**CommuniTEA Yoga – Session #5 – Living from the Heart**

**& the Benefits of Yoga for our Cardiovascular System**

**Yoga as a Stress Outlet**

One of yoga’s clearest benefits to the heart is its ability to relax the body and mind. Emotional stress can cause a cascade of physical effects, including the release of hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, which narrow your arteries and increase blood pressure. The deep breathing and mental focus of yoga can offset this stress.

**Yoga as Heart Booster**

Beyond off-loading stress, practicing yoga may help lower blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood glucose levels, as well as heart rate, making it a useful lifestyle intervention. One study has shown that blood measurements and waist circumference—a marker for heart disease—improved in middle-aged adults with metabolic syndrome who practiced yoga for three months.

Another study has shown that slow-paced yoga classes twice a week reduced the frequency of atrial fibrillation episodes in patients with that condition. In another report, patients with heart failure who went through an eight-week yoga program showed improvement in exercise capacity and quality of life. They also had lower blood levels of markers for inflammation, which contributes to heart disease.

**Affirmations: *The only path worth walking is the one guided by the heart…***

* With every breath I take, I am sending, love and gratitude to every single cell in my body.
* With every breath I take, I am sending, love, gratitude and healing to my heart!
* I release any fear/grief/bitterness (fill in your own…) that I have stored in my heart!
* Try random acts of kindness, see how this makes you feel

**Here are a few ideas to practice each day:**

* Practice 3-part or even inhale/exhale breathing
* If you are feeling low energy, do a few Breaths of Joy, or Lion pose
* Practice Padma mudra while breathing into your heart centre

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to seeing you next week!

Namaste,

*Lynne*

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Phone: 250-760-0301 (or call the Seniors Connect Centre and leave your name and number, I’ll call you back.