

Trainers

Janne Kontala

Janne Kontala has taught yoga for 25 years. He holds Yoga Alliance RYT-200, RYT-500 and continuing education facilitator credentials. In 2016 he completed a doctoral degree in religious studies at Åbo Akademi, where he worked as a researcher in projects funded by the Academy of Finland: Viewpoints to the World (2011–2015) and Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (2015–2018). He has developed and taught the master's level basic courses in Hinduism and Buddhism at Åbo Akademi and Centret för Livslångt Lärande.

Janne is a founding member and editor of the yoga magazine Ananda and has written the books Inner Yoga (Finnish: Joogan sydän, Basam 2015), Yoga Sutra – Hiljaisen mielen tie (2020), and Bhagavad Gita – johdatus joogan salaisuuteen (2023). He has been training yoga teachers since 2005 and has served as curriculum designer and lead teacher at Bhaktivedanta College in Belgium since 2017. He has also guided yoga for rehabilitation groups in Stockholm, Helsinki and Kerava. His specialisms within the programme are yoga philosophy and meditative techniques. He has developed a Yoga Alliance-approved yoga philosophy study module and led the working group that created Finland's first Yoga Alliance-approved online teacher training.

Emma Slow

Emma Slow is a yoga and meditation teacher, yoga teacher trainer and yoga therapist based in Porvoo. Her more than 20 years of experience with yoga encompasses a wide range of practice forms. Her teaching qualifications include Ananda Seva's 250-hour teacher training, the multi-year Slow Yoga teacher training, and Yoga Alliance YACEP E-RYT 200h and 500h credentials, as well as Svastha yoga therapy training and yoga therapy training at Manav Rachna International University.

Since 2013, Emma's interest has been particularly directed towards the therapeutic application of yoga alongside physiotherapy studies. She has completed diverse studies in yoga therapy and has been training yoga therapists together with Iia Lappalainen since 2020. Emma's teaching experience includes teaching in her own studio, adult education centres, and numerous fitness and yoga studios. In recent years she has trained yoga teachers in Finland, Estonia, Sweden, Belgium and Malaysia. She has been training yoga teachers since 2014. In training and on yoga courses she emphasises functional anatomy and physiology and a therapeutic perspective, with particular expertise in pre- and post-natal yoga.

Anneli Rautiainen

Anneli Rautiainen has an exceptionally broad experience across different yoga styles and teaching. In Iyengar yoga she has completed a level 3 teaching qualification and a three-year yoga therapy training. She has taught yoga following B.K.S. Iyengar's tradition in her own yoga

studio in Helsinki since 2003. Alongside Iyengar yoga, she has also completed the teacher qualification of the Finnish Yoga Institute. She co-authored the book *Lempeän joogan voima* (ReadMe 2018) together with Sonja Lumme. Anneli's areas of expertise within yoga are pedagogy and curricula; she introduced Iyengar yoga teacher training to Finland. She holds qualifications as a dance artist and dance pedagogue and has worked as a choreographer for television entertainment programmes since the 1980s. Within the programme, her specialism is the emphasis on individual guidance and the application of diverse pedagogical approaches.

Iitu Leinonen

Iitu Leinonen is a yoga teacher based in Helsinki who has taught yoga for fifteen years. She holds a Yoga Alliance RYT-500 credential. Her diverse teaching background includes yoga studios, adult education centres, gyms, companies, events, private sessions, online courses, retreats, and resorts, as well as running weekly classes and workshops through her own business. She has experience of training yoga teachers over several years, both in Finland and in international settings. Iitu is a Master of Social Sciences from the University of Helsinki, specialising in communication. Within the programme her specialism is the concept of 'self practice' — the practitioner's individual practice and the application of yoga in everyday life — and yoga as a profession, entrepreneurship and marketing.

Mikko Mononen

Mikko Mononen is an entrepreneur and yoga teacher from Ypäjä. His specialism within the programme, alongside asana practice, is meditation techniques. His path to yoga came after a motocross racing career that ended in injury, leading from a performance-focused mindset towards a search for meaning. A journey beginning with Greek philosophy passed through Western philosophy, theosophy, Christian mysticism and Buddhism before arriving at yoga. Mikko's daily life is filled with the study of yoga philosophy, aligning life accordingly, formal practice, and sharing the resulting insights with yoga students. In his teaching he aims to illuminate how philosophy, asana, pranayama and meditation techniques are not studied merely for the sake of the practice itself, but how daily practice tunes the instruments of body and mind that we then play in the challenges of everyday life alongside others.

