

Faculty Biographies



Michele Barnes, Director of 200 Hour Yoga Teacher Training CYA E-RYTGold/E-RYT200/YACEP

Michele is a certified yoga teacher who is also registered with both Yoga Alliance (USA) and Canadian Yoga Alliance. She has received over 1000 hours in additional training in Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy, Kripalu YogaDance, Pre/Postnatal Yoga; Restorative Yoga and Yoga for Seniors and YogAlign.

Michele has been practicing yoga since 1999 and teaching yoga and meditation since 2003. She began assisting in the 200 Hour Yoga Teacher Training (YTT) in 2004 at the *Lotus Centre for Yoga & Health* in London, Ontario and became the Director of Yoga in June 2008. She continues to offer 200 Hour YTT and

Continuing Education workshops for certified teachers.

Michele's passion is about living authentically and honouring the innate design and mechanics of the human body. She invites students and teachers alike to recognize what yoga postures and practices support this design, how to practice them safely and to avoid poses that may cause harm. Above all, Michele is passionate about helping people create harmony and balance, both within and without.



Leslie Heisz – Anatomy and Meditation

E-RYT200

In her life *BY* ('*Before Yoga*'), Leslie was a self-professed gym rat and avid runner. However, those two things didn't seem to help with her chronic stress, anxiety and depression. Her doctor suggested yoga. It didn't take too long for Leslie to realize that this was going to become a major part of her life!

Leslie took her initial 200hr yoga teacher training in 2009-10 and launched her yoga studio, ***Benders Yoga***, not quite two years later. Leslie has taught over 1000 hours of yoga and is currently pursuing her 500hr level certification.

As Leslie's health changed over the years so, too, did her personal yoga practice. However, her general philosophy has always remained the same: "yoga for all". Leslie believes that yoga is a powerful, transformative tool that is accessible to all (although definitely NOT one-size-fits-all!) That is where her love of anatomy comes in. Understanding how a body works helps a yoga teacher understand how to best teach different bodies, to truly make yoga accessible for all.

More recently, Leslie has come to understand the incredible power of meditation. She was never one to be able to sit still very long (even now – if she's sitting, she's knitting – as her gramma says!). Leslie's meditation practice, like many things in her life, was born out of necessity. It has helped her through periods of pain and disability and, she believes, has helped to alleviate many of her health issues. Not only has she become a happier, more patient, more loving mom and wife - she thinks she has become a better human being.

Leslie's yoga journey continues. She looks forward to sharing yours.