Here we go.

Good morning everyone. I am so happy to welcome you to the YogaAlliance community Sangha. Let us take a comfortable seat and just let yourself begin to breathe feeling the breath. Feet flat on the floor I would like to share reading it as a work from my Angelou called equality. Equality. You declare you see me dimly through a glass which will not shine though I stand before you boldly and marking time, you do all to hear me faintly as a whisper out of range while my drums beat out the message and the rhythms never change. The quality and I will be free. Equality and I will be free. You announce my ways of wanting that I fly from man to man but I'm just a shadow to you, could you ever understand? We have lived a painful history, we know the shameful past, but I keep on watching forward and you keep on coming last.

Equality and I will be frank, equality and I will be free. Take the blinders from your vision, take the pattern from your ears-- padding from yours and confess you hear me crying and admit you see my tears. Here the temple so compelling, here the blood throbbed in my veins yes, my drums beating and the rhythms never change. Equality and I will be free, equality and I will be free. Take the breath in. Exhale the breath from your nostrils. Together we will practice the three-part breath. Inhaling below the navel above the navel, then let your chest fill with the breath. Exhale from the top down below the navel above, at the chest, exhale from the top down. And maybe in 2 minutes we will continue practising the three-part breath noticing the rise and fall. Allow yourself to sit to be in this moment.

Allow your breath to deepen, exhale. And bring your awareness back to this moment and allow your eyes to open. Let's let our audible sigh inhale. Beautiful. I am so pleased to welcome Yirser Ra Hotep to be a guest on the Community Sangha today I want to tell you just a little bit about Yirser. He is a master yoga teacher and he is also the creator of the yoga skills method.

He is the most senior instructor of kinetic yoga with 42 years of experience practising and teaching. He was involved with the original research that unearths documentation of kinetic yoga in the 70s, and he holds, I love saying this because we have to get educated, that is what I have learned, he holds 2 masters degrees and he also has a bachelor's in political silence-- science he is quite a learned gentleman that Yirser Ra Hotep.

He is also a practitioner of tai chi and he has been involved in many research projects some measuring yoga and meditation on the youth and he has been involved as a principal instructor on a research project at Cook County Jail in Chicago. He is Prof. school for new learning where he has created new and cutting edge courses on the science of yoga. Stress management for health and wellness, ancient wisdom and modern science, research methods, cultural diversity, and the African-American family in genealogy. Yirser continues on its path in this glorious work that he is doing and welcome, Yirser.

Thank you, Maya, it is a was a pleasure to speak with you, to be with you, and I'm very thankful to be invited here to share what I have to share with our yoga community.

Thank you, you're welcome. Our title, our focus today is Kemetic Yoga. I welcome your wisdom, Yirser.

Let me say this for Kemetic Yoga, the word committed-- Kemet refers to the country that is now called Egypt which is
in the north east in part of Africa. And so, Egypt is in Africa and I have to emphasize that because when I was a child, in grade school, or geography book took Egypt off of the map and it took it and put it in our little circle and put it in the corner of the page and wrote Middle East under it and I thought that was quite of 4 geography book of a big chunk missing from the whole continent.

The significance of that is that a lot of our history, because of, like the poem you read by my Angelou is the history of black people of African people has been actually distorted and wiped out in certain instances. Egypt what should be called Kemet is probably the cradle of civilization, this is where people like the Greeks and the Romans and of the Western European countries, many other countries throughout the Middle East and Asia actually received their culture from because these people were in ancient Egypt, they were the forerunners of civilization, technology, agriculture, literature, philosophy, all types of different astronomy, and astrology, all kinds of different scientific breakthroughs were achieved by these people.

With having that understanding, myself and my teacher, back in the 70s, that yoga may have an origin or at least a connection with ancient Kemet it only made sense because like medicine comes from ancient Egypt, even though they say we know several thousand years before hypocrisy was born there was a man name MO tab-- from which the people in Greece learned what they called medicine. As we thought about it, there was an exhibit of the artifacts from the tomb of a Pharaoh whose name is student common-- who called in King tut and then in that exhibit there was artifacts unit including a chair that had images on it that were obviously yoga postures. These particular yoga postures, they were different than the ones that you would see from India this one particular artifact had a yoga pose in on it and a spinal twisting position, and had images on it back to what we would call the crown chakra and what we would call in a former snakes or cobras. The evidence was overwhelming and as we continue to examine the ancient Egyptian record, it became obviously obvious that images of yoga and symbols of yoga were ubiquitous throughout ancient Egypt throughout this entire history. And then as you do more research you find that the people of ancient Kemet were not just, the people actually came from other parts of Africa.

They came from southern Africa, only rivaled by the Amazon only 7 miles long, and it goes to a great number of African countries and a great number of African areas were African people have travelled the path of the now and eventually settled into a place that we call Egypt. We know conclusively that the people of ancient Egypt were African people. And we also know that even thousands of years ago there was also a river that went from east to west and connected West Africa with Egypt. Some people argued that your people that come from West Africa, you are not Egyptian or you are not Middle Eastern or whatever you want to say. We know it was also travelled back and forth between what we would call each and Kemet and what we would call West Africa. We have found images of people from the African continent practice in doing what we would call yoga postures that are 20 to 40,000 years old which are contained on paintings, on caves, that are supposed to be primitive but they are doing various postures that you will see people doing in India.

These things are many tens of thousands of years old. What we say is that yoga is not just, the word yoga is sand script, but we say that the practice of yoga, the idea that I'm going to sit and I'm going to breathe and I'm going to meditate and concentrate, that is a-- that is what human beings do, it is not related to one particular culture. The idea of doing movements and postures makes me feel better, they call this-- it causes my blood to circulate in my life force and energy to flow, causes my body to align. The practice of doing that, we can see the Aztecs, the Mayans, people of, all over the world, many cultures all over the world through posture, they do movements. In India, we know this idea of doing these things was called to find and we know that in Africa and other parts of the world, it was also quantified because we have the records of them. And so, from the ancient kinetic perspective, we use the term, spelt MAA T. In the symbol is a feather in the feather is worn by a divinity or a divine entity in the formal of a woman and her name is Maat and she wears a feather on top of her head, and the feather represents the consciousness that you are creating within your heart centre because according to our ancestors of ancient Kemet, the heart is the seat of consciousness. Not the brain, but the heart because the heart centre vibrates at a frequency that is beyond what the brain vibrates at an information is received in the heart before it is received within the brain. It goes from the heart to the brain, not from the brain and anyplace else.

If it comes into us from the heart, in ancient Kemet, it was symbolic the heart against the feather of Maat the entire process of developing this cosmic consciousness of developing this idea that I am going to be connected to the divine because the word Maat means there is an order to the universe that nothing is happening by chance, that there is an order and that the nature of the universe is harmony. It is not chaos, it is not this organization, it is not competition, it is harmony, these are very African values and African ideas. There is a harmony to everything there is a balanced everything that there is justice as part of the foundation of the universe, that there is reciprocity as part of the
universe. These are some of the principles that our ancestors from ancient Africa attributed or used the symbol of the women and when she was protected—portrayed as a woman, she would be a particular posture and she would have wings on her arms represented the likeness of the breath and ancient Kemet the world was call it denotes breath, and so Maat with her feathers on her arm, she the ability to control the breath, to manipulate the breath where we would call in Indian yoga, they used the term and so it is the breath, the atmosphere. And so symbolically, your heart is weight at the time you are making your transition into the next life, in order to end the next life, your heart has to be as light as the feather. And so this is a symbolic way of saying you must live your life in a state of Maat they must live by the principles. In that in order to live what you have to do, give to engage in practices that allows you to gain this type of consciousness. Meditation, prayer, proper diet, treat others as you would like them to treat you being in harmony being in balance of the universe, these are principles which can be related to a universal level, these are principles that were garnered by ancient access in Kemet they correspond very naturally with what we are trying to do in our pursuit of the idea of yoga. The other thing we have to consider is that in the most ancient times, the people of India were very dark skinned pigmented people in fact, you still see these people today, India is reported to have the second-highest number of black people outside of Africa, at least 400 million.

And so we know those original people that created will be call civilization in India, these were a dark skinned myelinated people. In that they had traditions and ideas which were very similar to what came out because we think about African civilization, it is not simply the continent of Africa, there was a consciousness that spread from Africa into the so-called Middle East into Europe, and Asia, and we have many stories of people travelling from Africa, about the exchange from Africa and these other cultures. There are different theories that say that people originating in Africa and they moved from Africa to other parts of the world, we have lots of genetic evidence of this, there are other theories that say people develop independently in different parts of the world. Whichever theory they choose and adhere to, the idea of a consciousness and idea that the original people were of a particular look and had a particular culture and had a particular consciousness which we can call African, that is pretty much in my mind, at least in my mind and the mind of many scholars, it is premature and disputed.

SPEAKER: Wonderful, Yirser, I want to read a couple of things I have come in. I do teach yoga classes, but I infuse the medicine into my medicine woman works, with 36 years by this highly rejuvenating yoga. Especially with the role of breathing. I am also an elder and highly recommend this form of yoga. He is worked very hard and a long time coming to introduce African yoga and it's time.

Hello from 2015, I am a white woman who did East Indian yoga for a few decades and when I decided to pursue teaching, I went to Yirser is a made sense to me that the yoga was brought from Kemet to Egypt a.k.a. Egypt to most people today. Those are 2 very positive thoughts about what you are doing in the world. I want to make a little bit, not comparisons, but may be contrast of comparisons between the yoga that comes from India and the Kemetian Yoga.

When you mentioned consciousness, and when you mentioned connecting to the divine, and you mentioned the concept of all the isms within Maat the way we live, the way we breathe, and the kindness we extend, those to me are universal themes. But they are also, I found them in the yoga that I studied in India. But I think, I would like to hear a little bit of discussion, I am recognizing that the Egyptian yoga came first. But I think yoga is so universal and we all need a connection to the divine in the consciousness and instilling of the mind, how do you put those together?

SPEAKER: First of all, I believe that yoga, I believe the word yoga is sand script.

SPEAKER: That is sand script, yes.

SPEAKER: The idea of yoga is universal, the first human beings who came into existence did yoga, they said and crossed it and they practiced, and they contemplated, they made it their true nature, how come this is just a thing that human beings do? Give one particular culture that is called yoga and at some point time of the development of their culture, a particular person or particular group of people wrote it down prior to that, there was nothing written, it was just a human behaviour the people did.
SPEAKER:
Yoga is universal in the book called the African unconscious talks about how this whole idea of energy is below the surface in the subconscious. I did not say that yoga originated in Africa and went to India. I'm saying that human beings, it's like a competition, as a human beings from the beginning engage in what we now describe as yoga. Yoga was coded by it a particular textbook or particular writing and we don't know potentially it was a one person or a group of people or this was done over a period of time, we don't necessarily know that, we know that somebody wrote books, but we also know that ancestors in ancient Kemet also wrote books. And when you read their work, when you read the writings you can see many similarities, you can also see a few different ones, that the primary similarities are there. Yoga to me is universal, the idea of yoga is universal, the use of the name yoga to describe it is just like, in my mind, it is like saying martial arts, when you say martial arts, you think martial arts from Angola, and southern Africa, martial arts from Greece, you could say martial arts. Sometimes people sort of get upset that you use the word yoga, like to me, yoga is taking the word yoga is taking on a more universal meaning than simply saying yoga comes from India.

SPEAKER:
Absolutely. Here is a question. How has the Black Lives movement informed your teaching today?

SPEAKER:
I think that our teaching of yoga is influenced the Black Lives movement. Like Black Lives Matter, the yoga that we do emerges out of liberation and liberation will use the term Black Lives Matter, we were practising yoga as a form of liberation. We considered the practice of yoga to be one of the tools that we were using back in the 70s and the 80s, and as a tool that we were using to help us to achieve liberation because we knew that we as an oppressed people who were oppressed simply because of who we are and the colour by skin and that in order for us to become enslaved in order for us to become to have a perpetual oppression the idea we have never done anything, that we would never achieve high levels of civilization, high level of spiritual development, the information about us had to be suppressed. And so, yoga as a means of mental development, as a means of spiritual development, as a means of health development in terms of adopting to vegetarian or the vegan lifestyle, talk about having respect and love for yourself and love for your body is a temple that houses your spirit, all of these ideas and concepts and practices for us were what was needed for people who were seeking true liberation from the oppressive mechanism. American and European systems of oppression. And so, we use yoga as a means to help teach children in schools or children even outside of schools that help young people who were involved with different behaviours that cause them to become incarcerated, to help people who were having substance abuse problems, to help people who were having mental illness problems, to help people who were having any type of any degree of social disorganization, we are going to use yoga and meditation, going to use concentration proper diet, we are going to use all of these to help people to evolve and to move out of this state. The main way that the system of oppression operates is by telling people or convincing people that they are not worthy, that they are inferior to other people. And so yoga in itself an meditation in itself is a very liberating practice because it allows you to understand what is your true nature then once you understand what your true nature is that you were this powerful being which is connected to the Creator and allows you to create and move to the point of self actualization when you can actually take your understanding of who you are and implemented into building yourself and building your nation and set the bar above and beyond what this oppressive mechanism that we call racism by supremacy, tries to impose upon us. And so Kemetic Yoga has always been part of the liberation movement. We don't say that white people can do Kemetic Yoga, we just say that Kemetic Yoga is one of the tools that we use in the other part I think that is important for people who have been told that they don't have a past, your history only starts 400 years ago with your enslavement that they have a practice which is ancestral which comes from their own ancestors and allows them to connect with something above and beyond, just a regular routine of 16 or 19 or whatever the year was that we came here and that is when her history started. We need an ancestral connection because our ancestors another thing of Kemetic Yoga is we connect with our ancestors through meditation out of her meditation is that we connect with our ancestors like my parents are both deceased, my grandparents are both deceased, on down the line into my great grandparents, those are my ancestors, then I have a great divine ancestors and then we have the forces of nature and our meditation to connect with all of these different divine beings and divine entities.

SPEAKER:
Just fascinating, I love it. Here are some questions. Someone says, this is a comment. This is wonderful, makes complete sense with what I know and have studied, I'm very interested in learning more. Someone also asked Yirser talks what you can medic writings, what writings are you referring to so that we can do research on her own?-- Our
SPEAKER:
There are many different, there have been techs that have been translated by different European scholars. You have a text called the book of the dead, the book of the dead, a better name is called the book of coming forth by day. When you read some of these texts, you are able to find that the interpretation of what the meeting that they were writing about was off but the book, if you combine or you learn how to read the due nature, do nature means sacred writing. This was what they call hieroglyphs and so we had to study how to read and translate the hieroglyphs. And so the book coming forth by day or the book of the dead is one that you should go to.

What I would say is that you should start off by reading books like the African unconscious, and dark grey consciousness. African unconscious, you need somebody that has taken those tax and has sort of reinterpreted them for us. We have a book by Wayne B Chandler who goes into an analysis of the 7 principles of ancient Kemet. Which we say comes from who was a sage of our ancient traditions. And so, he develop a concept of 7 principles, another book you should read is called the African presence of early Asia which is a book that has different authors, who have contributed to the book that go into history of the presence of African people, Black People, Mellon needed people in the continent of Asia and into shaping those civilizations there.

That's where, those of the books I would recommend in person to start with, the you go you learn how to actually read the language of the ancient cosmetic people and you go to the actual tax--text.

SPEAKER:
You are coming through. I teach yoga as I am a new a yogurt instructor-- yoga instructor, I mixed thousand by teaching, what resources can I added some medic-- this is mostly in the climate that we are in on the planet.

SPEAKER:
My resources, if you go to my website, I have videos or you can download, or you can get actual a physical disk, and the videos you can learn how to do different postures. An Kemetic Yoga in the way that I teach Kemetic Yoga is that we have certain practices which are uniquely cosmetic-- the you can see only on the walls of the temple and in the various text that come from ancient Egypt. My video is divided into parts, the first part is, the 2nd part, this one goes into yoga, spinal twist, but the 2nd part goes into these exclusively Kemetic Yoga postures. Yoga postures the poles of Maat and immortality, these are the ones where we see the divine beings from ancient Kemet going into, they have a very unique effect of pulling your mind, your consciousness, and moving in the flow of energy and life force to your body. And the Kemetic system as we understood it was a great emphasis on the movement and the flow of energy using the breath, somebody mentioned rule of 4th breathing which is a process of breathing we do which is just breathing but it is understanding that each breath has to be divided into 4 parts. The inhalation, the pause, the exhalation, then another pause. We just say divide each breath so you can really feel the difference, you can really feel the flow, and in addition to those videos we have the audio five-part meditation called journey so it's like Nirvana, it's like that place of consciousness where you make that connection with the divine and merge the consciousness and again, these are very concepts which have a lot of residence with what we would call yoga as it comes from India.

SPEAKER:
We have just a few minutes and there are so many questions. I'm sure we will be able to share the questions with you. You can communicate your responses. Based on everything that is coming through, I will have you back for part 2. Because there is a lot of interest in what you are teaching and there are many thank youse and someone is asking about the hieroglyph meeting stability and etc., but I don't think we have enough time.

I would like you to make one statement about the yoga skills method. What is the most profound thing you want to leave with us till we come back for part 2?

SPEAKER:
Yoga skills method is my conception of how to do yoga to get the most benefit from it. For me, it's like the universal field theory of yoga. When you practice yoga, you want to not just do something on the yoga mat and then that is it, you want to develop yourself in a way that it translates into everything that you do. You want to be able to change an entire way of thinking, your entire way of operating, and take it to a higher vibrational level. Yoga skills method is simply a methodology, it begins with a conceptual or cosmological people for who you are, who we are, then it goes from that cosmological view into very specific ways of practising yoga, and meditation and breath control and things
like that.

SPEAKER:
Thank you very much. We are going to end, I appreciate you being here, Yirser, and I look forward to inviting you to join us very soon. So we can do part 2 of Kemetic Yoga and lettuce and our session today with the breath. Inhale, and exhale. And just close your eyes. And focus. Feeling the breath, allowing yourself to be present. And with our breath, we send brother Yirser grace and love and gratitude. There are many questions which I'm sure we will share with brother Yirser, let us child-- chant the sound om. I honour the light within you.