

A person with extensive tattoos on their arms and back is seen from behind, performing a yoga pose with arms raised. They are wearing a grey tank top and a black watch. In the background, other people are also performing yoga in a bright, open space, possibly a gym or community center. A basketball hoop is visible in the distance.

**PRISON YOGA
PROJECT**

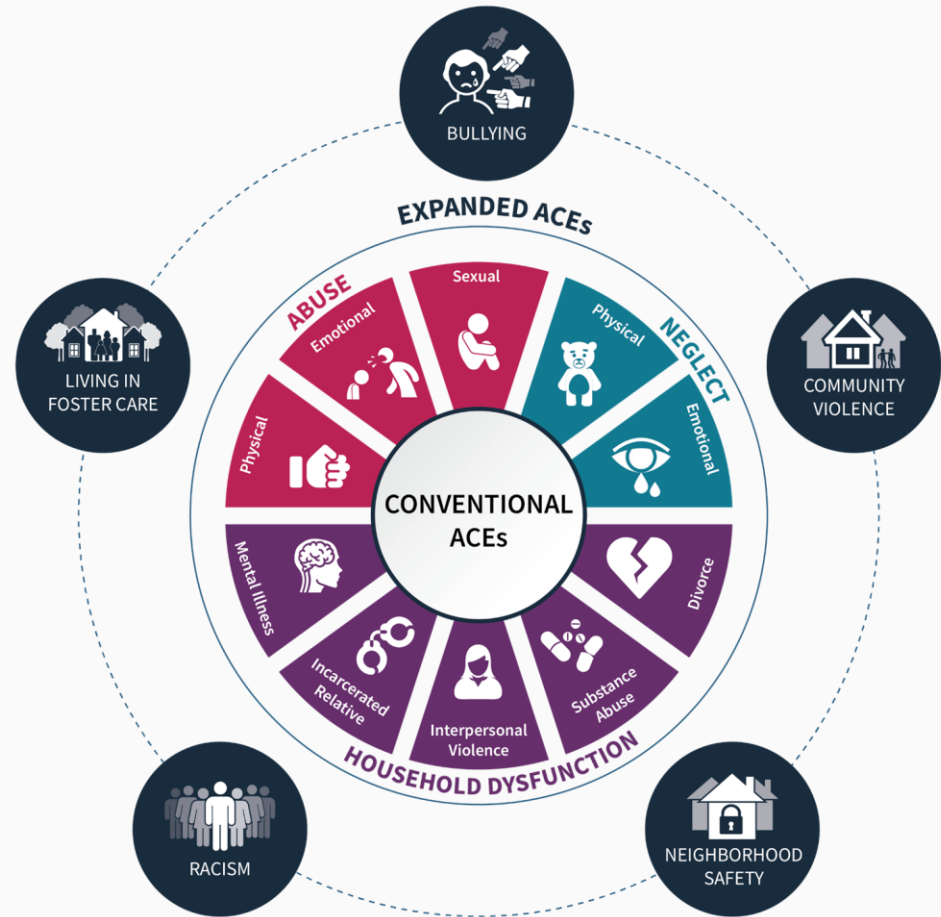
**Trauma-Informed Yoga Practices in Correctional Settings:
Recalibrating Responses & Boosting Resilience**

California Jail Programs Association Conference - October 24, 2024

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Experiencing multiple ACEs dramatically increases the risk of chronic health issues, substance abuse, and mental health disorders.

Understanding ACEs is crucial in addressing the underlying trauma that many incarcerated individuals have experienced, helping to inform more effective rehabilitation strategies.



Unresolved Trauma and the Body

“Intense emotions cause memories of particular events to be dissociated from consciousness, and to be stored, instead, as visceral sensations (anxiety and panic). Traumatized persons seem to react to reminders of the trauma with emergency responses that had been relevant to the original threat, but no longer have bearing on current experience.”

*Bessel van der Kolk, MD
The Body Keeps The Score: Memory and
Psychobiology of Post Traumatic Stress*

“When I’m triggered, I go from...”

~~0 → 100~~

85 → 100

Trauma-Informed Yoga Practices Recalibrate Our Nervous Systems and Boost Resilience

“Top-down regulation involves strengthening the capacity of the watchtower to monitor your body’s sensations. Mindfulness meditation and yoga can help with this.

“Bottom-up regulation involves recalibrating the autonomic nervous system.... We can access the ANS through breath, movement, or touch. Breathing is one of the few body functions under both conscious and autonomic control.”

Bessel van der Kolk, MD

The Body Keeps The Score: Memory and Psychobiology of Post Traumatic Stress



Creating Prosocial Community Engagement

Trauma is an interpersonal experience. It takes an interpersonal experience to recover from trauma.

Being together with other people in an alert but relaxed state has tremendous potential to influence prosocial behavior and create community.



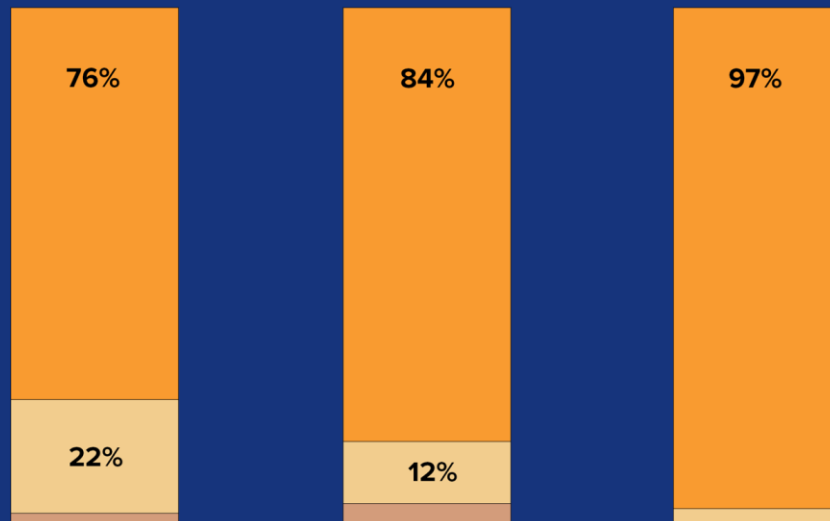
Enough talk! Let's practice!



PRISON YOGA PROJECT

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

FROM A SURVEY OF 90 PARTICIPANTS
IN CALIFORNIA STATE PRISONS



MORE EMPATHETIC AND
MINDFUL OF OTHERS

REDUCED STRESSORS AND
ENHANCED ABILITY TO COPE
WITH TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

WOULD RECOMMEND THIS
PROGRAM TO OTHERS

■ STRONGLY DISAGREE ■ DISAGREE ■ NEUTRAL ■ AGREE ■ STRONGLY AGREE

How to Engage

[Request a program](#) at your facility.

Purchase books in bulk—[order of 10 or more for \\$6.95 each](#).

Train with us to lead sessions at your facility. Check out our [Foundational Training](#) and our [Yoga Teacher Training](#). Additional staff oriented training will be introduced in 2025.

[Join our Community website](#) to attend webinars live and stay updated on PYP happenings.