



# 2020 **20** Anniversary **20** Vision

**My dear Yoga friends,**

*In January 2000, five like-minded Founder members – Linda, Marie, Helen, Elma and I - gave birth to a new yoga training organisation. We nursed it lovingly and watched as it took its first tentative steps into the public arena. We each held its hand through the toddler years, with all its painful teething problems. And we stood patiently by through the growing pains of the teenage years. And now, twenty years later, we can stand back and be proud of the wonderful, young, professional and confident adult we have created.*

*Yoga Therapy Ireland is a thriving yoga training school with International recognition for many of its courses. We have grown from our five Founder members to a very reputable organisation of over 600 yoga teachers and yoga therapists nationwide – and we are continuing to grow. I know I speak for the remaining Founder members*

*when I say that we have been so privileged to walk this walk with all of you. It has been the adventure of a lifetime and we are so grateful for all your support, encouragement and friendship over the years.*

*A very sincere thanks to all our Patrons, Friends and business colleagues; your support and association with our organisation has also been invaluable to us.*

*We are so fortunate that as our young, professional adult continues to mature, we have the wonderful guidance of our Board of Directors and Operations Team who will ensure we continue on the right path to our 2020 Yoga Vision; to continue to make yoga available to everyone and to continue to strive for official Department of Education and Department of Health recognition.*

**– Maureen Nightingale,  
General Manager**

# yogatherapy ireland

Celebrating 20 years of YTI



## Message from Indian Ambassador Sandeep Kumar

Embassy of India  
Dublin

I offer my heartiest congratulations to Yoga Therapy Ireland on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of its establishment.

I am very encouraged by significant work being done by Yoga Therapy Ireland towards promotion of Yoga and its associated systems in Ireland.

Yoga means “to connect”. It connects the mind, body and soul. At a larger level, it contributes to holistic health, global peace, community harmony and security. The scientific message of Yoga has universal appeal. Yoga Therapy Ireland has played a very important role in empowering individuals, societies and communities in Ireland.

In particular, it is heartening that Yoga Therapy Ireland has not only been encouraging the safe practice of Yoga nationally,



but also offering Yoga training, at various levels, of the highest quality and standards through its dedication, hard work and commitment. It has been successful in making Yoga available to all cross sections of society, irrespective of ability, age or fitness levels.

I salute Yoga Therapy Ireland for being a credible partner of the Embassy of India in our joint work towards creating awareness about the benefits of Yoga as a preventive and management therapy. It has also been joining hands with the Indian Embassy for the successful celebration of the annual International Day of Yoga in Ireland. I wish Yoga Therapy Ireland the very best in its future endeavours. The Embassy stands committed to supporting Yoga Therapy Ireland in all possible ways. May Yoga Therapy Ireland grow from strength to strength.

*Sandeep Kumar, Indian Ambassador to Ireland.*

## Message from Mrs Radhika Lal Lokesh



It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Yoga Therapy Ireland on its 20th anniversary celebrations in February 2020. I would like to wish Maureen Nightingale, the General Manager of YTI, all the members and the alumni a fruitful and memorable event to mark this special occasion. Yoga transcends religion, cultures and borders, although it is rooted in Indian philosophy as expounded by the ancient sages. Its message of holistic health, balance of mind, body and spirit and harmony with nature is universal. In recognition of its importance in bringing about positive change in society, at the initiative of the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi, the UN declared June 21st to be International Yoga Day in 2015.

Over the last two decades, Yoga Therapy Ireland has spread the message of Yoga in Ireland, which is also known, like India, as a land of sages and poets. The professional training programmes and workshops have helped to create awareness that complementary therapies like Yoga and Ayurveda are more conducive and effective in promoting long term health and prevention of diseases.

I consider it a privilege to be associated with Yoga Therapy Ireland as a Patron. My association with Maureen began when I started training with her soon after I joined as Indian Ambassador to Ireland in 2013. This friendship and the bond with Yoga Therapy Ireland has been a deep and satisfying journey for me at a personal level. I am happy to see that the partnership between the Embassy and Yoga Therapy Ireland has also grown from strength to strength. I also have very fond memories of the International Yoga Day at Aras an Uachtarain in 2015, graciously hosted by President Michael D. Higgins and Sabina, who has always been a source of support and inspiration to the Embassy and Yoga Therapy Ireland in our efforts to spread the message of Yoga.

Yoga Therapy Ireland has grown into a well-recognised hub for training, mentoring and encouraging yoga enthusiasts in the practise of Yoga in Ireland and beyond its shores – and completing twenty years is indeed a milestone – and there will be many more to come. My best wishes to the organisation for its continued success in the future.

## Message from Sean Collins Psychotherapist (retired)



It is my pleasure to wish all at Yoga Therapy Ireland “Congratulations” on completing 20 years of amazing work in education and training in Yoga. In 1982, Dr Dean Ornish, cardiologist, authored the book *Stress, Diet and Your Heart*. In it, he reported on the scientific use of behavioural medicine and the powerful effects produced for patients. In this early book, he placed particular emphasis on the use of yoga, breath-work and meditation in the successful treatment of coronary heart disease. Since then he has both published numerous scientific papers in major journals and written numerous books on the subject, demonstrating repeatedly the potential of behavioural medicine (again including yoga) in reversing or stabilising many of today’s lifestyle related diseases. His most recent book published in 2019 is entitled *UnDo It!*

With my colleague, Rhoda Draper, it was my pleasure over a number of years to present workshops in behavioural medicine as part of YTI’s programmes. I stand in awe that they have continued this important work, producing teachers and graduates with the ethical standards and knowledge to inspire their class participants.

Through its teaching programmes for yoga teachers here, YTI has led the way, pioneering and developing the use of behavioural medicine as both a therapy and as a model for healthy living. Like Dr Ornish, this group of devoted trainers and teachers has remained at the cutting edge of the effective use of yoga, breath-work and meditation, and I wish them every success into the future.

## Message from Gertie Cull:



In celebrating 20 years for Yoga Therapy Ireland, I wish to acknowledge the contribution Yoga Therapy Ireland has made to the lives of so many people in Ireland. I recall the early days of YTI when the practice of Yoga was introduced to the staff, students and patients at the National Maternity

Hospital. It was hard to envisage such progress and expansion as seen in the last few years. In my long career in Midwifery, I have seen at first hand the enormous benefits and valuable contributions Yoga has played in the health and wellbeing of mothers, babies and families. The mission, foresight and education of Yoga Therapy Ireland and its team must be appreciated by society.

Yoga offers a holistic approach to care for pregnant women, their partners and their families, for their physical and mental challenges during pregnancy and beyond. Yoga has so many benefits; it empowers the mother and her partner to be involved in their own care and to make informed choices. Yoga encourages internal focus and slower breathing patterns in preparation for childbirth. Breath is life and Yoga is a path to good health, wholeness and connection and this is continued into the post-natal period, with bonding and breastfeeding.

Thanks to Yoga Therapy Ireland, Yoga is now available in all areas of people's lives - schools, workplaces, sports clinics, gyms, active retirement centres, hospitals, hospices, nursing homes and community centres. There is a course to suit all ages and abilities, from health promotion and disease prevention to chair yoga for some elderly or disabled people. Yoga is a lovely uplifting practice suitable for all ages and can be done at different times and places to reduce stress and bring body, mind and spirit into balance and harmony. It can be adapted by all cultures and traditions.

I congratulate you on your success and achievements over the past 20 years. I wish you continued success and blessings for your future vision.

## Message from Olive Gentleman

*(Written on her behalf by her husband, Robert)*



Congratulations on your 20th anniversary. Sadly, Olive's memory has dis-improved considerably over the past year and has turned into dementia. So, thank you for the invitation to her to compose a message on this occasion and to attend the celebrations; I'm sure she would

have loved, and have been honoured, to do that, but wouldn't be able to do something like that now. She loves getting the magazine and thank you for sending it so regularly; she likes turning the pages. It is always good to hear about what is happening at YTI and best wishes from us both.

## Message from Alexander Gibbs



May I take this opportunity to express my admiration, respect and gratitude for creating a space of capable excellence for us Osteopaths across Ireland to have a place of referral for our patients who need individual care and internal work. We have been working together for the past 20 years, watching both disciplines grow in sophistication and eminence as we assist our communities around us. In my opinion, Yoga Therapy Ireland stands uniquely apart from the average standard, in that they introduced a higher performance by moving from a purely physical to a greater, holistic approach that completes the individual's journey to health and recovery - physical, mental and spiritual.

Yoga Therapy Ireland and its magazine, under the directorship of Maureen Nightingale and the team, have created an extensive educational resource and a window to a deeper understanding of yoga across our community.

May I wish you all for now and the future to deepen in your spiritual ground, stay complete to your original principles and may the practitioners of the future complete the journey of bringing Yoga as a source of Inspiration and Health to those requiring guidance, tuition and encouragement. Happy 20th Anniversary, Yoga Therapy Ireland - a miraculous and great achievement!

## Message from Dr Ruth Gilmore



Twenty Years of YTI, it's hard to believe that it's twenty years since YTI began. None of us who were involved at the start could have foretold its wonderful success, nor the significant impact that it would have on yoga teaching and therapy training throughout the island of Ireland. In the middle 1990s, I was involved in bringing yoga therapy training to the North, with the first two-year course run under the auspices of a London-based charity, the Yoga Biomedical Trust. I was responsible for the teaching of advanced Anatomy and Physiology, together with clinical medical information. Yoga teachers from all over Ireland enrolled, including the founders of what would become Yoga Therapy Ireland. Maureen, Marie, Linda, Helen and Elma came to realise the importance of making this type of training locally available to Irish yoga teachers – thus Yoga Therapy Ireland was born. I was delighted at this development, and over the years I contributed so regularly to YTI courses that the Marino Institute began to feel like a second home.

Now, twenty years on, I am sending my heartfelt congratulations and all good wishes for the next twenty years and beyond. With hindsight, I am convinced that an unseen hand was guiding those pioneers along their path - sometimes the way was challenging, sometimes demanding, but it always wended its way upwards towards the undisputed position that YTI now holds in Irish yoga. I am proud to have been involved from the very beginning, and delighted at the outcome of all the commitment and hard work that the YTI founders and others have put in over the years – well done, everyone!

## Message from Julie Gudmestad



Congratulations to YTI on the occasion of your 20th anniversary! I'm pleased to honour and support your association in our shared mission of making the healing benefits of yoga available to all who can use them. Yoga can help facilitate healing, rebuild strength, and ease pain for people suffering from a wide variety of problems. Everyone who has lived in a body has experienced pain: it is one of life's shared experiences, and is a part of virtually all illnesses and injuries that we might see in a yoga class or therapy session. At one time in my work as a physical therapist, I worked in a chronic pain clinic, and we learned that pain makes tension (mental and physical) and tension fuels the pain. One of our most powerful tools as yoga practitioners, teachers and therapists is the breath, as mindful breathing helps the nervous system relax and thereby breaks the pain/tension cycle. I'm joining you, YTI, in our efforts to help ease the suffering in this world. I look forward to seeing you in June of 2020 as we continue to walk along the path of healing for all.



YTI was founded in 2000 by Marie Lennon, Elma Toland, Helen Morrow, Maureen Nightingale and the late Linda Southgate.

## Marie Lennon

### Q. What inspired you personally to set up YTI along with the other founder members?

My personal reason for joining with my friends in setting up YTI was to offer teacher training that was inclusive and therapeutic; this was and still is our ethos. This type of training wasn't available 20 years ago. Our aim was to offer our students a firm grounding in A&P so that they could understand the structures involved in various illnesses and physical limitations and be able to modify yoga practice to suit everyone.

### Q. What have you learnt through your involvement with YTI?

The practice of yoga is organic and I have learned the necessity of change but I have also learnt the value of staying true to our ethos despite the differing trends in the yoga world.

### Q. What are your fondest memories of the last 20 years of YTI?

I remember with great fondness the shared passion of my founder-member friends and I in birthing and growing YTI and our subsequent joy in witnessing the outstanding teachers the early training courses produced.

### Q. What has YTI meant to you personally?

I have enjoyed working with my committed friends within the organisation and seeing YTI grow from strength to strength. Also, YTI has given me the opportunity to facilitate many teacher training courses with a countless number of students. In so doing, I got to pass on YTI yoga teachings and share my love of yoga with so many people.

## Elma Toland

### Q. What inspired you personally to set up YTI along with the other founder members?

My first inspiration was the Biomedical Trust Yoga Therapy Training Course we had just completed in 1997. This inspired me so much that I just wanted to share this approach in training yoga teachers. My four colleagues and I motivated and inspired each other with our passion, our enthusiasm and our dream.

### Q. What have you learnt through your involvement with YTI?

I have learned the power of collaboration, the power of blending individual skills, abilities and experiences together to create amazing yoga training programmes. I have learned the power of commitment and following a dream with passion and focus. I have also learned the power of committed management and marketing of an excellent product. I have also learned that in creating a professional and competitive modern-day training organisation, you can still maintain the holistic, physical, spiritual and therapeutic nature of yoga.

### Q. What are your fondest memories of the last 20 years of YTI?

When we wrote the Teacher Training Course and set out the different modules. We wrote the content up from month to month. The simplicity was genius and our confidence and passion were inspirational. We had created a Masterpiece! Standing on our Stand in the RDS, marketing our training course, dressed in our different coloured Indian tunics - we thought we looked amazing! When Maureen got our yoga therapy article published in 'Yoga for Health' - the *British Yoga Magazine*.

My fondest memories are more about how I felt when we came together to nurture our YTI baby - we shared some amazing fun-filled times. We also shared some times when we disagreed with each other and had to find compromises and agreement in

our going forward. But we always got there in the end because our intention was always for the good of YTI and we may not have been always fully aware but we were birthing and building bonds of relationship and friendship that were born to last. I cannot think of YTI and not immediately think of Linda. She was so committed to YTI and so creative in all her yoga work. Linda and I were 'best friends' and we tutored together on the TTC for so many years. My fondest memories are when we came together to compile and prepare work for YTI. We laughed so much, drank so much tea in my living room and talked 'yoga' into the small hours of the morning. It was a wonderful and magical time for us and will always remain in my memory of the last 20 years.

### Q. What has YTI meant to you personally?

YTI is family. Linda, Maureen, Marie and Helen have all been like 'siblings' to me. Over those initial years we grew together, inspired each other, challenged each other and annoyed the life out of each other. But through it all we respected each other, admired each other and watched each other blossom in our own areas of ability and expertise. YTI created a platform for the founder members to develop and to realise our personal dreams and our dreams for YTI. We had a dream of bringing the benefits and transformative power of yoga to everyone, those fit and healthy and to those who were limited and challenged. The years have flown, we have matured and grown in knowledge of our subject but also in understanding ourselves.

YTI is now a much bigger organisation; it has grown up well, now hosting the most amazing facilitators, trainers, teachers and therapists who bring the value and experience of yoga to so many people, able-bodied students and less able-bodied students.

The dream has been realised, YTI teachers are teaching this "approach" all over the country. The dream was worth dreaming and the organisation is in excellent hands going forward. I will always think of YTI as family and look forward to our 2020 Celebrations as a coming home!



## Helen Morrow

### **Q. What inspired you personally to set up YTI along with the other founder members?**

In a nutshell it was the opportunity to be creative and to work with my colleagues who were equally enthusiastic about teaching yoga. A bond was forged between us during our years of training together and practising as yoga teachers. We discussed our common experience of feeling not skilled enough when we completed our initial teacher training course. We began a mutual quest to acquire skills and understanding so that we could work from the heart, mindfully and safely with the general public. Our tutors from our training courses thought we were ready and urged us to become tutors. The prospect was both terrifying but exhilarating at the time but as a team it became possible to develop a teacher training course that would empower our teacher trainees.

### **Q. What have you learnt through your involvement with YTI?**

I have learned that it was possible to develop and facilitate yoga teacher training courses that bring out the best in its teachers, and that YTI is open to improving its courses and keeping a high profile in the yoga world for the benefit of its members.

### **Q. What are your fondest memories of the last 20 years of YTI?**

My fondest memories of YTI are: Bouncing ideas off my colleagues while developing or making improvements to our training courses; watching our teacher trainees grow in confidence and ability, forming friendships over the two years of training. The happy buzz in the rooms. The care and support the students and tutors give one another. The enthusiasm and the thirst for understanding yoga. The graduation ceremony when our teachers collect their diplomas.

### **Q. What has YTI meant to you personally?**

Personally, YTI has been a heartfelt experience, a wonderful opportunity to experience and share the benefits of yoga with like-minded people.

## Maureen Nightingale

### **Q. What inspired you personally to set up YTI along with the other founder members?**

Having completed a number of yoga training courses - the most inspirational being the Yoga Therapy course offered by the Yoga Biomedical Trust – and not belonging to any association in particular but at the same time wishing to belong to a professional yoga network, I and my four yoga friends Linda, Elma, Marie and Helen were inspired to create a new organisation for like-minded yoga enthusiasts, who were also looking to belong to a professional organisation and who also might be inspired by a more therapeutic approach to teaching and practising yoga. This was our initial intention.

We never dreamed that what would come from our initial intention was a yoga training organisation which began by offering a two-year part-time teacher training diploma course in September 2000 – with that therapeutic approach which would make yoga available to absolutely everyone. Our team of five worked really hard to develop a course with extremely high standards, so that we could eventually gain an international recognition for our school, and maybe one day gain recognition through the Department of Education.

### **Q. What have you learnt through your involvement with YTI?**

Yoga Therapy Ireland has taught me so much over the years – about people, friendships, working relationships, collaboration, business, social media, dedication, respect, commitment, energy, passion, following the dream, gratitude - and that everything you put in, you get back a hundredfold. This was certainly the case for us; our team of five was totally dedicated to Yoga Therapy Ireland and right from the word go, our organisation was successful and gained wonderful credibility thanks to the phenomenal expertise of our tutors, Linda, Elma, Marie and Helen. Yoga Therapy Ireland began to grow quite quickly and from our initial team of five, we had the help of

various committees and teams of volunteers who gave so generously of their own time and talents, for which we will be endlessly grateful.

### **Q. What are your fondest memories of the last 20 years of YTI?**

Fondest memories – too many to include here, but to highlight just a few: seeing our very first Teacher Training Course through to completion, giving birth to Yoga Therapy Ireland as a training school; meeting so many wonderful yoga tutors from around the world who shared their own yoga journeys and taught us so much; receiving our international recognition through Yoga Alliance and more recently through the International Association of Yoga Therapists; nurturing really strong links with the Indian Embassy; celebrating all our graduations over the years, to realise over 600 fantastic yoga teachers and yoga therapists nationwide and abroad; being so proud to promote Yoga Therapy Ireland at festivals such as the Mind Body Spirit show, Rude Health, Your Health, Vitality and many more; moving premises from the Healthy Way in Leixlip to the amazing space that is Marino Institute of Education; our Gathering event in 2013 when over 100 of our teachers came together for a fantastic yoga celebration and having over 80 teaching representatives of Yoga Therapy Ireland present at Aras an Uachtairain for International Yoga Day in 2016.

### **Q. What has YTI meant to you personally?**

As many Yoga Therapy Ireland members will know, founder member, Linda Southgate, died in April 2017 having suffered from Motor Neuron Disease. I always remember one of our earlier guest speakers from the UK, Mary Madhavi, comparing us five founder members to a five-pointed star, such was our united energy and passion. When Linda died, it was as if the light in one of those five points went out, but now, undoubtedly, her light shines down on us from above and gives us the strength, creativity and inspiration to continue with our work.











# 20th Anniversary Celebration on February 01



9.15am-9.45am  
9.45am  
10.00am-12.00pm  
12.00pm-12.30pm  
**12.45pm-1.45pm**  
1.45pm-2.30pm  
2.45pm-3.30pm  
3.30pm-3.45pm  
4.00pm-8.00pm

**Registration**  
**Official Opening**  
**Helen Mason from The Mindful Institute U.K.**  
*– Keynote Speaker and Yoga Class facilitator*  
**Chanting for All – Led by Connie Walsh and YTI members**  
**Lunch**  
**Dr. Rajvinder Kaur from The Ayurveda Centre – Introduction to Ayurveda**  
**Michael Melnychuk from Trinity College Dublin – Current Yoga Research**  
**Yoga Flow for All**  
**Speeches and After Party**

## Marino Institute of Education, Marino, Dublin 9.

### Speaker Profiles



**Heather Mason** is the founder of The Mindful Institute. She was the first person in the UK to train to teach trauma-sensitive yoga under the guidance of the Boston Trauma Center. In addition to leading The Mindful Institute's 500 professional yoga therapy training, she specialises in using mind-body techniques in the treatment of trauma, anxiety, and teaches professionals how to use physiological assessment to determine appropriate yoga therapeutic practices for clients. Heather is also the director of another company, the Yoga and Healthcare Alliance (YIHA). This company is a social enterprise devoted to integrating yoga into the NHS. In conjunction with this organisation Heather and a collection of other leaders within the yoga world, leading yoga researchers and leaders within the NHS convene at Parliament to work in conjunction with central government towards this end. Heather is now the secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Yoga in Society.



**Dr Rajvinder Kaur** attained her Bachelor's

degree in Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (B.A.M.S) from the "Shri Krishna Government Ayurvedic College" in the state of Haryana in India. This is a six-year degree course, covering all aspects of Ayurvedic Medicine. In the curriculum of B.A.M.S, Ayurveda and modern medicine subjects are taught. She did her internship in Ayurveda and modern medicine hospitals. Rajvinder also has a diploma in Naturopathic and yoga science. She has a deep knowledge of Ayurveda herbs. After graduation, Rajvinder worked in General Medicine in India with a skin specialist and specialised in women's health care. Rajvinder has been in Ireland since 2007 and has become an integral part of the "Ayurveda Centre". She specialises in Ayurvedic treatments and consultations. She has great knowledge in the area of Ayurvedic diet and nutrition and successfully treats people with this knowledge. She runs Ayurveda cooking and nutrition courses, where her knowledge of herbs, spices and healthy eating comes to the fore.

Rajvinder is also an expert in Yoga, and runs one-to-one classes, teaching Yoga postures for back pain, healthy heart, weight loss etc. She loves to spread Ayurveda in Europe and heal people with the ancient knowledge that still is as precious as

diamonds. Rajvinder likes to learn and respect other complementary therapies. She did a one-year foundation course in Homeopathy as well.



**Michael Melnychuk** is a post-doctoral researcher in neuroscience at Trinity College, Dublin. He is originally from British Columbia, Canada, where he spent a good part of his life climbing and planting trees in the mountains.

His research focuses on the relationship between breathing and attention, with the main aim of gaining a scientific understanding of the underlying changes of the brain and body that result from pranayama and breath-focused practices. His findings to date suggest that attention and respiration comprise a coupled system at the neuro-physiological level, and that an individual's attention and breath are related in ways that can be measured using modern brain imaging techniques. He sees his work, which is informed by his personal practice, as an extension of traditional yogic science.