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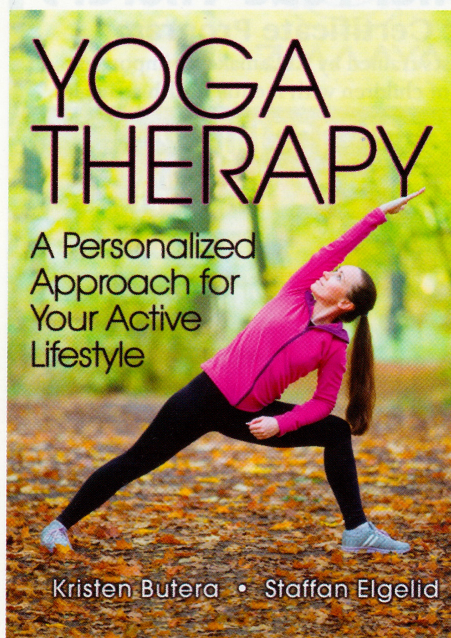


Mark Your Calendars!

**SYR 2017** Oct. 16–18

**SYTAR 2018** June 14–17





## Yoga Therapy: A Personalized Approach for Your Active Lifestyle

By Kristen Butera and Staffan Elgelid  
Human Kinetics Publishers (2017)

Review by Shelly Prosko

Collaboration is when two or more people come together with their ideas, knowledge, experience, and wisdom to create something unique that never existed before they came together. *Yoga Therapy: A Personalized Approach for Your Active Lifestyle* is a testament to true collaboration between co-authors Kristen Butera and Staffan Elgelid. Butera, an experienced and dedicated yoga practitioner and teacher of teachers, found inspiration during her own healing journey through a physical therapist that led her to re-evaluate her yoga practice and explore movement practices outside of yoga. Elgelid, an experienced physical therapist and a respected professor of physical therapy, has always been intrigued with the nuances of human movement. He found inspiration working in athletics and the arts and studying a variety of somatic movement practices. Both Butera and Elgelid are seasoned yoga therapists, avid movement explorers, and dedicated educators. Their collaboration results in this refreshing perspective on how one can use yoga to create and sustain an active

lifestyle through a personalized process, just as the title says.

Part one sets the tone and clearly states that the focus of the book is to guide you in a way that is meaningful to your own goals of living an active lifestyle by offering a “clear path that allows for growth and exploration ... rather than boxing you into any one perspective.” It includes concepts surrounding yoga therapy and intricacies of human movement systems and compares yoga therapy to somatic education in an intriguing and practical way. The concepts of identification, differentiation, and integration are introduced as foundational practices to influence the way one moves, thinks, perceives, and lives. Strategies to develop focus such as movement, breathing, awareness, visualization, and mindfulness are outlined to enhance the practitioner’s experience of being fully immersed and present in the activities of daily living beyond asana practice. The remainder of the book builds on these chapters.

Part two emphasizes the importance of understanding how each person’s experience of a yoga pose will be different and why these differences might exist. The authors clearly state their intentions are to guide the reader to develop a practice based on inquiry and curiosity with “basic poses, movement experiences, and variations” as they relate to “basic adaptations, mobility, strength, balance, and recovery.” Use of props and variations with breathing, meditation, and relaxation practices are included. This section ends with a chapter on injury prevention in yoga and using yoga for preventing injuries throughout an active lifestyle.

Part three puts all of the concepts into practice in a clear, concise, and organized manner. A wide variety of poses along with an abundance of illustrations are outlined and categorized in a purposeful and logical way, with the option to choose your own adventure based on your unique intention and goal.

I really loved how engaging this book is and appreciate the authors’ concept of yoga therapy as an educational process. I appreciated how they tackle some of the biomechanical debates in yoga asana: “It’s about discerning your habits and becoming more responsive to them. It’s about introducing options for different experiences in the same pose while continuing to identify and work intelligently with limitations that might come up.”

This book is perfect for students who want to be involved in experiential learning and value the opportunity to inquire, problem solve, reflect, and offer new input into their systems to achieve desired changes in movement and lifestyle. And as needs change, the text can still serve as a framework to meet new goals.

This book is not meant to replace individual therapeutic intervention for people with specific dysfunctions or injuries. It does not dive into wisdom from traditional yoga texts; however, references to these resources are provided.

The clear illustrations and detailed instructions are valuable for the experiential segments, but it might be easier to sustain the embodied presence being created if the reader did not have to interrupt the experience by referring back to the book for the next written instruction. An audio version could offer further enriched learning so readers could more efficiently follow the detailed instructions during their explorations.

This book is written for individuals of different activity levels and is a must-have companion for yoga therapists of all levels of experience. It also serves as a valuable resource for yoga teachers, healthcare practitioners, and movement specialists with an interest in integrating yoga into their personal or professional lives. *Yoga Therapy: A Personalized Approach for Your Active Lifestyle* is an overachiever when it comes to fulfilling its purpose of guiding you “to more deeply understand yourself through applied yoga therapy practice ... and to contribute to the enjoyment of all your life’s activities.” Although this takes time, effort, curiosity, and patience, it can be fun, effective, and rewarding! **YTT**

*Shelly Prosko, PT, PYT, CPI, is a physical therapist and professional yoga therapist who has been integrating yoga into physical therapy since 1998. She offers courses internationally and teaches in numerous therapeutic yoga programs including Life Is Now Pain Care and the Professional Yoga Therapy Institute. She is founder of Prosko PhysioYoga ([www.physioyoga.ca](http://www.physioyoga.ca)).*