun with friends for get-togethers. Also, a great opportunity for one-on-one instruction to deepen your practice.

Additional groups:

- Travelers
- Kids day-care services

4.2 Target Market Strategy

Everything Yoga Swell does is to fit the client's needs. Because of Yoga Swell's simply hourly rate, the customer can choose how long he or she would like the session. Because of the co-design opportunity, the customer can help to create his or her dream yoga class, with the benefits

and results, he or she, is looking for. The location is recommended to be outside for the pure benefit of nature, but the client is able to choose that as well. Due to the lack of a permanent location, the sessions will most likely be held out of the comfort of the client's home.

4.3 Service Business Analysis

Yoga Swell's focus is on serving a large number of beginners who would like one-on-one instruction. Yoga Swell will also be looking to serve those who have the means for long-term commitment.

4.3.1 Competition and Buying Patterns

"Stars do it. Sports do it. Judges in the highest courts do it. Let's do it: that yoga thing. A path to enlightenment that winds back 5,000 years in its native India, yoga has suddenly become so hot, so cool, so very this minute. It's the exercise cum meditation for the new millennium, one that doesn't so much pump you up as bliss you out. Yoga now straddles the continent-from Hollywood, where \$20 million-a-picture actors queue for a session with their guru du jour, to Washington, where, in the gym of the Supreme Court, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and 15 others faithfully take their class each Tuesday morning."

-The Power of Yoga, Time.com April 15, 2001

The key to any good yoga business is the quality of the instructor. The education and experience background as well as the personality create that unique quality. The most powerful contributor to a successful business is a strong and determined intention behind the practice. Mary holds all those qualities, and it will be Mary's personality that will essentially set Yoga Swell apart from all the others.

Strategy and Implementation Summary

Yoga Swell will market primarily through word of mouth. Fliers and cards will be distributed in beauty salons, tanning salons, boutiques, and Wedding shops. Clients will all have a free consultation to start. For each Reference, the client will save 10% on their hourly charge of \$50. Yoga Swell will also be using the service of Facebook to promote the website and services.

5.1 Competitive Edge

The competitive advantage of Yoga Swell is personality and quality of the Instructor. In addition, the comfort of one-on-one instruction as well as a convenient setting will sell the business.

5.2 Sales Forecast

The sales forecast is simple and based off the service and products of Yoga Swell. Lessons will be the primary source of sales, while products (CDs, shirts, DVDs) will provide *occasional*, additional revenue.

\$50/hourly session	Sessions/week	Expected Income
---------------------	---------------	-----------------

Year		
Year 1	5/week	12,000
Year 2	10/week	24,000
Year 3	15/week	36,000
Year 4	20/week	48,000

5.3 Marketing Strategy

The key to Yoga Swell's marketing strategy will be word of mouth accompanied by an informational website. In addition to the word of mouth technique, Mary will have the Yoga Swell sticker with contact information on the back of her car. This will be a great tool for free advertisement. Additional stickers will be handed out to friends in the surf and yoga worlds, to help promote the company. Fliers and cards will be left at the front desk of boutiques and dress shops.

By teaching in the community at local studios, Mary will meet clients that want to deepen their practice with private lessons. This will be one of the best ways for potential clients to experience Mary's teaching style and practice.

6.0 Personal Plan

Mary Fischer, founder of Yoga Swell, is a dedicated Yoga Practitioner. She received her 200-hr Yoga Teacher Certification from the Nosara Yoga Institute in Costa Rica. The program was based on the philosophy of Interdisciplinary Yoga, which pulls from all styles of yoga with a concrete focus on teaching from your own unique style, passion, and experience. The intention, for teachers, is to be genuine in sharing your personal practice in order to assist and encourage the genuine and unique practice of your students.

With this beautiful background of knowledge in addition to nine years of personal yoga experience and one year of meditation, Mary is a confident and passionate teacher. Her love for the practice and for her students shines through in every class.

Mary's personal goal for practice is to come more truly into her Self; To live peacefully, lovingly, and trusting in all situations and circumstances- free of judgment and harm. She believes that the law of karma applies to our individual thoughts and feelings; that the energy we send out into the world will come back to us. In this same belief, is the idea that our individual vibrations carry out into the world, shaping the interactions in our personal lives that create ripple effects into our societies at large.

In this sense, Yoga is more than a physical movement; it is a spiritual movement towards peace in our lives so that there may be more peace in our world.

Mary's peaceful passion for change is what drives her to teach, understanding that the change must begin within.

Believing that intention is the key to success, this intention will flourish beautifully into business.

Yoga Swell's personnel will be the following:

- Mary Fischer

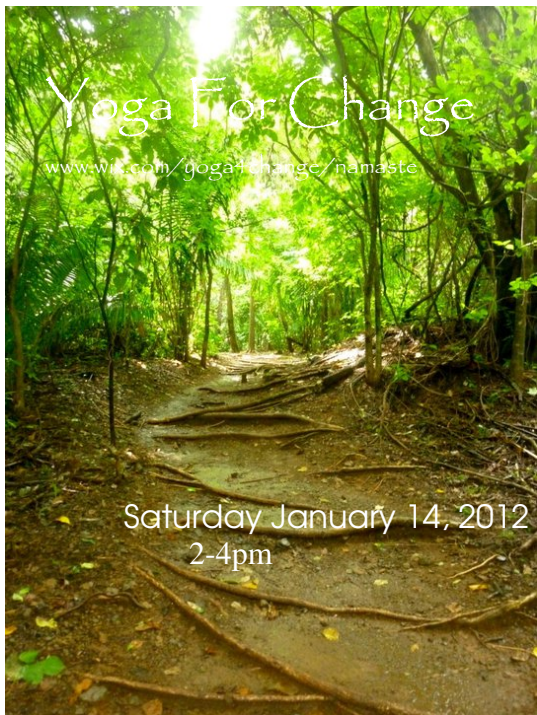
7.0 Financial Plan

Because this business is a start-up with the intention of being a side job, a detailed financial plan is not important to include in this document. The drive for this company will always be to teach from the heart and to share peace. The money will be appreciated revenue to help pay the bills, but will not be the driving force for business.

Appendix C

Business Cards

Appendix D Fliers



Embodying Namaste Workshop

Where?

Yoga Centre

When?

2-4pm

Why?

directly to the programs at the San Luis Obispo Women's Shelter. The workshop is donation-based,



Embodying Namaste Workshop

Where?

Yoga Centre

When?

Why?

2-4pm

100% of the proceeds go directly to the programs at the San Luis Obispo Women's Shelter. The workshop is donation-based, \$20 minimum is recommended!



Embodying Namaste

Where?



When?

Why?

2-4pm

100% of the proceeds go directly to the programs at the San Luis Obispo Women's Shelter. The workshop is donation-based, \$20 minimum is recommended!

Embodying Namaste

Where?

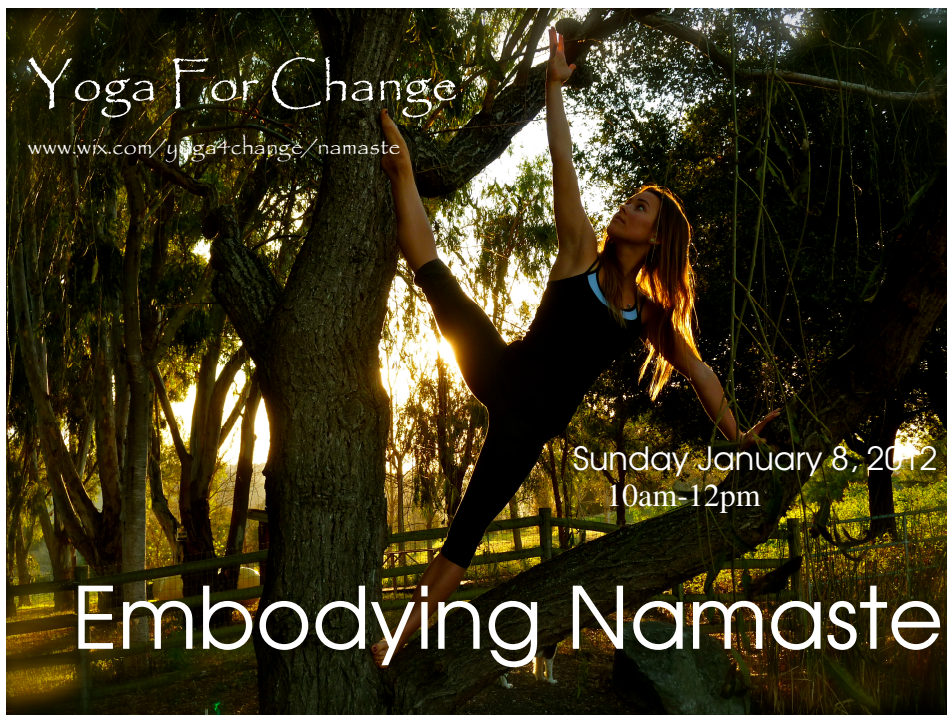


When?

Saturday, January 14, 2012

Why?

100% of the proceeds go directly to the programs at the San Luis Obispo Women's Shelter. The workshop is donation-based, \$20 minimum is recommended!



Embodying Namaste Workshop

Where?

m body Studio
When?

10am-12pm

Why?

directly to the programs at
the San Luis Obispo
Women’s Shelter. The
workshop is donation-based,



Quisque libero.

Where?

arcu. Donec feugiat nisl vel

When?

How?

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tortor. Mauris dapibus enim



Wichs

40

Embodying Namaste

Where?

arcu. Donec feugiat nisl vel

When?

Why?

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mattis non, mi. Proin tellus
tortor. Mauris dapibus enim

Quisque libero.

Where?

arcu. Donec feugiat nisl vel

When?

How?

eleifend sit amet, placerat ac,
mattis non, mi. Proin tellus
tortor. Mauris dapibus enim

"Be the change
you wish to see
in the world."

~Ghandi

Yoga 4 Change

www.wix.com/yoga4change/namaste/

Our Mission:

"To share the mind, body, and spiritual practice of yoga with those experiencing a difficult time in life. Teaching others techniques to bring peace into their lives, and in turn, offering peace out into the world."

~ Each month we will introduce a different philanthropy.

~ During that month, we will be open to scheduling yoga classes for your club/sorority/fraternity/group/business.

~ All the classes will be donation based and all the proceeds will go directly to the designated philanthropy of the month

There is no catch in this program; We are simply trying to share the gift of yoga with others

The Philanthropies:

JANUARY: San Luis Obispo Women's Shelter

www.womensshelterslo.org

FEBRUARY: Restorative Partners

www.restorativepartners.org

MARCH: Amp Surf

www.ampsurf.org

Email Us
At:

[Yoga4change@
gmail.com](mailto:Yoga4change@gmail.com)

And Set
Up A
Class
Today!

