SPEAKER: good morning everyone and I'd like to welcome you to think Yoga Alliance community saga and I have wonderful's and I tell you about them in a moment. We will first come to a seated position. Make sure you are comfortable and if you are lying down you can listen to my employees apply flat.

Were going to focus on the voice and if you have been watching my son, I like the three-part breath it's a simple breathing practice and I invite you to join me experience the front body from below the navel, above the navel and we exhale from the top down so I modify that a little bit today and make it a two to one breathing practice so inhale to the count of three. One, two, three, exhale. Two, three, four, five, six.

Inhale. One, two, three, exhale. Two, three, four, five, six. Inhale. One, two, three, exhale. Two, three, four, five, six. And let us continue this practice. For one minute top

Now bring your awareness back to this moment. I have a wonderful reading for us I'm so excited and it is from Alice Walker's most recent work. Hard times require serious dancing and. I will not deny my lives there smile. I will not deny my heart its sorrow, I will not deny my eyes their tears, I will not deny my here, the wildness of my age, it is profound, selfish, I will deny me nothing of myself.

Drink that in. It is wonderful work by Alice Walker. Hard times require furious dancing. I have to say hallelujah.

Because I know what that means so I went to welcome our guests today. I have two vibrant, beautiful woman with me today and it is Amina Naru and Pamela Stokes-Eggleston and they are both past executive directors of the Yoga Service Council and Amina is a founder of Posh Yoga in Wilmington, Delaware and she works as a trauma sensitive yoga teacher and facilitator.

Her work is deeply informed by her studies with master teachers, Johnny Gillespie of Empowered Hilda. BK robes of the yoga Institute NYS two by our and Jennifer of Little Flower capital got and let us not forget James Fox will top Amina and Pamela were featured in the yoga Journal and she was also featured in yoga therapy today and many of our yoga alliance podcasts so she is a very exciting woman and I would like to welcome you Amina and Pam is a former executive director of the yoga service Council and is a certified yoga therapist and meditation teacher with specializations and plant-based nutrition, cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia and trauma informed Gogo and she has worked with veterans, their caregivers, insomnia sufferers and she has an MS in yoga therapy from Maryland University integrative health and MBA from the University of Maryland University College.

Pam is an accomplished consultant, advisor, published author and national speaker and worked for many agencies including the Veterans Administration, Department of labor and has been a veteran intern for John Hopkins medical Center and I could go on and share more about both of these women but I want is to begin talking about our theme today for the theme of this sign, which is retreat to spirit a rather innovative program that both of these women created and are embarking on offering to the world so I welcome you and namaste my friends.

AMINA NARU: namaste. Thank you my.

MAYA BREUER: Amino let us -- Amina these are tumultuous times where we deal with Covid-19 pandemic, dealing in the aftermath and that death of George Floyd and dealing with many of the protests and racist and negative things that have been stirred up.

And so if you have a comment on that I welcome that is all. Thank you.

AMINA NARU: yes. Thank you. Retreat to spirit was birthed through Pam and I back in 2018 and it was really an intuitive project that we knew we wanted to put together and based on the needs of the communities that we've been serving, and the responses we have been getting from mentors and conferences and things like that, so we created
Retreat to Spirit and we kind of like to sit on the sidelines as we pursued our full-time positions – or full-time work with the Yoga Service Council in our executive director goals, however, it could have been more timely than when we were relieved of our duties with Yoga Service Council our projects retreat to spirit work were waiting for us at the perfect time as far as what is happening in the world today and the need for spiritual practices within our yoga community and outside of that.

So our work with the YogaJournal.com doing our self-care course was launched right in time for all the COVID pandemic, the racial issues that are happening within our country, the issues we are having with our now president and learning how to navigate that and have some real tools that can help us and give more meaning and joy to live and waking up every day having the same conversations and disgruntlements and we find ourselves in groups with peers and colleagues talking about the same disgruntlement's without any way to make change with in ourselves we can reflect change outwardly so camp retreat to Spirit and I joined mentors who are in leadership positions dive in and creating conscious relationships with self to expand outward into the community.

MAYA BREUER: Thank you. I have a question but I hold that. Thank you, so Pam, please share with us.

PAMELA EGGLESTON: I would like to cosign my cofounder Amina Whitchy said about retreat to spirit it was very intuitive and came together organically and when we actually try to speak to how we formed it and what was the idea behind it and it was intuitive, organic, natural flow and we allowed it to happen is hard to for people to grasp what that means outside the yoga space but even inside yoga space we are currently in, how did that happen because often you don't see partnerships like this.

This is what we have been told, so it's been an amazing ride an amazing two years and I put my quotation fingers up for the "racial upheaval." The racial stuff has been here and the George Floyd thing happened but the racial stuff has been here and COVID illuminated the real virus in this country.

The president to Amina early point is a symptom that was already there we have time to sit with ourselves via COVID to notice things we may not have noticed or turned away from. Retreat to Spirit is a project at empowers people to turn into that.

To turn into the pain, the suffering so you can retreat and is a partner remembering you really are from soul, from that bliss consciousness and spot and blood contemplative work continue to process it so I just leave it there.

MAYA BREUER: Wonderful. So tell me – I looked at some of your material and some of the things that I found were Discover your health, Cultivate a Spiritual Lifestyle, self Healing and Connecting with the Divine feminine and just take one of those and talk about the types of activities you promote are what are the type of teachings or presentations that fall under these categories.

Why don't we just start with Self-Healing.

AMINA NARU: -healing. -- Self-healing. Of her base from where we teach as our own practices and describing what has worked for me may work for other folks, French, and Pam has her own practices and we come together and to our presentations and create our projects.

For me the self-healing piece focuses a lot on meditation practices. I discovered probably about 11 years ago when I went unattended a salad meditation retreat -- silent meditation retreat that sitting with stillness and allowing traumas and feelings and sensations to arrive and be fully present in that moment was releasing like years, years and decades worth of pain and being a child of drug addicted parents and growing up in dysfunctional family and things like that, a lot of us have those characteristics in our back row, but having that time and I probably was about early 30s when I discovered that I could sit and you what was coming up and it was I don't want to say magically released, but it definitely felt like it was moving on, it passed.

This was to a practice of a certain meditation and it is hard work because just learning how to sit with pain and discomfort is challenging and a lot of us have to turn off or to find a distraction of whatever that may be for folks, and with that practice you know I moved into a vigorous arsenal practice that help to open up and release any blockages were things that were stuck on the physical level.

So it didn't happen together, however, I was practicing yoga when I did that deep dive into meditation but it wasn't as vigorous as after the meditation. I took one piece at a time. So there is profound self-healing through that and then with discovering a community that provided support for the rest of my healing journey was very powerful and leading up to where I am now helping others are wanting to give myself an in-service way to help others reach and get
through challenges like this because it is so hard.

And life can often feel very lonely when you are going through or have these type of things and trauma trapped inside and not wanting to feel those pains and the struggle, especially our racial traumas. Things that have been happening to us as micro aggressions even. Things that we don't even consciously notice, but the body and the spirit is fully aware and taking in what is happening in our environment, so I'll leave it right there.

MAYA BREUER: Good, so the laboratory for what you share with others is been here been?

AMINA NARU: absolutely.

MAYA BREUER: And you offered a workshop as the retreat day so I am just clarifying people know if they want this Amina and Pam can come and share with you this particular set of practices that fall under self-healing scope. So Amina – I mean Pam, someone asked how deep do you go in Yoga with veterans?

PAMELA EGGLESTON: That depends. If I have people that come off the street and I haven't done an assessment you see where they are in their healing journey I do a peripheral yoga teacher if they even hear half of it because a lot are already sleep deprived and they's fall asleep so at least your subconscious can receive some of it.

There's stuff I avoid if I don't know who they are coming up the street. I don't talk about surrendering or sinking to the floor or anything like that with veterans, I'm real careful with the imagery and that kind of stuff atop

I've been seeing a veteran privately -- if I haven't seen a veteran privately then I go deeper because we've had time assessment, I've had time to understand their living environment, what types of other therapy that they've attended. Most of them that I've seen have gone through cognitive behavioral therapy.

Some people have done some other types of now, -- other types of yoga but it depends and I had people come out and they are sobbing and it's important I believe to be trained in some type of trauma yoga and be able to provide a holding container for that emotion be processed after the session and through the session.

MAYA BREUER: Someone said well said. If you consider all the facets of what you're offering, another one that popped right out to me was Discover your help. So what are some of the you know some of the experience one might look for when they come to you for this aspect of your retreat to spirit?

PAMELA EGGLESTON: Discover your health is broad because we focus on physical, mental health and emotional and it is all the things but a lot of time will focus initially on physical health. I want this, I want the yoga but, although physical parts of yoga which is fine.

Amina and I are trying to unpack why are you having this kind of shift or energetic shift when there is a full moon, for instance, why are you feeling some kind of way you can't quite put your finger on it when somebody says something about the George Floyd situation, is going on and what are the layers of that, and what are you doing at home -- what are you ingesting and are you drinking tea, are you drinking water with lemon, what other "food" are you ingesting that is affecting your health and we have family members we have been stuck in the house with for four months maybe we can do anything about.

What are we ingesting, what types of food are we ingesting and that matters and I think yoga helps us to pay attention to our bodies in Philippine awareness -- in developing awareness so we can see it may not be right for me or the best thing for me or mentally that may not be the right thing to ingest to consistently listen to my sister tell me how much of a loser I am or what ever but you can do now prior because you are comfortable in your chaos so how to get uncomfortable with that and discovering your health and moving on, that whole process and arduous journey of getting to that muck and discover your health and that way.

MAYA BREUER: This powerful. Just lifting you both up in your great work I'm happy to know about what you offer. We are on similar paths in my own work includes compassion in bodied ways to become a white LI and it feels great to have black women leading in our yoga community. Keep on.

PAMELA EGGLESTON: Thank you. This beautiful. Thank you for that.

MAYA BREUER: Was of that lovely. Amina what type of meditation someone would like you to mention the type of meditation included in Retreat to Spirit.
AMINA NARU: We teach from practices used or sell. I have been a practitioner of passion of meditation go and, and also transcendental meditation I also started out with simple mindfulness meditation and that's what I teach in the criminal justice system to my students of adult and juvenile detention centers.

The simple mindfulness for three minutes a quiet practice of just observing the thoughts seems to be very powerful beginners who are looking to experience the benefits of meditating, start with three minutes and as time goes on increase to five, 210 and eventually -- to 10 and eventually Steve is 30 their own meditation practice.

PAMELA EGGLESTON: I do meta-meditation and my practice lately has been meta-meditation and with caregivers I've been similarly to what Amina has done to start off with two minutes and a lot of times caregivers don't have time you don't have to do a whole 20 minutes twice a day thing if you can't do that, but I start with a simple focus on the breath like you did to kick the webinar off my and focus on deep breaths and draw attention back to the breath and focus on attention and do that you have in three minutes so have that mindfulness practice to start the day with and I might expand if I'm working with them for an extended period of time to five, 10 or 15 minutes.

AMINA NARU: We forgot to mention in addition to my toolbox…which seems to be very powerful especially when I feel in conflict with others are holding resentment that meditation works really well.

MAYA BREUER: What is the name of what you just said?

PAMELA EGGLESTON: There is an age, Oh and -- ho Pono Pono's I'm sorry, please forgive me, thank you, I love you. I have led a meditation with that any change or inflection and is energetic and how you are feeling at that moment, who shows up in the space while you are getting that meditation and you will be brought to tears and it sounds simple but it is you know...

MAYA BREUER: Here is a question. I'm curious about what you have to say about working with historical trauma, trans generational trauma that we don't know we carry height as the impact of micro aggressions etc.?

PAMELA EGGLESTON: Well, that steep because here is the thing and this is what Amina and I recognize and our attorneys are different and we were brought together by divine intervention and I cannot say it any other way other than what it is. We have our own traumas, our own intergenerational traumas and I and others recognize if that is the stuff I'm working on. I use the tools of yoga to work through this stuff, so there is no arrival.

I think people think I'm yoga, I'm this way and that way and I'm always a student and always working on things that I recognize and you have to be, I believe, and I tell my students or any clients that I have open to consistent and constant learning about yourself, remembering who you are and about the things around you and really observing how those things may shift or learning about yourself and things around you, so internal and external learning and recognizing, allowing the observer to see the ships that will inevitably occur and you learn more and more about yourself.

You go up against yourself and you don't want to experience the trauma that your mother told you that happened when she was in a segregated school to come up and you start talking, blocking and if you are doing yoga practices and diving deep into breath work and the llamas and others you will have to break through it and you may have break those to have a breakthrough but you have to allow for that.

And that is really being courageous and vulnerable and brave as he worked through the stove, so my conversations lately and I don't know about you Maya or Amina around the George Floyd stuff and racism and this stuff has been going on for over 400 years, so there is no figure you can step in your journey is the journey you have done under and not focus on time so much but the deep, deep work that has to be done and you need to put in.

MAYA BREUER: I think that work is for all of us particularly in positions of power to awaken themselves to the suffering that we have been through transgenerational he in this state and time. For people who ask me what do I do for welcomes of for people of color, I encourage them to feel, to move through it with breath and movement and do some form of creative expression and it could be drawing, art, dance.
Get up and dance because it is easy and I went to state this but this is such a beautiful, necessary, powerful work. Can't have systemic change, evolution without personal, individual change the top I'm a white woman here in New York City, a 16+ year yoga teacher feeling so much come up, struggling to articulate support and alignment as an ally, feel called to seek a new approach as we move forward and be led to explore trauma yoga practices, trainees, community of support to guide myself and each other to help process this arising within and empower us to create a new.

Thank you for your spirit and wisdom. Want to say namaste and we honor you for your willingness to step into the circle with us to really change what has to be changed so we can step into a new culture here in America.

Go ahead Amina what you are speaking about transgenerational trauma.

AMINA NARU: First I would like to address a comment because we have so many of our white allies reaching out and feeling like they really want to do something and you know I have been speaking with folks and just copy them reach out to their white friends and to speak to their white communities, because the first thing that people want to do is reach out or dive into the black experience, what were feeling, however navigating this, how are you doing in that sense, which is great and appreciated, but the work has to start in that community amongst white folks with white folks and that's my personal opinion.

MAYA BREUER: I agree but I think white folks may need to take a look at some of the issues that we've had so there's always a way to go to someone who is in the business and say what are the things that have concerns for you, how have you been treated. I'm discriminated against every day and now I'm in my home more than out but that's how my life has been so when I share that with my white friends there so surprised, you know, but I think they do need as much education from us because they haven't walked in black shoes or yellow brown shoes. They are coming fast and furious, so I'm a sensitive person. You have any techniques to identify with the energy you feel?

Do you know of a source obviously someone close or connected to? Lacking is not wanted but what could you suggest?

PAMELA EGGLESTON: Blocking. I'm going to recognize the sensitive person is an end And blocking is not an option always had to, in my opinion, go with him. What is going on with a new. And not to denigrate yourself being sensitive or an empath how are you reacting to this person that you don't necessarily want to block? What is rising up for you?

In this always goes back to what ever traumas customers you are dealing with, whatever pleases you may be working with in dealing with this person that you may not want to block so that if you can shift action with the person's energy is it will be different.

Of course this is a practice so you can shift immediately this will have a. So if your spouse is really working your nerves and you've been in the house with your spouse for four months and this person is somebody you love and they are bumping up against you, how do you shift your reaction to their stuff because it is their stuff? So if you are empathic, sensitive and your emotions are like very on edge, and I think a lot of us are feeling this energy, I think a lot of us are, all you can do is focus on your energy using the breath work, using moving and for me sometimes it's a more rigorous Oslo practice and sometimes it is me being still and sometimes it is not in us enough practice or doing something else in a more rigorous type of practice and really honoring and becoming anterior separately aware of yourself and your body's energy alliance and booze for you because as an empathetic and sensitive person you can feel this energy in 2020 20 to 2021 feel so crazy and different from what we have been experiencing so my heart goes out to you and I'm feeling it because I feel it every day and my practice and my contemplative work has changed as well.

MAYA BREUER: Thank you Pam. Namaste my friends and there's a question...ladies inspire me so much. I'm so passionate about my practice. I am 24 and wish to make in my career, unfortunately, when a boy's my interest in obtaining an app's annual paprika therapy I'm often met with you should choose a degree that is more useful in studying yoga because you like it. Pamela, can you speak on your journey about obtaining your MS and possible natural degree options it would be helpful in the yoga field?

Thank you ladies for showing up to the yoga community and all the wonderful ways you do.

PAMELA EGGLESTON: Thank you for that comment and I have an MS in yoga therapy and Amina does not and Amina is still successful, has contracts working in the prison system in Delaware and Florida and has a whole state of Delaware. I CHOSE TO GET MY MASTERS IN YOGA THERAPY BECAUSE IT'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO DO and you can make money doing anything you want to do and you can do what ever you want to do, it is how you do
If you listen to a lot of other yoga teachers I never believed that and I never believed that, I never received it so my experience was I'm going to go and see what I can do, if I can work with the VA and kept class, if I can work in this phase and I was doing that before I had an MS and yoga therapy.

It's about relationships and if you went to get a Masters and have the resources to do it go ahead and do it. These people are well-meaning people should get something more useful like an engineering degree but was going to sustain you went into the 21st century into the age of Aquarius? The stuff that we did 30 years ago is shifting and we feel that as yoga teachers and yoga practitioners will top is going to look and feel different and subsequently is going to be different and you have to follow what your passion is.

If you are doing it because somebody else has it he may want to reconsider but if this is something in your heart and soul and something you cannot shake the universe will align to make it happen and what I'm suggesting, sometimes you don't have to tell everybody all the stuff you are doing, you don't have to tell every visit to the thing say you are six-month in and do it the understanding that I am going to carve a niche for myself and make this work for me.

AMINA NARU: And it takes passion. You can turn your passion into service, right, you may not need to go years for a specific trade or schooling. I had no intention of being a professional yoga teacher, what ever you want to call it, I stumbled across something that changed my life and provided profound healing for me and my family.

And I just wanted to share it with people who look like me, came from the same social economic background and I struggle to afford my yoga practice as I took care of a household, family and mortgage and I just wanted to offer it to people who could not afford yoga, and it felt like an elitist type of practice and I volunteered, I started out volunteering and after six months of volunteering somebody found money to pay me an alternate time I was unemployed, collecting unemployment checks from state.

And about nine months into collecting unemployment the state of Delaware offered an opportunity to run a program for yoga mindfulness for all detention center's and it opened a whole new career for me and path of empowerment of self empowerment and to create a b impact on these communities, so it doesn't always have to be a cookie-cutter approach.

Sometimes you just have to sit with your passion and be guided by intuition and whatever comes to your higher power.

MAYA BREUER: Thank you. There are so many questions I read a few comments. I was quite struck and floored when I learned who the board was of our yoga Institute and everyone is white and it felt so contrary to the inclusive mission and philosophy and they are working on it now but this was a real eye opener.

Someone else wants to know. They are saying these women are amazing, so connected understand the big picture, brilliant. So happy I joined this session today. There are more questions but I don't want to get into questions our last three minutes we have three minutes now, tell us one thing you want to leave but the audience and I want to tell the audience we will follow up with you with your questions if they didn't get answer today.

Pamela, what is one thing you want to leave here at the yoga community saga?

PAMELA EGGLESTON: Follow your bliss according to Joseph Campbell. Follow your bliss.

MAYA BREUER: Wonderful. Amina.

AMINA NARU: I would say don't be afraid, confront the fears. There is healing and there is impact and empowerment in confronting your fears.

MAYA BREUER: Thank you and I add...listen spirit. Listen to your spiritual top it will be a great guy to you and for those of you who are really seeking support at this time retreat to spirit is here for everyone and we provided other information.

It can be a support your company moving forward, it can support your interest in becoming an ally, this is for everyone. This Retreat to Spirit is open and I thank you for joining us today Pam and Amina and let us close our communities on the by chanting. Bring your palms everyone in front of your heart and let us chant Omm.
Sean T, Chante, Chante, he's copies copies. -- Piece, peace, peace