

Dear Wakeful Body yogis,

What a pleasure it will be to practice with you! Attached to this email is your **Wakeful Body Course Syllabus**, including weekly recommendations for the course.

Getting the most out of this course requires that outside of class, you continue to read and even more importantly *practice*. Practice is the true teacher. The weekly readings are short, so that you can focus on building a daily (or daily-ish) somatic meditation practice.

A few helpful tips for getting started (if you don't already have a routine):

- Set up a designated meditation space, where you keep your meditation cushion or chair, and perhaps set up a small shrine nearby with some cherished or inspiring objects, favorite prayers/poems, your practice books. Maybe light a candle at the start of your practice.
- Think about the time of day you most like to practice, and try to get to your cushion or yoga mat at the same time every day. You might set a timer on your phone.
- Read a little bit of *The Wakeful Body* right before you sit, something from the chapter we are focusing on, such as a poem or one of the meditation practice descriptions.
- Queue up the Wakeful Body Audio Guided Mediations on Soundcloud, and do a guided practice
- Make a plan at the beginning of each week, which meditation practice(s) or movement practices you are going to focus on. I have made suggestions to that effect in the syllabus, but you might want to plan more specifically, for example, breath meditation on Monday and Wednesday and GROUND practice on Friday.....listen to your body!

The **Wakeful Body Home Group** is a cohort of your peers who meet monthly to discuss the practices and readings, assisted by a few guiding questions provided on the syllabus. Feel free to deviate from the structure as needed.....the Home Group is intended to help you learn from one another and develop a sense of community as we go through the course. I strongly recommend participation in the peer group, even if you consider yourself to be an introvert or “non joiner”.....the support you get from connecting to one another around meditation practice might surprise you.

Finally, a little about the readings.....I have included on the syllabus some optional supplementary readings. Only *The Wakeful Body* is required reading for the course, but the other books provide further paths of exploration. There are so many more books that could have been included, but I just chose a few of the ones that I have found compelling. I am particularly interested in how science and philosophy are talking about the body-mind continuum at this point in history, so the readings skew a bit in the sciency direction, rather than books on meditation or Buddhism per se, although there are a few of those.

With joy and looking forward to our next gathering,

Willa