



Strengthen Your Mental Health on Your Mat

Ben and I turned to Yoga, meditation, sound healing, and other holistic practices when we were both struggling. Losses and hardships had built up to the point that neither of us knew where else to turn, and at times, getting through the day seemed difficult. But, slowly and with increasing grace, we took small steps to heal. It could be as simple as two more minutes of quiet meditation or one more Downward Dog, but after some time, we felt stronger, more at peace, and safer.

So many community members have shared stories about how their time at Thermal Horizons has given them back a part of themselves they thought they'd lost or maybe had not even discovered yet. This is the dream that Ben and I had when opening our doors in June of 2022: to invite the community to go inward and find a place within us that is peaceful, content, joyful, open, aware, and present. It all started as a personal journey for us!

On October 10, we celebrate **World Mental Health Day**. Within our community and beyond, we'd love to share how the holistic practice of Yoga and meditation can complement traditional therapies and promote overall well-being. If you or someone you know is struggling, please consider sharing how just one visit to Thermal Horizons might be the first small step needed to start a healing journey. The benefits are endless, but here are a proven few:

- **Stress Reduction:** Yoga incorporates relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, and mindfulness. These practices activate the body's relaxation response, reducing the production of stress hormones like cortisol.
- **Mind-Body Connection:** Through physical postures (asanas), we become more aware of our bodily sensations and emotions. This increased awareness can help in identifying and managing emotional issues.
- **Improved Mood:** The physical activity of yoga releases endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. Combining physical movement, controlled breathing, and relaxation techniques can elevate our mood and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- **Enhanced Self-Awareness:** Yoga encourages self-reflection and self-awareness. We gain insights into our mental and emotional states by paying attention to thoughts and emotions during practice. This self-awareness is a valuable tool for managing mental health issues.
- **Strengthening Resilience:** Yoga teaches perseverance and patience. Holding challenging poses and progressing in practice can boost self-confidence and resilience, helping us cope better with life's ups and downs.
- **Regulated Nervous System:** Yoga can help regulate the autonomic nervous system, balancing the sympathetic (fight-or-flight) and parasympathetic (rest-and-digest) branches. This balance promotes emotional stability and reduces symptoms of anxiety and panic disorders.
- **Improved Sleep:** Many people with mental health issues struggle with sleep disturbances. Yoga's relaxation techniques can enhance sleep quality by reducing insomnia and promoting a restful night's sleep.
- **Social Support:** Group classes can provide a sense of community and support. This social aspect can combat feelings of isolation and loneliness, common in mental health struggles.
- **Emotional Release:** Yoga often involves gentle movements and stretches that can release physical tension held in the body. This release can lead to the emotional release of stored feelings and trauma, aiding in emotional healing.



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- **Mindfulness and Acceptance:** Yoga fosters a non-judgmental attitude towards ourselves and our experiences. Practicing mindfulness and self-compassion can help us accept our thoughts and emotions without self-criticism, reducing feelings of shame or guilt.

Wellness encompasses our emotions, physical bodies, minds, and spiritual selves, and any step you take on the journey toward wellness can help you discover a clearer and more distinct self. We invite you to join us in exploring Yoga, sound healing, meditation, aromatherapy sauna suites, and breathwork so you can journey towards a newfound sense of self-awareness, confidence, and appreciation for others. For some, it may be a primary intervention; for others, it may work best as a complementary practice alongside professional mental health treatment.

If you have questions, need support, or have a story to share, our doors are always open. Our community is here to support you. We are committed to creating safe places that are inclusive and respectful of a diverse community that includes you.

So much love,

Jaime Annett,
Studio Owner - Sound Healing Practitioner, Yoga
Teacher



Community Member Spotlight



Christiana Monterrosa

Christiana Monterrosa is a third-year graphic arts student at California Institute of the Arts. She loves being able to communicate through beautiful design. She also loves how Thermal Horizons helps her bring that beauty to the surface.

She was introduced to Yoga ten years ago and was drawn to it because it combined the physical and mental. As a young woman who struggles with mental illness, Yoga provided her a sense of grounding that felt safe. She's dabbled in her practice ever since.

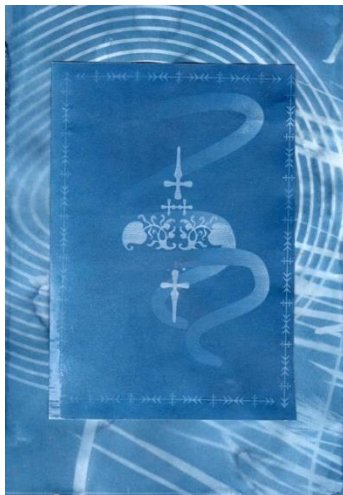




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Last spring, a fellow student and friend from Cal Arts introduced her to Thermal Horizons. The first class she took with the community was iRest Yoga Nidra, an evidence-based transformative practice leading to psychological, physical, and spiritual healing and well-being. She was guided in meditation while lying down or reclining with support to heal unresolved issues and traumas present in her body. The practice initiated a feeling of wholeness and peace of mind in Christina. She cried. That, to Christina, indicated that the class was one of the best in her life.

During the iRest experience, Christina felt utterly safe to allow her emotional release. She also appreciated that her teacher, Kate Cianci, LCSW, was a psychotherapist and spoke with her about her emotions during and after the class.



At first, she tried not to be seen in the community. She would walk quickly and quietly into class to not attract attention. But soon, she found herself chatting with Ben and Jaime, more teachers, and fellow community members. She felt herself being drawn out by the safety and love of Thermal Horizons.

She has added Vin/Yin and Grounding BLYS to her community practice. Both classes utilize poses involving movement with breath (Yang), and poses held for extended periods to nourish the body's connective tissues (Yin) for nervous system regulation, mind, body, and spirit connection. Christina enjoys the feeling of opening up with a flow to release her restlessness and then turning inward to feel grounded (the Yin and Yang)



Christina has felt herself getting stronger physically and mentally in just five months. Her practice at Thermal Horizons has impacted her schoolwork and made her feel better. She feels more spiritual and at ease and can take her work on the mat into her everyday life. She is grateful to see herself emerging from the slump she felt herself in before she started.

“With mental illness, you don’t always feel up to doing things to help yourself, and when you don’t, you end up feeling even worse. It can be a scary cycle,” said Christina. “Doing one thing, like attending a Yoga class, can help break it.”

Christina encourages others with mental illness to not give up. “Use whatever tiny bit of hope you have to try and be brave,” she says.

Christina is expanding her bravery and hopes to try a hot Yoga class soon. She has some fear of the sweat she sees on the community members coming out of the hot classes, but she also sees their smiles. She’s working through the fear that she might not be physically strong enough to do the poses Christina imagines are held in the class, but she also knows Yoga is a personal journey that supports all levels.

In other words, Christina is feeling safer and opening up even more. She is building on her bravery and becoming more grounded every day. And through this all, we will be with her to support her on her journey.