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Yoga Therapy International Graduate Profile

*Interview with Bobbie Seale-Cobiskey - Halfmoon Bay, British Columbia
YTI graduation: June, 2013*

While in the YTI program, Bobbie Seale-Cobiskey worked privately with an elderly MS student, and taught a small therapeutic yoga class for individuals with spinal cord injury. "The practicums gave me the opportunity to teach many of the things I had been learning, including breath awareness and simple breathing techniques, gentle movement, adaptive modifications, chanting, and meditation," says Bobbie. "These simple yogic tools allowed me to meet each participant where they were, with a special emphasis on pain management and trauma sensitivity."



YTI: What post-grad training have you completed?

BS-C: After graduating from YTI I continued to study with senior Yoga Therapists across North America. For example, in 2019 I completed online studies of Yoga for Arthritis Professionals Introductory Course and Chair Yoga for Arthritis with Dr. Steffany Moonaz. In 2018, I earned an introductory certificate in ARKAYA Healing Indian Head Massage. In 2018, I also took an ayurvedic cooking class with Elizabeth Innes, part-time community pharmacist and ayurvedic educator in Sechelt, BC. Most recently, I have been studying Yoga for Osteoporosis, a 20-hour online course with Loren Fishman, MD, and Ellen Saltonstall.

YTI: Where do you practice / work as a yoga therapist now?

BS-C: Since 2014 I have specialized in working with people with movement disorders, including those with spinal cord injury, older adults and seniors. I teach several chair yoga classes in assisted living and in long term care homes for seniors in Vancouver and on the Sunshine Coast. I also work as a Yoga Therapist at the Blusson Spinal Centre in the Yuel Family Physical Activity Research Centre (PARC) in Vancouver, where I teach three therapeutic yoga classes a week.

YTI: What other work do you do?

BS-C: Since graduation I have organized local community adaptive yoga workshops and events funded by Vancouver Foundation under their small Community Grants Program, raising awareness for the need to create a more accessible and inclusive yoga community. I was also invited to share Adaptive Yoga at special outdoor and indoor events for people with mobility challenges in Vancouver, including events for Spinal Cord Injury BC and the annual Walk for Muscular Dystrophy.

YTI: Do you work with or specialize in certain conditions as a yoga therapist?

BS-C: As my work has deepened and expanded through the years, I have become more aware of the risks and challenges mobility impaired people of all ages, including those in

senior populations, face on a daily basis. The courses, experiences, and hands-on practice of these years more than merely suggest that the need for accessible, alternative ways to maintain health and wellness will also significantly increase throughout the aging process, requiring more thoroughly trained and dedicated practitioners to work for and with each and every one whose lives have been so seriously altered.

YTI: Have you taken part in any research projects or studies involving your yoga therapy work?

BS-C: In 2018, an opportunity presented itself for me to participate in a research project at PARC studying the efficacy of yoga for individuals living with a spinal cord injury. I would like to express heartfelt appreciation to the students / participants at PARC who volunteered for the pilot study and all those who continue to participate in the therapeutic adaptive yoga classes. This work is significant in helping to bridge the gap between yoga and healthcare. Gratitude, too, for all the older adults and seniors living in long-term care homes who continue to participate in Chair Yoga classes ? beautifully open hearts and minds willing to explore something new.

YTI: What aspect/s of yoga therapy are important you?

BS-C: My personal yoga practice is home based. As a student, registered Yoga teacher and Certified Yoga Therapist with the International Association of Yoga Therapists (C-IAYT), I avail myself of their online tools and resources. My interests have grown with regard to utilizing the more subtle aspects of yoga including pranayama, meditation, visualization, and the use of sound to ease pain. For the past two years I have been a member of a weekly meditation group.

YTI: Tell us a little more about you?

BS-C: My husband Lane and I own a small seasonal ice cream shop on the Sunshine Coast. I blend my teaching and the requirements of small business ownership throughout the year. We vend at various festivals and events on weekends and are involved in the coastal community.

I am deeply thankful for all my teachers past and present, particularly so for the training at Yoga Therapy International with Maggie Reagh and her faculty. The training has provided me with the techniques, tools and philosophical underpinnings needed to continue to be thoroughly engaged in the work I love.

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