CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

I am ready. Good afternoon everyone. Welcome, make yourself comfortable. Take a seat and take a breath. My name is Christine Marcella and I will be your moderator today. I am a lifelong practitioner of yoga. 30 your educator of yoga and a yoga therapist. In addition I am the corporate accounts manager for Yoga Alliance. We will be discussing the yoga of relationship. You will notice there will be housekeeping notes listed in the chat. The chat will be turned off but you will have an opportunity to post questions in the Q and a section as we go through this session. I am joined by the author of the yoga Institute by Gary Kraftsow. This is a mouthful. A multidimensional nature of the humans system and the corresponding multidimensional practices taught by the ancients. I will let Gary go into what that means. For those of you who may not be familiar with who Gary is, he's been a pioneer in the transition of yoga for health and healing and personal transformation for over 40 years. Not coincidentally, those are parts of the titles in some of the books he's written. He began his study in India in 1974 and received a special diploma from the yoga international in Paris, France in 1988. Please join me in welcoming our host, Gary Kraftsow.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

Thank you Christine and everybody for controlling these functions and all of you for joining. It's an honor for me to have this opportunity to speak through the Yoga Alliance network and share what I perceived in this tradition. Christine, when we spoke briefly, you asked me I think to speak a little about my background. Is that appropriate?

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

Absolutely, I think that's important.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

Briefly, because it's about the yoga and individual transformation, not about my story. I started out as a young man. When I graduated high school, I went to college and six months after I was in India. I went to college in upstate New York and I met - - and began a lifelong study of yoga. And yoga therapy. I was a gymnast in high school and I came to yoga not from the perspective of - - but I was a student of
religion. I had encountered - - teachings and I was invited to go to India with a music group who were studying Carnatic music. But I was coming to India Billy to study yoga, but not - - in particular. I thought I understood - - because I was a gymnast. But I really didn't understand. But really about what yoga saying purposes of life and the reality of change, impermanence and inevitable death. That's where I was coming from. My teacher told me right away that the purpose of yoga, traditionally, is preparing for the moment of death. That's not something I teach very often but as therapists, we teach yoga in preparation for the end-of-life. He told me this yoga tradition has been reduced in the West and even in modern India to more the structural components of yoga. Those that think about yoga, think about – practice. It's growing now and more educational. What people have reduced to a therapy structure. What I always thought it was these ancient teachers explored the mysteries of reality. Especially the nature of human consciousness. The material world and the nature of the divine when that dimension that is the on the mind, let's say. In the complex interrelationship between these three aspects of reality. Ourselves, our consciousness, material world, including our physical bodies and what's beyond the mind. They understood that our true nature is consciousness. Described as - - that's about the only descriptor. The unchanging source of true awareness, is who we truly are. But we come - - become identified with name and form and that we become identified with and attached to the things of the world. We are really unsure about who we truly are. And we are living as consciousness in a kind of complex multidimensional relationship with our physical bodies, our unchanging thoughts and emotions. With our families, community, our society. With the physical world around us. With the greater cosmos of the universe in this dimension, for lack of a better world - - word, the mysteries of life. So we have these relationships. I do train people in yoga 70 how to use refined relationships, interpersonal relationships. That's not what I'm in this title though. Our multidimensional relationship with ourselves, with our families, with our communities and the physical world we find ourselves in and the mystery of life with the divine. That's within the ancient study and they develop what I call multidimensional practices. The word I use is refine relationship. If you have an intimate relationship with a mate or parent or child, it can be good or not so good. But if you want to improve the relationship, you have to work at it. You have to make love. It's a third. You have to make it work. - - A. So we are refining our relationship with our bodies, our breaths, our emotions and thoughts. And then with each other and our future and how we want to direct our behavior in the world so we can move from now to the end-of-life and reach the end of life with a sense of gratitude and peace and maybe even curiosity about what's coming next. Rather than resentment, anger, fear and uncertainty. This is how I was taught. That this yoga science is about every dimension of who we are and my Dharma as a practitioner is to go into a deeper self understanding and refine all of my relationships. As a teacher, my job is to help the student understand how these tools can serve them in refining their relationships that are multidimensional. Eliminate sources of suffering. Realize and actualize what their innate potential is. And of course, ultimately, achieve freedom. So that we can reach the end-of-life with that sense of peace and fulfillment. So this is kind of the introduction to this topic. And so, what I want to talk about is the different tools the ancients evolved and how they fit in to this discussion of our multidimensional nature. For many people, and it wasn't my case, we enter yoga through - - practice. The way I was taught is that - - have no value on their own. The only value it has is the value it serves the petitioner when they are practicing. - - The practitioner when they are practicing. I don't know if you saw toy story, the people go way and the toys are talking to each other. It's like that. They don't have value of their own. The value is the value they afford you when you are practicing. And what the Oslo let me preface all of this, what I am speaking now, I'm speaking from the perspective of
the lineage I received. My decades of practice and teaching. But it's really from our perspective which doesn't mean everyone has to buy into this of course. This is the teaching that flow through - - to me. I was taught it's a way of cultivating a conscious relationship with my spine. Let me add and I will come back and talk about this in a moment, via the breasts. And then the rest of my anatomy. Next and shoulder tension. Hip issues. Tech net disk problems and all sorts of repetitive injuries. Not having a conscious relationship with our dysfunctional movement patterns. That means you refining your relationship with movement. That your movements follow patterns that are serving you and then you can change patterns of moving. To create a conscious relationship with your anatomy. It helps us create a conscious relationship with our spine via the to create this relationship with our spine. Then we can use through this conscious relationship, the tools to create more structural stability. More appropriate range of motion. Strengthen weak muscles. Identify and release muscles that are chronically contracted. Create more circulation to heal tissue damage. And to improve of course structural alignment. That's important. And then just overall, transform these dysfunctional movement patterns. If you think it's about the form of a posture and you're just trying to do it correctly, according to way I was taught, you're missing the point. They are mirrors to help us see what's happening in our bodies and they are means to which we can adapt postures. To gain the structural benefits we need. Of course it's not only about structure. It's a way of dividing up these complex teachings. Let me go through the components and then we will look at an integrated practice. I'm not reducing it just to structure but the main focus is one of the human structure. But we are not just a structure. Sometimes I joke is what's more important after all, your hamstrings or your liver? I've never met anybody that answered hamstrings. They are people that have hamstring attachment injuries, so they've got the pain in the butt. In that moment, they're more conscious of the hamstring. In the long run, we can think about, hamstrings is to anatomy what liver is to physiology. It's just sort of a metaphor. I've never met anyone who ultimately thinks there physiology is not just as important or more important than their anatomy. Our physical well-being will affect our longevity. Let's say at least the physiology is as important if not more important than our anatomy. The ancestral origin of this tradition, and great Yogi from South India named - - he has been known to said, to have presented yoga teachings in three stages of life. Sunrise stage, the first 40. -- 30. And in the sunset stage. In the midday stage of life, press practices are more important for our longevity and physiological well-being. They're both important and I never met a spine without a liver attached. I will talk about that multi-interrelationship in a moment. But think about your physiology. It's the practices that are so important for you to influence your physiology. If we go backwards, it's the brass that helps us make a conscious relation with our mind and the function of our anatomy. It helps us develop a conscious relationship with our physiology. Via the autonomic nervous system. Through the breath, we can affect our nervous system. When we do movement, we are transforming movement patterns. Muscular education is influencing the voluntary nervous system via the breath through movement. Our respiratory system and its relationship to the autonomic system. Which influences the functioning of our physiology. The parasympathetic regulation. If you study the field of pharmacology, you will see -- I don't know the exact percentage. Over 90 percent of pharmaceuticals prescribed to patients suffering from chronic illness are parasympathetic activators. To help parents manage symptoms of disease. Is a parasympathetic activator. We can influence and change that sympathetic -- parasympathetic dysregulation that happens with stress and other physiological conditions and create states of parasympathetic regulation or balance. So that's a big change for a lot of people. It's not just about my structure. It's more importantly about improving my digestion. About balancing my cardiovascular rhythms. About helping
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me work with my respiratory condition, especially in the time of stimulating my immune function and balancing my hormones. Good yoga practice will help us understand, not only how our lifestyle and our choices may negatively impact our physiology, but what we can do throughout our practice to actually enhance our condition and optimize our physiological well-being. And that's really the science. I would say as opposed to structure centric. - - Form centric. I'm talking in a very Western way about this of course. So then the next question is, are we just anatomy or physiologically? The next question is what's more important, your hamstring or your liver? And then the next question is what's more important, your liver or your happiness? When we have emotional conditions, it can impact our physiology. I know you Christine, you understand for example, chronic state of anxiety can be a cause or factor in irritable bowel syndrome. A chronic condition like irritable bowel syndrome can lead to a state of anxiety or depression. Everything is interrelated. I wouldn't say chronic state of anxiety will be a causal factor in inflammatory bowel disease, just to pick something in the digestive system. But it can be a compensating factor. But anxiety can be the cause of irritable bowel syndrome. Irritable bowel syndrome caused maybe by food anxiety. So we are not just a mind. Mood, emotions and feeling are the same technically, although different terms. And then our stories, our narratives. The story we tell ourselves about ourselves and the world around us. Our identity itself is a construct as we navigate and growing these biological imperatives in the context of our families and society and physical world around us. And it's made up of our emotions, our memory, conditioning, our thoughts. Our priorities and values. What we think we want to achieve in this life and how we move forward. Those thoughts and feelings are causal factors in choices in our behavior. When we go back into physiology, a lot of our choices are unconscious or addictive behavior is a factor in disease. So our lifestyle, relationships with each other are causal factors in joy or suffering. My teacher taught me that more important than that you can handstand or that you can do - - with straight legs is that you improve your relationship with your mother, while she's still alive. That's more yoga. Later on your wife, your kid, that you understand these tools of yoga are not just about your physical structure. More importantly, they're about your relationships to other human beings. Your mind and emotions. The proper field of yoga, my teacher told me, was master the mind. I came as a student of religion, I came to yoga as a student of religion. I had 20 years in deep contact with Buddhists. I was on the board of directors of the Dharma society for 20 years. So I have a deep connection to the yoga of Buddhism and the yoga of this tradition I was initiated in in the early 1970s. So we were taught this yoga science is about understanding the meaning and purpose of life. So how they we then change our emotions. How do we change our narrative? How do we work through our misunderstanding about our true nature and discover what's real and awaken to our highest potential as a human being. Tensions offered the science of chanting and meditation. Chanting is a powerful tool that can influence parasympathetic regulation, like breasts chanting is a way of linking your heart and mind to something that takes you beyond yourself. We even can listen to music to change our mood. Imagine if you're chanting something that has deep meaning that you resonate deeply with. When you chance, you are disconnecting things of suffering and create a deeper, heartfelt connection to something that has more meaning and purpose that can give you more sense of meaning and purpose. So chanting is an important part of yoga practice. In fact, I don't want to say anything inappropriate. I have a lot of respect for the Yoga Alliance. I was in the conversation in the 80s that led to the Yoga Alliance. When we were reviewing standards, I mention one thing that's not in the standards is chanting. Because every yoga tradition whether it's Orthodox, Hindu or Buddhists, chanting is a part of transformation. It means understanding the power of voice, the power of language and chanting in transformation. My teachers
teaching, chanting is fundamental. We were taught to chance. My first lessons - - is an English word for memorization. He started, first lesson. Like that until I memorized the entire text. And then I was taught - - the teachings go in and penetrate to a deeper level than just the intellect when you chant them. So it's a way of learning and then way of connecting your heart to something beyond yourself. So it's really an important part of our practice. Especially for influencing emotions and changing your narrative. Then we have the whole science of meditation. Which is fundamentally about the mind. And transforming the mind. One of the things we were taught is, a starting point my teacher said, is - -. It's deep self reflection. It's a way we can become more critically self-conscious of the patterns we are running that we are not conscious of. The conditioning that influences the way we perceive things and the way we make choices and how we act in the world. So the purpose of meditation, there are multiple purposes. - - Said we can come out of our group thing and become self-conscious of our buyers and empty ourselves of ourselves is how I would articulate that. So we can see things clearly and as they are. So we can gain that insight, we can gain knowledge and then transformed knowledge to understanding. And understanding to wisdom. So that we can discern what's really going on and what our best choices are. And that's what the science of meditation of meditation is. Meditation is like a mirror for your mind to help you understand and transform. Just like - - is a tool to cultivate a relationship with your anatomy and - - with your physiology and of course emotions. Meditation is like a mirror for your mind. It helps you understand and transform and become free. And then there's the inner teachings. It moves from the patient into what we might call for lack of a better word, Tantric yoga. These inner practices that are really designed to what I call, the heart/mind, to link the mind and our stories with our feelings and emotions and open us to devotion and love. So these Tantric inner practices that use complex symbol systems like chakras and deities and goddesses like the work I did with the Tibetans. They have a science of the a to yoga. Working with these complex symbol systems which are unfortunately not well understood. Please help us transform these inner dimensions and ultimately become free. So that's the complexity of the science. That we are not just a body. Not just a structure but a physiology. Not just physiology but our emotions. We are also our thoughts and narratives and our stories. All of that is influencing our behavior and our relationship to our families and communities. You get the idea. Then the science of yoga centers, use these tools to understand more deeply for you are. Use these tools to transform yourself so that you eliminate sources of suffering, at every level. Back pain is suffering. Irritable bowel syndrome is suffering. Anxiety is suffering. A sense of lack of meaning or purpose is suffering. Bad relationships. Resentment is suffering. All of these things are what yoga is designed to overcome so we can reach that deeper understanding of who we truly are. Actualize our highest potential and as my teacher said, get ready for end-of-life. And actually what he said, when life ends, it's not over. Not only can we reach the end of life with that joy and gratitude and like I said, maybe curiosity. But we can propel ourselves to a more auspicious births. And that's the metaphysics of that yoga tradition. Anyway, I said a lot but that's kind of the introduction. And then when you get into it, you can do a - - practice and stop. You can chant or meditate. In a separate way. But we were taught that the true science of yoga is an integrated science where we are weaving chanting, meditation and these Tantric inner practices into one practice. So everything supports everything else. It's like a good meal. When the right foods complement each other, the whole meal is better. If it's separately, you don't have the same depth and transformation, potentially. So we are taught how to weave together - - in these inter-practices to help us deepen our experience and really reap the true benefits of this complex ancient science I hope it was clear. It's kind of certified
let me say one last thing, I feel part of my Dharma that yoga is this broad science. And it works with the totality of who we are, not just one dimension.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

Yes, absolutely. Speaking about all of these different techniques we have with the - - the chanting and meditation of course. My teaching as well, these were not separate. The practice was all of them. We have segregated them much for the secularization of yoga in many different arenas. But we do have questions. And I'm going to start with someone who asked, do you have a recommendation on guiding students into chanting who may have never experienced it before? Because I do think it's important that we reintegrate these practices.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

Let me reiterate two things. One of the purposes of chanting his learning. You go to Indian middle school school, 1000 years ago, your lesson starts by chanting and memorizing when I was in India in 1974, my first lesson was - - so traditionally, chanting was used to learner knowledge. To gain knowledge. In the ancient times, there wasn't a printing press. There was an Amazon and Google and all of that. So the texts or compose in a way, they were called pneumonic devices so they can be passed on generationally. Chanting to transmit my knowledge I'm not sure if I'm speaking to mostly Americans here. All of us learn, what your first song? Then there was schoolhouse rock and singing to learn algebra and grammar. We do in our culture, chant, as a way of learning. So you just have to educate people about that. I will answer the question more directly in a moment. So we do have an experience of using music to learn. The other thing is using chanting to connect to something deeper. We don't have that as much. We have love songs. If you belong to a particular religion, they're all singing something. The chanting links the mind and heart to sources of inspiration or to the divine. So we do in our culture also have chanting for learning and chanting to link to something beyond the mind. So what we do when we share that with people, let them know it's not a weird thing from India. It's actually interwoven in our own cultures. And then to share with people, you have to start with things that are nonthreatening to them. It can be bowel sounds, it can be songs. I use chanting to help people with breathing problems. To give you an example of how simple it can be. I asked people to inhale when I chant. And then you chant and we will chant together. In healthfully right now and now exhale. So we are chanting to learn the breasts. That doesn't mean people do - - [ (chant) The real answer to the question is, you need to be trained to teach this stuff. You don't want to just make it up. There's a way to be trained how to share chanting in a meaningful, nonthreatening way that can help someone. Help them learn their exhale. Help them learn something about themselves that's important. Help them connect to God. Your job is to meet the student where they are. What they're interested in and what's assessable to them and maybe chanting will be a useful tool in their own pros and transformation.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:
Excellent. With that, there are so many questions coming in. In relation to the chanting, people want to know, which I thought you explained very well. How to get it started into their arena if it’s an arena that’s not used to the prospects of it.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

You connect new information. That’s about learning. You connect new information with something there already familiar with so they don’t feel threatened. Like that, I get it. And then you begin. Some people want to do it in the yoga worlds. You shouldn’t be attached to whatever language. I have taken people to Italy for many years over decades for retreats. When we were chanting this Italian prayer from St. Francis, people were crying. And they are Americans. So be open. Meet people where they are and begin simply.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

Someone brought up the point that both Christianity and Judeo Judaism use chanting.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

It’s a mantra.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

Allowing yourself to be with whatever resonates with you. We do have people that want to know, so many questions. Can you speak more about ideas around how practices appropriately change for the different stages of life? There are people interested in the transformation through the different stages of life.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

Thank you very much for that question. I will give you - - which is a text that means the secrets of yoga. It’s from around the ninth century. 800 A.D., that period of time. - - Said we need to adapt practice. One thing is age. There’s a difference between biological and chronological age. One thing is constitution. What the individual needs. And the other thing is interest. So isn’t just age, it’s also interest. The first stage of life which I used the metaphor, the sunrise stage of life, first 30 years or so. We are called - - it means growth and development. You see like a little infant and then they learn to walk and then they grow and get involved with activities and sports. The activities we do should support the balance, growth and development of the individual. Not just the body, but also their concentration, attention, their discipline. So the practices should support growth and development. And – taught in the sunrise stage of his life, that led to - - yoga. For training kids so they grow in a balanced way and then - - which means they cultivate power. When you think about athletics, most of the professional
athlete except maybe PGA golfers are in the sunrise stage of their life. The youngest which is like women’s gymnastics, they can be like 14. Usually there between 18-30 let's say. That's where there's maximum physical power. The other is skateboarding. World champions can be under 10 years old. That was just a side, so just ignore my deranged mind. But it's about growth and cultivating power. Midday stage which is called -- which means stability and protection. I'm grown and I'm balance and now I want to stay stable. Structural stability so my neck doesn't go out when I'm on a bumpy road. So I need to be stable. But also physiological, like immunity. And psychological stability because things will change and I need to be stable in these challenging times. So we can continue to produce in the world, support our families. That's the midday stage. The longest stage. So sunrise, growth and development. Midday, protected that stability and then Sunset stage of life which is variable. Let's say 75, into the 80s. For such healthy, normal people. Then there's -- the endgame. How to resolve so there's no resentment. Youth taken care of your family and your material affairs. You can turn inward to -- to realize your true nature. Self-realization. And then -- first word is resolved everything, realize who you truly are and then merge back with source. So the end of life is the last part of course. Although my teacher said I should start doing meditation on the end of life when I was 19 and 20 back then. Because he said the moment of death is uncertain. But the teaching is that in the Sunset stage of life. You're not distracted so you can turn inward. Realize your true nature and get ready to merge back with source from once you came. That's a classic idea, the three stages of life. Is that clear? All of these are much more complex. I'm sharing them very briefly.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:
I want to get to one, it's going to revolve around a much longer answer. You mentioned the Contra practice.

GARY KRAFTSOW:
When I was a young man in my 20s and living in India and studying -- contra lineage. I was studying with a great master. His tradition was -- it popularized in yoga by -- successor. I was living back then in what's called -- the tradition was powerful. Then I encountered the Tibetan Buddhists. When I was young, I moved to Maui in 1976. And I decided when I got there -- I was so excited when I got there. What I saw what was happening in Maui, it was some form of sex therapy. Wait a second, this is not the type of therapy I learned. It's yoga, it's not a different tradition. It's a continuation of the tradition that you will say correctly, Tantric yoga. Its antecedents are ancient. They say the earliest references are found in the -- so really all. But the actual appeared in A.D. So they are Tantric texts. So it is a form of yoga but offers specialized, it develops specialized symbol systems. Like the chocolate emerged in the context of Tantric yoga. In that period of time that Buddhists were also growing. There were a series of practices that used techniques like -- this is a longer story as you said. -- Practice the whole science of deity yoga is a Tantric yoga tradition. In the Tibetan lineages, there's lots of deity yoga. So they're just specialized practices. -- That's all part of what evolved in the. What we would call Tantric yoga. Here's the thing, there's no yoga in the 20th century that hasn't filtered through Tantric yoga. No one can skip that and go back 500 BC or whatever it potentially was. What comes through today filtered through hundreds of years of Tantric yoga. But when you stay, you are inferring specialized practices.
CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

When you talk about these things, we have people here from Poland and other places who were asking about the relationship enchanting and religion. The anger towards this maybe from the Catholic church. One of the things I learned and I find very important that someone else mentioned, chanting isn't just about the words. It's about the intonation and the sound because those sounds are sacred and they have a residence that physically affect the body. One of our friends asked about, even English words have lost their power. We see in the media, the power of words is just as important as the breath. Can you related to that?

GARY KRAFTSOW:

I love this question. Can we spend another six hours together? My work has been so much about yoga therapy. But my own inner work is really in this field that this question. So first I want to say that all world religions have processes of self investigation and transformation through which practitioners can understand themselves, purify themselves. Let me say first, purify themselves, understand themselves and create a deeper living connection or establish a living relationship with the divine. However it's expressed in any tradition. That's true in the Catholic Church, and the Jewish synagogue, and the Islamic mosques in the Hindu Temple. They're not the same path exactly, but they all have certain consistent elements. Purification, deep self investigation and then linking the heart to something bigger than oneself. That's true in all religions. A lot of times there's anger because there's a lack of understanding. A yoga teacher should never be trying to convert a client to what they believe. There's a Chinese expression that I always loved, which says, that nothing that enters through the front gate can be a family treasure. It means the treasures are already buried in your hearts. You don't have to go to India to learn this. Your job is to discover what's precious to you. And then yoga helps you link to that thing that's most precious to you. My job is to help them uncover what kind of chanting all speak to their heart and help them learn that. If you impose it on someone, then you will have this reaction. If yoga so someone someone says, yoga is from the devil, then they don't understand. - - Was a Catholic priest, but he was an amazing human being who understood and wrote books. So he was a profound mind. Where there's ignorance, there's us and them. Today we see fragmentation like you were saying because of media. We construct an identity and then we are attracted to people who agree and see the things the way we do and that we demonize or feel hostility to think differently than us. That's happening even now. Yoga is about recognizing the underlying unity. You have to walk up the mountain on your own path and you shouldn't judge anyone else's path. So chanting is assessable to anybody of any culture. But they should chant in the language they want to chant. Your job as a teacher is to help them realize what resonates in their hearts.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

There's a question about who is qualified to teach chanting? I don't know if you need a qualification but I will defer that to you.
GARY KRAFTSOW:

If I study - - I'm not qualified to even practice yoga. And I've been practicing for 45 years. Teaching and I didn't start to train teachers until my teacher told me to train teachers in the early 1980s. If you're initiated into a process, either by a teacher - - we think of our church, who is the priest? The priest is ordained by an organization. And then the priest can offer communion. They've been initiated. As a priest it means ordination. There is a process of being initiated to teach for things. But there are individuals who wake up and who know things and teach them. My teacher said I initiated you to teach others. Also to train teachers, including chanting. I went the old school way. My teacher said yes, do it. But then he said, be creative. It's your job to learn more can help them find chanting that speaks to their hearts. So I would say if you feel motivated, seek out a teacher. Don't fake it. But if you have inside inspiration, trust your heart. And it will be effective for that. I don't think you should disqualify yourself but you should be respectful of the teachings and the people you're working with.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

The last part of that question was basically about the mantra and the sound. The speech itself. (Laughs) I know we are running out of time.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

My teacher is a very pragmatic guy. He's gone now of course. People used to ask them this question. - - Is a special language and has special power. You know what he said? If you believe it. There's a story about this scholar sitting at the banks of the river and there's a little island and he heard some diet chanting, and he was mispronouncing it. A guy goes to him and says forgive me, I just want to correct your pronunciation. You can say it's in the pronunciation. And my teacher says it is if you have a feeling for it. If it resonates with you. But then here's the story of a master that mispronounces and he's a master. I wouldn't take that too literally. There is power in sounds but it's also in your relationship with sounds. It's not just the sound but the decades, centuries of people who have been resonate with that sound. You're tapping into something that's real. These chants help you link -- I will say one last thing. Creation in all world traditions is from the call so plank through the subtle plane into manifestation. The yoga practice is we return to source. These chants open us up to that subtle plane. Pronunciation is important, but intention is more important.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

Thank you Gary. We have time for just a couple more questions. I want to get to where you were talking about - - and the how to weave these practices together. A couple people working with elders in the sunset stages of life are wondering if there is something they can focus on over the age of 70? What kind of practice is recommended for that?
This is a big question again. I want to respect what I was taught by giving first the classic answer. And that I will give you concrete things. Classically, you want to be careful with the breath and be trained to do it appropriately. When someone is fragile, which is often the case with seniors -- some people who aren't seniors are also fragile. That you understand what you're doing. First thing is not to force the breath. Holding the breath in after inhale. Keeping that at a minimum and make sure XL is equal to or longer than that. And then lengthen inhale and legs and exhale until they reach a point where there comfortably doing their maximum. And stay a number of breasts in that comfortable maximum. Just that can change their lives. Just becoming aware of the breath, gently lengthening and keeping that length for a dozen press and then returned to normal. That would be safe and really valuable for them. I guess you could see my hands are on my heart. Doesn't have to be the heart, it can just be like this. And then open the arms. A lot of times when they're older, they lose the elasticity in their theoretic system. That interferes with their breathing. Just inhale and open the arms and tail and close their arms and maybe put hands on the heart. Do that a few times and then do this to lengthen the breath. That would be very useful for seniors, and safe. Just an example.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

Thank you Gary. One last one. I don't want to go over. We will need to expand this into a second session because I have so many questions for you.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

Grateful and honored to have this opportunity, so thank you.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

Someone has asked, are there any contraindications related to the COVID-19 infection? Especially healthcare workers, a lot are feeling this intense fear of breathing. They don't want to take that deep breaths.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

When this started, for me, it took until the end of March. That I started, which I had never done before, a series of live stream 30 minute practices. One was on meditation to face these challenges. And then the others were specifically for this crisis. To increase self-confidence and to build energy and increased respiratory fitness and the other side to manage stress and to find peace and stillness. Those classes are online and their 30 minutes only in their live stream and are available. You can access that through they address very specifically this question. The only contraindications are the same. Don't force the breath. Don't make holding the inhale longer than the exhale. And don't make the length of inhale be longer than a tale. Make sure that exhale is as long or longer than inhale. Second point, make sure XL is as
long or longer of any holding the breath. You can stimulate immune function, stimulate your promote relaxation. Call to your and find peace. I hope you all seek out education about breath. And if you're interested in what I'm talking about, just look for the online classes.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

All of that information is in our chat so you can find the links to that. Please go to the chat, save those links. Gary, thank you so much for being with us today. Please come back.

GARY KRAFTSOW:

Thank you for the honor.

CHRISTINE MARCELLA:

This could go on forever so we would love to have you come back and expand on this. We had so many questions we didn't get to. Thank you for your questions and thank you for participating. We appreciate you all so much.