Yoga, Music, and the Science of Wellness: A Special Conversation with Lori Lowell Transcript

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Yoga Benefits and Podcast Introduction

Daily yoga cultivates strength, flexibility and balance while reducing stress and anxiety, right? So have you ever taken a yoga class and you've walked out and you said, oh my God, I feel so good.

I don't know what it is, but why all of a sudden do I feel so good? I feel uplifted, I feel. And you don't really know why. And it's because we've improved your posture.

It. Yoga supports joint health. It boosts circulation mentally. It enhances focus and emotional stability and resilience. And that's all happening while you're in a yoga class.

Welcome to Doctor Talks, the podcast where every episode leads to a healthier you. Join us as we navigate the world of optimal health, uncovering groundbreaking strategies to conquer chronic disease.

In each episode, we'll bring you the latest insights from leading health experts, medical innovators, and wellness warriors. If you are seeking to transform your health journey, or if you're looking for answers to burning questions, you've come to the right place.

Get ready to unlock the secrets of lifelong health and vitality. This is Doctor Talks, real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most.

Welcome to the functional edge. I'm Doctor Julia Ward, and this is where science meets real world strategies for living healthier, sharper and stronger.

From uncovering hidden environmental toxins to unlocking peak performance and mental clarity. We cover it all. Ready to take control of your health and thrive.

Let's dive in. So I have Lori Lowell here. She is a trailblazer in the fitness and wellness industry with over 30 years of experience. That includes owning and operating ten Gold's Gyms and serving in the national group, fitness director for Gold's Gym International.

Guest Background and Drishti Beats Origins

Her passion for movement and wellness led her to co-founder HD beats, a music production and performance company, where she blends yoga and music into transformative experiences, attaining the prestigious white 500 certification.

Lori has developed a unique yoga teacher training model that empowers individuals at all stages of their yoga journey through live and online programs, as well as workshops at global yoga and music festivals.

Laurie's lifelong dedication to fitness, wellness and creativity is evident in her innovative approach to group fitness programing and her ability to inspire teams and students alike.

Her commitment to sharing and transformative power of yoga and music continues to resonate, making her a leading voice in the global yoga and wellness community.

Welcome. Wow. That's that's some shoes to fill there. Thanks, Dave. Really no experience having experienced your yoga and music festival in a number of occasions.

They are really transformative and amazing. So. Yeah. So thank you. Thanks. It's always a pleasure to have you in one of our sessions for sure. And I love coming up and giving you adjustments and assistance.

I think that's awesome. Well, can you share your personal journey into yoga and music and like, what inspired you to combine these two, two passions and to create music specifically for your yoga classes?

Sure. Well, my journey into yoga began as a personal pursuit to elevate my physical and spiritual wellness. So with a background in fitness and this lifelong passion for dance and music, yoga, yoga became this natural progression for me.

It was a practice that harmonize my body, my mind, my movement, my creativity, and it really resonated way with me. And also my husband, my husband and I.

Jeremy, we started our true yoga journey back in 2006, and in 2012, we fully embraced yoga, discovering the transformative power. On multiple levels. I mean, it was just unbelievable how much we experienced.

We started our own yoga teacher training journey, first with a couple of different 200 hour training programs, and then we embarked on a month long training in Bali for our 300 hour yoga teacher training.

So today, we're both are 8500 our teachers. E stands for experienced and Right, stands for Registered Yoga Teachers. Our company, Drishti Beats, is a registered yoga school.

Okay. So music has always been central to our lives. So we're musicians. And creating music for our yoga classes felt like an organic extension of our passions.

So through Drishti Beats, we found a way to blend soulful, rhythmic music with yoga, which enhanced the flow of practice and creating more immersive experiences for our students.

Yeah. Agreed. Yeah. So what makes this whole process even stronger is that we produce our own music, for our classes. And yoga. Yoga is a feeling. A yoga, a yoga class is a journey of contrasts.

It's a woven fabric of experience. So music to yoga, we believe, takes one to a higher level of consciousness. So. Yeah.

Yoga Teacher Training and Mind-Body Connection

And so teachers in yoga have a choice. Don't don't use music at all. In a class which takes away from the overall experience in our opinion. Simply just use any music and put it in the background and let it just be there with no connection or.

Use music that resonates with you, that helps you create a journey through the class that you teach, that connects the movement to the breath and to the music in a mindful way.

That's awesome. So yeah, so that answers partly my next question, which is what is unique about, your approach to training, yoga instructors and how do you emphasize the connection between yoga practice and the 11 major systems of the body, and maybe back up and explain first, what are the the 11 major systems, of the body according to yoga?

Well, they are the 11 major systems of the body, all your different organs and all the way that they function. So our training program stands out by focusing on the art of science, of yoga.

And 11 major systems of the body is part of that. Our teachers become artists, so they are yoga artists putting. And what they're doing is they're painting and dancing images of movement that draws this beautiful picture.

So before I get to the 11 systems in the body, and how it connects, because the science of yoga is really important.

But, before I get into that, there's no such thing as a yoga instructor.

Okay? We are yoga teachers. So if a yoga teacher calls themselves a yoga instructor, they have completely missed the point of what it is to be in yoga.

Instructors teach a skill, teachers impart knowledge, and there's a huge difference. So with our training, we're just not teaching yoga poses. We are incorporating how, how to incorporate yoga and yogic thinking into our classes and bring that to teach our students how to incorporate that into everyday life.

So to become a competent, knowledgeable, and beautiful yoga teacher, you not only have to learn the asanas, which are the poses, you have to learn front of Yama breath and the different breaths.

You have to learn the Yamas and Yamas, which is our practices of how we live life. We emphasize a deep understanding of anatomy and physiology and how yoga directly impacts the body's different systems.

So from the circulatory to the nervous system, we discuss all the different systems. And so we also discuss the subtle body systems, the chakras, you know, the the chakras, the seven chakras in your body, the coaches, the nods, the river flow and how to coach and how to guide and how to adjust our students with hands on technique.

So we teach our students how to build the entire process of being and yoga. And look, it's your body. It's the only place you have to live. And how many of us know nothing about our anatomy?

I mean, there's people that really don't even know what their gastrocnemius muscle is. You know, their calf muscle. There's a lot of people that really don't understand how the body moves together as one, and how all the systems work together.

And so, of course, we're not doctors, but we do teach the anatomy and physiology of the body and how it works. And how to connect the dots. And that's a part.

So, we, we give lectures on, on, on all kinds of things meditation, sound healing, how to be in yoga, how to become spiritual. We want our students to know and we want our students to think.

And our trainees that are in our teacher training, they need to learn to teach with intention aligning. They need to understand alignment. They need to understand aligning movement with breath and body and awareness.

So that's what makes us different. We want our students to be confident and understanding the body and how it works and how to flow. That's awesome. So how does yoga enhance the mind body connection, and why is this connection so essential for overall health and well-being?

Great question. Well, you know that everybody says I need more yoga in my life. I need to meditate. Meditation is really big right now. Learning to have a spiritual space in your life is so important to everything.

But, you know, yoga has been around for a long time. Yoga truly strengthens the mind body connection, and the reason why is it encourages. When you practice yoga, you encourage mindfulness through movement, breath, and awareness.

So this connection allows us to tune into our physical and emotional states. And what happens is this fosters a balance and self-awareness. A strong mind body connection improves emotional resilience.

It enhances decision making and reduces stress. All the things in functional medicine that you talk about. Yeah it's essential because it helps us move from living reactively to living intentionally.

Music, Nervous System, and Yoga Flow

Yeah. And it and that improves our overall health and well-being. So we have our students to journal to write down

their attachments, things that they would find difficult to let go of and from there, we invite them to let go of something, even if it's just a little bit to create space for more yogic thinking or their meditation.

Like just like ten less minutes on your phone a day and Zen stillness to find for meditation. You know how far that can take you? Yeah. Yeah. That's awesome. That's awesome.

How do you create music that complements and enhances the yoga experience? And what role does it play in calming the nervous system or improving focus?

Oh wow. So music for yoga should flow seamlessly with the classes energy guiding the students, the practitioners through your journey. So we drishti beats.

We compose tracks with mindful rhythms, with soothing tones and uplifting beats to sync with each phrase of practice. So music is our partner when we're teaching, it works with us.

So music calms the nervous system by activating what it activates the parasympathetic response, which helps reduce what cortisol levels. All this stuff you talk about on a daily basis and it promotes relaxation, but it also deepens focus, allowing participants to immerse themselves in the present moment.

So think about this when you go out to dance, what happens? You get up on the dance floor. You listen to the music and you start moving to the beat of the week right?

And of course, some people move to the beat of the music and have better moves than others, but people are, and, you know, inspired to move to the beat of the music.

Yeah. So that's beautiful. You dance and you and you feel the beat. And some, of course, do it better than others. But if you didn't have, music behind, like, an, TV series or a commercial, it it wouldn't be as impactful, right?

Yeah. And that's why we use it. Music not only creates emotions and feelings, but it takes you to a higher level of consciousness. And so what's strange about this is that many yoga teachers do not use music to their advantage.

It just sits in the background. Yeah. And so we are very committed to creating this music to yoga movement connection. And it really makes a difference.

So if you don't like music you are not for yoga and for the yoga teacher training, that's for sure. We teach our students to create their own music playlists for their own classes that, and then they just continue to create movement and create space for their students that resonates with them, that music resonates with you, Julia, and you play it and you talk or you teach.

It's going to resonate with the student because you're you're exuding your emotions and your feelings. And that's what makes a fabulous yoga artist. That's great.

Yeah. So from a physiological and a mental health perspective, what are the most significant benefits of daily yoga practice? And can you share some of these examples about how these benefits manifest over time?

So daily daily yoga cultivates strength, flexibility and balance while reducing stress and anxiety. Right. So have you ever taken a yoga class and you've walked out and you said, oh my God, I feel so good.

I don't know what it is, but why all of a sudden do I feel so good? I feel uplifted, I feel. And you don't really know why. And it's because, we've improved your posture.

It. Yoga supports joint health. It boosts circulation. Mentally. It enhances focus and emotional stability and resilience. And that's all happening while you're in a yoga class.

And oftentimes students will report better sleep. They'll report reduced chronic pain. And they'll report a much more

positive feedback. Outlook, regular practice, because it reduces symptoms of anxiety and increases energy levels, it builds this prevention, it builds a really pro that profound sense of inner calm and so, you know, many times people will say, I don't have time to get to my workout and I don't have time to take yoga because I need to do my strength training in my cardio. And that's just a bunch of hooey.

You know, much of our society really feels, it feels that way. They can't get to a yoga class or like, you know, or yoga is too easy. And they really don't understand the power of yoga.

So I've owned ten Gold's Gyms throughout my career. Husband and I still run Gold's Gyms and think about this Gold's Gym, the stigma of serious fitness and strength, the number one brand name in the industry, and then yoga.

It's been around for 5000 years and it's certainly not going anywhere for a reason. Now imagine this. We've we've, perfectly we have a perfect blended platform of how to get our Gold's Gym members to immerse not only in strength training, but into spirituality and yoga.

And that's power. Yeah. So they've experienced this differently.

Daily Yoga Benefits and Stress Regulation

And it's it's really amazing what what's coming back to us is people really understanding that from a mental health perspective, from a physiological, perspective, the benefits are just huge because they're able to become stronger, they're able to become more flexible, and our members are really benefiting from the fact that we, you know, immerse and bring in so much yoga into the space.

So it's really about teaching people about the. So I answer your question that that makes sense to you. Did okay. Yeah. That just brings me to my next question.

Is that okay? Can you elaborate on how yoga helps regulate the nervous system, particularly the parasympathetic response, and why this is critical for managing stress?

So yes, yoga definitely activates the parasympathetic nervous system PNS through breathwork, mindful movement and meditation. Ujjayi victorious Ujjayi pranayama.

Nasal breath is really, really important. In our classes we teach, vinyasa flow style vinyasa directly means to place something in a special way. So we're moving and we're placing things in a in a very special way.

And we're only utilizing, for the most part, we use many different breaths, but for the most part, throughout our vinyasa flow, we're teaching parasympathetic breath, in through the nose and out through the nose.

A calming breath. And that is, often called let the rest and digest system counteracts the sympathetic nervous system or the, fight or flight, which we call it the fight or flight response lowering heart rate.

And it really is stress hormones. Another thing that you talk about all the time says, yes, exactly. But practice is like this. Deep diaphragmatic breathing or forward bends, you know, leaning forward, folding yourself in half calms the nervous system, making yoga a really effective tool for managing stress and improving digestion.

Enhancing emotional regulation. Right. And so what I find so silly is that yoga is the only movement fitness related class that teaches breath, except for Pilates.

But most of us don't breathe correctly, right? When have you gone to a strength training class or a cycle class where the instructor, not the teacher, but the instructor is speaking to breath?

So we miss that. So silly fitness instructor don't call breath because they're not trained to so very true. Yeah, yeah. Many people struggle with sleep issues.

How does yoga practice contribute to better sleep and and are there specific poses or practices you recommend for this purpose? So yoga improves sleep by calming the mind.

Releasing physical tension and promoting relaxation. However, there are power yoga classes. There are really hot yoga classes, so it's important to be mindful of when you choose to do certain types of yoga.

We don't, we don't prefer yoga, power type of yoga classes in the evening or late or late at night or an hour or two before you go to bed. But restorative poses, before sleep, such as child's pose.

Bella Sana. I do you know, a child's pose is weird. Down on the floor, your knees are to the outer edges of your mat. You touch your toes and you sit back and you reach your arm forwards.

Or you stack your hands and place your forehead on your hand in an egg position. Child's pose. Balance. Yeah. Or something like legs up the wall, which we call the Partita Karani means waterfall, legs up the wall where you actually just get your behind right up against the wall and you lift your legs.

That's a great pose to do for releasing physical tension. Before bed. Explaining bound angle pose, which is called Sukh tabata konasana, where you lie down on your back and you put the soles of your feet together and your knees open wide, they're particularly effective.

These poses, breathing poses like Nadi Shodan and, alternate nostril breathing where you take your index finger and your middle finger and you put it up your third eye center, you plug your left nose, nostril, breathe in through your right leg, both nostrils open up the left, breathe out through the left, and then alternate.

Inhale through the left leg. Both sides. Exhale through the right. Inhale through the right leg. Both sides. Exhale through the left. And as you do this over and over again, if you're in bed and you can't sleep, it can help put you to sleep for sure.

That's good to know. Your body showed an alternate nostril breathing. Alternate nostril breathing. I will keep that in mind the next time I wake up in the middle of the night, and that can seem to get back to sleep because my mind is racing.

So, you know, gentle stretches before bed, or micro bend in the knee. But, you know, if you have your legs out and stand extended in front of you and you bend your knees and you lean forward, things like that will help.

And indicated for a good night's sleep. But yoga has a lot to offer for enhancing street sleep. Just doing yoga during the day could potentially enhance your sleep at night.

That's great. So how do you think music contributes to the healing process during yoga practice? Are there specific tones, rhythms, or instruments you incorporate to align with the body systems?

So music creates this healing atmosphere, which, as I've said before, evokes emotions and soothes the mind and syncing with bodily rhythms.

Sleep, Healing Music, and Body Systems

So we often use, soft percussive beats, calming melodies or harmonic tones to compliment yoga instrument like Tibetan singing bowls, flutes, string that resonate with the body's natural vibrations.

This promotes alignment and reduces tension, and I won't get too deep in it. But there's all kinds of Hertz frequencies used in yoga, and that can be very helpful to create a healing atmosphere for a vinyasa flow type class.

We start easy with easy, soulful, deep music to get our students prepared for what's ahead. And then we build a little more power for the traditional sun salutations movements.

If you taken a yoga class, you know what Sun Salutations is. And these are sequences to music to warm up the body, to prepare for what's ahead. And then we'll bring it back down for some balance poses and, and then we'll bring it back up for the warrior poses, which are the antagonists.

You know, they're going to rule the entire class. So there's all these peak poses that could happen. So we use music to take people through a series of feelings and emotions and power or less power to create, a physical experience.

So if the music is powerful and we're speaking to powerful movement, powerful poses, the music is going to help the students go deeper into those poses using their breath.

So it's really important that we we learn how, to use the different types of music that's available to us for a yoga class. There's so much to talk about.

This is a whole lecture in itself. When you get into hurts and, and, you know, and so your sounds and that's just a whole nother, nother space that we could go down a huge rabbit hole, but we layer our music on top of the experience to enhance the journey and the feeling.

That's amazing. Of course you're going to feel better. Yeah, yeah. Well, when teaching about the 11 major systems of the body, how do you help students and instructors understand their interconnectedness?

And the impact that yoga can have on each? Well, for our students, you can only imagine unless they've had a lot of training. Anatomy and physiology can really freak them out.

So, we emphasize experiential learning. So where students feel the effects of poses on specific systems. So within our yoga teacher training, each chapter has a different series of poses.

And those series of poses have a direct relationship to the anatomy or the physiology. So, we talk about, breaks. For example, if we were talking about inversions, getting upside down, which demonstrates to improve circulation.

But when we're talking about a twist pose, a pose that you get into some kind of twist, it will stimulate digestion. So each time we talk about, the anatomy, the anatomy of a pose we get directly relates to what's happening to the system, whether it be digestion or whether it be circulation.

And that's how we make it a little bit more accessible. Because when, when our students to walk away with knowledge. And so they're not just sitting with the anatomy, coloring, book coloring, different parts of, of the body.

We've all seen that anatomy coloring book in our youth. So it's not like that. We really put them in a pose and talk about the anatomy of what's feeling.

So they can they can feel it. Right. So, you know, we have visual aids and interactive discussions, which deepens the understanding of how these systems work together.

So we explore yoga on everything from the endocrine system to the nervous system. And so the students gain this practical insight that they can apply to their teaching.

So we want them to graduate with knowledge that it could be knowledge and competent. And we have a complete section of anatomy analysis of the poses in each chapter.

And they walk away with a complete guide, a referred to, you know, after their training and, you know, have a strong understanding of yoga and anatomy and the body mechanics of anatomy.

Yeah. That's fascinating. Really fascinating. I had no idea that, different poses are going to have different effects on your anatomy, on your organ systems.

Right. That's you know, we take our body for granted, you know, and we need to do the work to understand it. And I think, no offense, I think we can blame our education system for that because they're just not really, you know, in school, they're really not teaching you about your body.

I don't mean to offend, but so many people have no idea. Yeah. And at the same time, what is yoga? It's about setting yourself free, getting in touch with your inner self.

Reflect, becoming strong and flexible and joyful. It's about leasing endorphins in a mindful way. It's all about that, and it's our body. It's our anatomy and physiology plays a huge role.

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. If someone wanted to experience a Drishti beats, yoga class, where could they go? Well, let's see, we have an entire online platform.

So drishti d r I s h t I means focus. So beats refers to our music. So we created this company called Drishti Beats and we have a website Drishti beats.com.

We have a full on demand platform where you can take classes. You can also find some of our classes on YouTube where you'll see us teaching with our violin player.

Me teaching alone. My husband Jeremy, and I teaching side by side. So there. And, maybe taking one of our festival classes, this year in 2025.

Finding Drishti Beats and Closing Remarks

In January, we're curating the, the, the Oasis Lounge, the wet Oasis Lounge on the Groove Cruise, which is, music, dance Cruise, which should be a lot of fun.

We're taking over the entire front of the ship and providing sound healing and meditation and all kinds of fun yoga classes. And we have beautiful spiritual house and world house deejays playing sets in the evening and lots of downtempo, chill music.

So there's a place where you can find us in October, October 3rd, three, ten of 2025 we will be hosting, Drishti Beats Yoga Retreat in Bali, so you can find that on our website as well.

And then we're on all music platforms. So if you just look up Drishti Beats on, Spotify will show up and you can listen to our music. That's awesome. That's great. Thank you so much.

I really it's been an honor to have you on the Functional Edge podcast. I really appreciate your time and all this information. It's been really enlightening.

So it's an honor to be here. You know, it's it's a pleasure. And, I'm always look forward to working with you and perhaps seeing you in our next class.

Yes, that would be. Thank you, everyone, for joining me on the Functional Edge. I hope today's episode gave you fresh insights and practical tools to level up your life.

If you found value and what you heard, don't forget to hit the Subscribe and Share button. And share the podcast with someone who needs it and leave a review.

It's the best way to support our mission of bringing powerful health solutions to more people. For more resources, updates, and behind the scenes content, please visit Doctor Julia ward.com.

And until next time, stay strong. Stay healthy and keep living on the functional edge. Thank you. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health.

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