



## KEKOKA YOGA RETREAT SESSION LEADERS 2026



**Dr. Eva Abel** is a licensed clinical psychologist with over 20 years of Hatha Yoga experience. Join her in her dedication to cultivating profound presence and inner illumination. Eva has been deeply immersed in the Integral Yoga and Raja Yoga traditions, bringing a rich understanding of both physical and philosophical practices to her teaching. She offers a unique approach that seamlessly integrates natural mindfulness into day-to-day activities, revealing the divine in the everyday and empowering you to live with greater awareness and joy.



**Susan Brady, MPT, MCS-P**, is the founder of Nurtured Bones and a nationally recognized bone health educator. With a background in physical therapy, nutrition, integrative health, and microbiome science, she helps women support strong bones through practical, whole-body strategies. Susan is the creator of the **BONES Method®**, a framework that integrates nutrition, movement, digestive health, stress resilience, and targeted supplementation to promote lifelong skeletal strength. She is also the author of the book *The Gut-Bone Connection™* and is passionate about helping women move, age, and live with confidence.



**Melissa Burke**—In 2020, Melissa opened Grow NNK, turning her dream of owning a business that offers organic wellness products accompanied with the energy of plants and healing crystals into reality. She's since transformed that business into a sacred sanctuary where she offers reiki, sound healing and meditation along with complimentary wellness products. Most recently, she's been called to work with children by teaching Mindfulness at Chesapeake Academy. She believes her soul purpose is to be a messenger of God: to connect the physical realm to the spiritual realm, to assist in healing, and raise consciousness through meditation, sound, and reiki, to create a safe space for children and adults to connect, empower, and encourage divine love and guidance. Learn more at [growwnnk.com](http://growwnnk.com).



**Mohler Carlson, RYT 200**—Mohler fell in love with yoga in 2005 when she wandered into a yoga class at her local YMCA. In 2016, she received her Yoga Alliance 200 hour teaching certification from Jenny Hunter at [The Yoga Movement](http://TheYogaMovement.com) in Dallas. In 2019, she received a 55-hour Myofascial Release certification with Tiffany Cruikshank, founder of Yoga Medicine. You'll often hear Mohler say that, after having been a registered nurse and a mother of three, she grew up to be a Yoga Instructor. She's currently practicing and teaching at [TAOU Studio](http://TAOUStudio.com) in Richmond.



**Ellie Gale**—Ellie "Feathertree" Gale grew up in on the southern bank of our very own Rappahannock River. She discovered Ecstatic Dance while living in Charlottesville, and fell in love with both the movement and the supportive community it created. Passionate about authenticity and self-expression, Ellie is excited to facilitate a space where others can practice connecting to their heart centers. She believes learning this is critical to cultivating loving communities and a world.



**Art Gilbert**, Kekoka Yoga Retreat Co-Chair, has been an amateur astronomer for over 30 years. Before moving full-time to the Northern Neck he was active with the Baltimore Astronomy Society, including many "Sidewalk Astronomy" public outreach events.



**Dr. Atma Garcia (Joseph A. Garcia, Psy.D.)** is a licensed clinical psychologist specializing in existential, transpersonal, and mindfulness-based psychologies. With over 30 years of dedicated spiritual practice, he serves as the founder and steward of the Atmaguru Forest Hermitage in Powhatan, VA—a sanctuary for deep practice and occasional small-group intensives. Dr. Atma's work sits at the intersection of clinical rigor and ancient wisdom, offering a grounded approach to modern transformation. Learn more at [garciapsyd.com](http://garciapsyd.com) and [atmaguru.org](http://atmaguru.org).



**Esther Heideman**—Esther has made it her life's mission to use her musical gifts to heal others. For the past 28 years, she has been performing as a soloist with the top orchestras and opera houses of the world, including multiple engagements on the east coast with the Metropolitan Opera, Carnegie Hall, and The Kennedy Center. In 2020, during the covid lockdowns, Esther was introduced to a Tibetan Singing Bowl Master from Nepal, who started working with her on the ancient art of using vibrational energy from Tibetan Singing Bowls to heal. She is now a certified Tibetan singing bowl healer who offers private and group healings in Kilmarnock, VA. For further information visit [TheBowlMovement.com](http://TheBowlMovement.com).



**Amber Hogg**—Amber is an ACE Certified Group Fitness Instructor who began her teaching career at the Mathews Family YMCA in 2018. In 2020, she discovered a passion for WARRIOR Rhythm and became a Master Trainer for the WARRIOR Instructor Academy in 2022. She is also part of the WARRIOR Rhythm talent team and can be seen in official instructor videos. Amber is well-rounded in fitness, holding SCW Indoor Cycling (SCHWINN) training and certifications in all WARRIOR formats. Since WARRIOR Rhythm is rooted in yoga, she is currently pursuing her RYT-200 certification. She is passionate about creating fun, challenging, and inclusive classes for all participants. Amber currently teaches at the Mathews and Middlesex YMCAs, as well as CyclePath Fitness in Newport News.



**Susan Johnson, E-RYT 200, YACEP**—Susan is the Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Kekoka Yoga Retreat and the owner of *InsideOut Yoga + Retreats* in White Stone. Since 2010 she's been teaching classes and leading retreats around the world that challenge your body and nurture your spirit. Her Ashtanga/Iyengar training in 2008 reinforced her love of challenging movement and skillful alignment—a love that continues to inform her practice and teaching to this day. InsideOut Yoga's upcoming retreats are Fall 2026 in Portugal and October 2027 in Greece. She's currently training to be a Yoga Medicine® Therapeutic Specialist with Tiffany Cruikshank and a GYROTONIC® Instructor at Motion Studios in Kilmarnock. You can find Susan at [insidoutyoga.org](https://insidoutyoga.org) and on her YouTube channel, [InsideOutYoga1](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1...).



**Sherab "Shey" Khandro** is a distinguished artist and philosopher whose journey seamlessly integrates ancient wisdom with contemporary insights. She studied and practiced for 15 years as a Buddhist nun in the Tibetan tradition. Shey has deeply explored philosophy, spirituality, metaphysics, and modern science. During her decades-long artistic career in the sacred arts, her work resonates with mindfulness and compassion, with each dot in her vibrant pointillist paintings imbued with intention, a prayer to end suffering. As a dedicated professional, spiritual mentor, and speaker, Shey passionately advocates for your love of self, each other, and our precious planet. Her fierce commitment to fostering a compassionate and connected world inspires individuals to embark on their own journeys of self-discovery and inner peace. Join Shey in exploring the transformative power of mindfulness & compassion and discover their profound impact on your life.



**Sejal Kinker** — Sejal is an avid whitewater boater who enjoys paddling many crafts including kayak, canoe, raft and stand-up paddle board. She is also a L5 whitewater kayak instructor, certified in Wilderness first aid and has taken many water rescue courses. While not on the water she enjoys yoga, hiking, mountain biking, making pottery, jewelry, and spending time with her family and four granddaughters.



**Jenny Landry, ERYT-200, CPT** — Jenny began practicing yoga almost three decades ago and immediately became a devotee after experiencing the transformative affect yoga has on the mind, body and spirit. She's been teaching in the Northern Neck for almost 15 years and remains committed to the mission of making yoga accessible to all. Jenny is equally as passionate about embracing yogic practices and philosophies as a way of life.



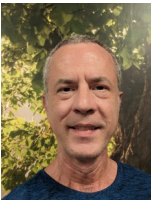
**Amy Maloney, RYT 200**—Amy has been practicing yoga since October 2004, and teaching since July 2007. She completed her 200 hour teacher training certification with YogaWorks in March 2010 under the instruction of Anne Van Valkenburg. Amy integrates safe alignment, flow of movement, and connection to breath and the inner body. She believes that yoga is for everyone—all you need is the willingness to try. Her website is [sharedacresyoga.com](https://sharedacresyoga.com).



**Lindsay Manziak, MSN, WHNP-BC**—Lindsay Manzlak is a board-certified Women's Health Nurse Practitioner and founder of *Wednesday Wellness*, a wellness-based practice focusing on hormone optimization and metabolic health, backed by science and rooted in connection. Lindsay has over a decade of experience as a nurse practitioner, serving women in gynecologic oncology and primary OBGyn settings before venturing into wellness-based care. She has always had a deep passion for preventive health and now focuses on supporting women in midlife and beyond through a holistic lens. Her work blends clinical expertise with a heartfelt mission for women to be heard, empowered, and restored in their bodies. Lindsay lives in Newport News, VA with her husband and three children, and is a realist oil painter in brief interludes throughout her life. Wednesday Wellness is located in Newport News and serves all of Virginia. Learn more at [wednesdaywellness.co](https://wednesdaywellness.co) or @wednesday\_\_wellness on Instagram.



**Nathan Martin**—Nathan is the co-owner of Motion Studios in Kilmarnock, and the founder of CAPITAL GYROTONIC® in Washington, DC, which he established in 2013. He currently divides his time between DC and Virginia's Northern Neck, where he also teaches weekend yoga classes at the Middlesex and Northern Neck Family YMCA. A former ballet dancer and alumnus of the Joffrey Ballet School, Nathan is a certified GYROTONIC® and GYROKINESIS® Master Trainer as well as an RYT® 200 Registered Yoga Teacher. As the grandson of a Qi Gong master and acupuncturist, Nathan spent much of his childhood around his grandparents' Chinese medicine clinic in Hong Kong, where he developed an early appreciation for holistic healing and the restorative arts. This unique foundation, combined with his extensive knowledge of human movement and anatomy and his professional background in dance, has shaped a thoughtful, highly intuitive teaching style. His ability to bridge Eastern healing traditions with contemporary movement education has made him a sought-after teacher and trainer throughout the United States and Asia.



**Joe Miller** has been studying, training and teaching Martial Arts since 1984 and has taught Tai Chi at his local YMCA for over two decades. Tai Chi is all about reconnecting the mind, body, and spirit. The smooth continuous movements are easy on the joints, yet they build energy in all our different bodies. Come lift your spirits for the day with a little Tai Chi in the morning!



**Barbara Olin, RYT 200**—Barbara has been an avid yoga practitioner since 2000 and has been teaching yoga for over 20 years. She completed her 200-hour teacher training program through Yoga Fit International and is registered with the National Yoga Alliance. She continues her education by attending workshops with the masters of yoga and through personal reading and study. Bar bara believes that everyone can benefit from the practice of yoga no matter their age or physical condition. Improved flexibility, strength, coordination and focus will come with a consistent yoga practice. She encourages her students to discover themselves and their own potential through a very relaxed, fun and supportive environment.



**Susan Phillips, 220 Hour Kundalini and Meditation Teacher**—Susan has been practicing yoga since 2005 and teaching Kundalini Yoga and meditation since 2018. She's passionate about sharing her love of Kundalini Yoga and teaches with an authentic and fun approach. She offers a caring, nurturing, and safe practice for students to enrich their lives. She loves Kundalini because of the high vibration that can be reached to heal our bodies and to heal our world.



**Parham Neal-Pishko, E-RYT, YACEP, AHC**—Parham is an Ayurvedic Health Counselor specializing in women's holistic health with a decade of experience guiding movement, mindfulness, and transformation through yoga. Through her business, Luuma Yoga & Ayurveda, she leads immersive women's retreats both internationally and throughout the U.S., writes and leads yoga teacher trainings, mentors instructors through her one-on-one anatomical creative sequencing program, and works with special populations to make the practice accessible and deeply supportive. You can find P teaching at Blue Honey in White Stone, and The Yoga Dojo in Richmond, as well as online with VB Method Fitness. Rooted in the wisdom of Ayurveda and the belief that yoga is a practice of both presence and play, Parham's classes are thoughtfully crafted to balance strength with softness, intention with curiosity.



**Terri Sanchez, International Coaching Federation Associate Certified Coach (ACC)**—Terri founded Purposeful Design Coaching to help women who have spent years putting everyone else first finally design their next chapter. She believes true empowerment begins when a woman turns inward, giving herself the same courage and compassion she has always given others. Terri works with her clients to help them find clarity and confidence in pursuing what matters most. She completed a distinguished career as a member of the Senior Executive Service for the Department of Defense, where she mentored rising leaders across numerous Federal agencies. She also served as a Professor of Business Management, encouraging aspiring entrepreneurs to lead boldly. Since retiring in 2025, Terri has coached full-time, turning clarity into lasting change through hands-on methods and tailored frameworks. A wife and mother of three, she draws inspiration from the Northern Neck's yoga and wellness community. It is never too late to design a life you love.



**Nancy Sessoms, E-RYT 500**—Nancy has been practicing yoga for over 20 years and teaching since 2013. She was the owner of Gloucester Yoga for 7 years and is currently teaching 3 classes per week. She is certified by Dr. Loren Fishman and teaches his 12-pose program for osteoporosis. Nancy embraces yoga as a lifestyle and believes in its efficacy to find stillness and peace within.



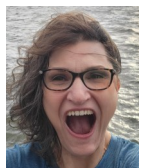
**Tricia (Prajna) Richardson, E-RYT-200, RYT-500, YACEP**—A search for natural complementary and alternative medical treatments for rheumatoid arthritis led Tricia to the practice of yoga in 2019. The practice was so transformative (both physically and spiritually), she felt compelled to bring it to others. Tricia completed her 200-hour Yoga Teacher Training with Zenya Yoga in 2023. A retreat to Yogaville in Buckingham, VA that same year opened her heart to the Integral Yoga community. She has since added 300 hours of education with IYISF, including Raja Yoga Teacher Training, Meditation Teacher Training, Yoga Essentials teacher training and received her spiritual name (Prajna). In December 2025, T Prajna certified in Yin Yoga with My Vinyasa Practice (MVP). She teaches at the Beazley Senior Center, the Portsmouth Public Library, the YMCA and local Yoga Studios in Portsmouth.



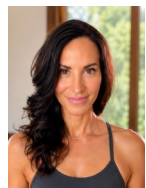
**Shelle Taylor, ERYT-200**—Shelle has been an instructor and trainer at American Family Fitness in Glen Allen, VA for over 35 years and at ACAC Fitness and Wellness for over 10. She added Yoga to her life in 2008 by completing the 200 hour training at Glenmore Yoga. Teaching yin, power yoga and vinyasa flow weekly helps her find balance. Her mantra is "taking everything from your mat into your life."



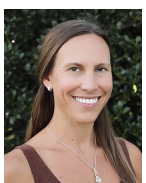
**Avery Thomas, RYT 200**—Avery has practicing yoga for over 10 years and teaching since 2019, after completing her 200-hour Yoga Teacher Training at Asheville Yoga Center. Whether it's a fiery vinyasa or a deeply restful yin class, Avery strives to create a warm, welcoming space where everyone feels supported. She currently teaches at Dragonfly Yoga Studio in Fredericksburg, VA. Off the mat, Avery enjoys hiking, swimming, and practicing aerial silks.



**Tessa Timberlake**—Tessa's passion is to share yoga practices that allow freedom to be felt in our hearts, bodies and souls. She teaches Vinyasa and Hatha, but specializes in Yin Yoga, Wall Yoga and Energy Healing. A teacher since 2017, she has obtained 900 hours of yoga certifications, some of them faith-based. Tessa is also an NASM certified personal trainer, corrective exercise specialist and energy healer.



**Rochelle Townsend** has been teaching yoga since 2004 and brings over 20 years of experience in Vinyasa, Yin, somatic movement, Reiki, energy work, fascia-informed practices, and holistic wellness coaching. A Reiki Master and longtime wellness educator, her teaching style is grounded, fluid, and deeply inspired by the rhythms of nature and the sea. After spending years sailing full-time throughout the Caribbean aboard her sailboat, Rochelle developed a unique approach to movement and mindfulness that blends strength, softness, breath, and presence. She is the founder of Wild Salted Glow, a coastal wellness space in Virginia's Northern Neck offering yoga, mindful movement, and holistic wellness experiences.



**Irene Vest** is a Certified Pilates Instructor offering private reformer sessions at her home in Kilmarnock as well as mat classes around the Northern Neck community. After years of weight training, collegiate volleyball and running, she began to focus on resistance-based, low impact movement postpartum in an effort to safely and effectively strengthen her body. Irene is a firm believer that Pilates can enhance all other forms of fitness as it enables individuals to connect intention to the movement and build strength from the inside out.