



Sigrid Steen Haugen

MOVING AND FEELING

An exploration of the play between motion, emotion and motivation in yoga practitioners in Norway.

Master's thesis in Religious Studies
Supervisor: Gabriel Levy & Sven Bretfeld
Trondheim, September 2016



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Norwegian University of Science and Technology
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Initially, I opted to do a comparative study of people's experiences as "something set apart" from ordinary everyday life through their various embodied practices, such as dance, yoga and crossfit. I wanted to look at how modern people bridge the religious-secular gap through embodied practices that both relate to exercise of the body and have ritual-like elements that appear "spiritual, but not religious"¹. The framework of a master's thesis called for narrowing the project, and I chose to go with yoga, since this is a field that only during the last decade has been in greater ethnographic focus in various academic fields, among them religious studies, social anthropology, sociology, pedagogics and psychology. In addition, of course, it was my hope that my personal studies of yoga over the past 15 years would come in handy.

Building upon several studies, my starting point is that yoga *is* an embodied practice, used by *some* to express or experience their 'spirituality', or to induce or seek to experience 'emotions experienced as set-apart-as-special'². This means that, although many modern day practitioners do yoga mainly for its physical benefits, these will not be the practitioners in focus in this thesis (De Michelis, 2005; Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005; Smith, 2007). Over the past decades clinical and cognitive research studies testify to the fact that yoga and meditation have many health-benefits, both physical and mental, and several of them look into the value of applying yoga as a tool for various psychosomatic treatments (Fiori, David, & Aglioti, 2014; Gard, Noggle, Park, Vago, & Wilson, 2014; Impett, Daubenmier, & Hirschman, 2006; Mackenzie et al., 2014; Schmalzl, Powers, & Blom, 2015). Yoga practice is indeed linked to a higher quality of life in many research projects, both from the angle of clinical studies and ethnographic studies, and these findings have definitely been a part of yoga's integration and acceptance into secular society. Yoga inherits a diverse "use", since it can be both a tool for optimizing physical posture and movement, and at the same time, in the functions of an embodied ritual, it conveys an intricate and fuzzy system of beliefs and values from a cross-section of traditional Indian philosophies mixed with Western ideas about healing and self-realization. The blending of

¹ Meaning that the people doing the practice "get more out of it" in a religious-like manner than merely the physical and social, and yet they do not relate it to a specific religious organization.

² For further explanation of the use of the words 'embodiment', 'spiritual' and 'emotions experienced as set-apart-as-special' in this thesis, see 1.2

ideals of health, self-realization and popular culture all meet in the practices of modern yoga, and it appears as if many blend the practice of physical yoga with alternative spirituality, and use the physical poses as a bodily language to express devotion and experience interconnectedness with “something”³ (Ylönen, 2012). The extent to which this blend is considered “something more than physical” is highly up to each individual (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 308). In other words, the people that blend and bricolage their spirituality where yoga is (one of) their main physical practices are the ones in particular interest in this project. This means that several of the points made in the discussion that will follow in this thesis focus on the part of yoga that orients itself in the direction of borderline religiosity. The definition of yoga is wide in this thesis, and was intentionally left undefined in the survey I conducted, in order for the practitioners to do their own interpretations of the word. In other words, physical postures, meditation, breathing, relaxation, singing, and also studies and lifestyle choices might be included in a broad sense of yoga.

The embodied contemplative nature of yoga and meditation seem to make way for a non-judgmental mindfulness and a greater awareness of the current experience of bodily sensations, emotions, and thoughts (Mehling et al., 2011; Solomonova, 2015). The way yoga creates a “set-aside-space” for the practitioners, enables the practitioners to be more aware of their internal states (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 311). Suzanne Newcombe’s findings on how a majority in her case study report that their practice facilitates both an awareness of and a way of managing their feelings led me to shed a closer light on emotions in yoga practice. Varela et. al. suggest that mindfulness, or awareness might work as a method for examining and exploring human experience (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991, p. 25). In fact, Varela et. al. suggest that mindfulness/awareness creates a clear link between cognitive science and phenomenology, meaning that embodied reflection (mindfulness) could serve as a way of gaining better “access” to experience (Varela et al., 1991, pp. 25-27). Shaun Gallagher also suggests a similar experimental approach to “suspend the beliefs” of the subjects, and make them able to have a more “open-ended reflection” about their experiences that can “cut the chain of habitual thought patterns and preconceptions” (Gallagher in Taves, 2009, p. 73; Varela et al., 1991, p. 27). Suspending the beliefs would ask the subjects to be able to look beyond the context of their

³ “Something” as in something “bigger than themselves”, or something energetically outside or inside themselves, be it their own selves, an idea of God or some kind of universal energy. Suzanne Newcombe says that, “despite the frequent appeals to medical science to elucidate the mechanisms of exactly how āsana practice might improve mental and physical wellbeing, many asana practitioners would also affirm that there is something to the transformative experience of yoga practice that cannot be reduced to biomedical “scientific” mechanisms” (Newcombe, 2013, p. 69).

experience, and rather take a closer look at what it feels like in the body, what emotions arises, and why they differentiate this from other experiences in their lives (Taves, 2009). Although I do not attempt to ‘educate’ the subjects in suspending their beliefs about their experiences, the basis for many of the questions in the survey for this thesis builds upon the idea that yoga enables a greater mindfulness and reflexivity towards both physical sensations and embodied experiences such as emotions.

From the basis that yoga practice creates introspection and room for emotional exploration and experience through embodiment, I am interested in finding out more about whether, and to what degree, these emotional experiences are a part of the framework that motivates⁴ the practitioners to have a continuous practice (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005; Smith, 2007). Emotions tend to be a side-project from the main issue, my hopes are that this thesis will be a contribution to expanding upon this field, especially in the context of religious studies and research on embodied everyday-life-practices that are given meaning and value through (among others) the means of emotional suggestions and experiences. In this context, it is interesting to see what kinds of emotions are prevalent in relation to a yoga practice, and whether or not this corresponds with the ideas of ritual as a liminal phase – in other words – if the practitioners themselves experience some “specialness”, or “set-aside-ness” through their emotions in their practice, and if this links to a notion of spirituality. I will look further at the concept of ‘spirituality’ in the eyes of the respondents, and see whether or not this is compatible to the concept of yoga as an embodied practice.

The way the body serves as a societal symbol makes understanding bodily practices integral to understanding modern societies (Shilling, 2005, p. 226). Looking at how a practice might influence and shape people’s schemas, values and knowledge about the world, but also how previous knowledge shapes the practitioners experience will be in focus in this thesis. Narrowing the focus on emotions, the idea of how emotions often are shared and culturally informed, my intention is getting at the tendencies within this particular sub-culture (yoga) in

⁴ Hasselle-Newcombe’s case study of British practitioners of the Iyengar Method of Yoga looks closer at spirituality and ‘mystical religion’ in the contemporary society, and her findings show how motivations for yoga practice do go beyond the physical for a majority in her sample.

Norway, creating an attempt at a framework for possible future studies on emotions in ritual-like practices (Michaels & Wulf, 2012; Winters, 2008).

1.1.1 REFLEXIVITY

I have been practicing yoga (in the broad sense of the word) for 15 years. I have also taught yoga regularly since 2005, including weekly classes, weekend workshops, retreats and teacher trainings. From 2010-2015 I was a co-owner of one of Norway's largest yoga studios. Because of this, I have immediate access to the yoga milieu, and also insight to practices, tendencies and trends.

Early on in this project, I was unsure if choosing yoga as a specific area to work with was a good idea or not. I was and am very aware of that due to my personal involvement in the field, it is highly necessary that I keep my eyes wide open to my own biases, my language tools, stream of thoughts and conclusions. However, in discussion with several of my supervisors and well-informed colleagues at the yoga center where I have spent most of my yoga teaching days, I got the support I needed to change perspective. As a practitioner myself, I might more easily understand and have better access to the milieu than an outsider would. In the context of research on embodied practices, experiences with the practice in one's own body seems almost necessary in order to have a baseline understanding and relation to the physical and affective effects as described by informants (Cossette, 2014, p. 34). In addition to the experience part, I have good access to and knowledge about the language, symbolism and theories linked to this milieu, which makes approaching the actors experience through 'their' language easier.

1.1.2 METHODS APPROACH

Because this is a pilot-project of sorts, I chose to do a broader research via an online survey, so I had the chance to reach as many as possible of "group-within-the-group", meaning those who practice yoga in Norway with religious or spiritual intentions in mind (body). Although I hoped to do in-depth follow-up questions with some of the respondents, the timeframe for this thesis did not allow for that. The survey focuses on three main subjects: spirituality, motivation and emotions. In addition to the more open-ended questions, the demographic questions such as gender, age, educational level, religion or lifestyle and whether or not the respondents are yoga teachers serve as comparative elements for other research on yoga and fitness. Unfortunately, there is a lack of statistical research on both yoga and spirituality in Norway, (though some

googling tells me that PhD Candidate in Science of Religion Knut Melvær at the University of Bergen is working on the latter). This means that the grounds to make comparisons between the results in this thesis and the Norwegian population in general that engages in yoga and/or associates with spirituality will be difficult before such numbers are produced.

In order to attempt to measure motivational aspects that come to play in the respondents' interpretation of their practice, the survey was based on affective (subjective experience) self-reports by recall (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014, p. 328). Thus, the emotions that are available from the survey are based on people's recollections of their emotions, in other words – what they remember as motivating. This thesis does not compare certain emotions with specific postures or styles of yoga, but rather takes a general overview.

1.2 EXPLAINING THE TERMS

1.2.1 EMBODIED

Broadly speaking, embodiment refers to the entire physical context of the human body where social values, environment and various dispositions in and through the body are a result of the reflection that happens in a symbiosis between the body and the mind (Barsalou, Barbey, Simmons, & Santos, 2005; Strathern & Stewart, 1998; Varela et al., 1991). Embodied cognitive science holds that the mind is inherently embodied in such a way that our conceptual systems and our capacity for thought is shaped by the nature of our brains, our bodies and bodily interactions with the environments we live in (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, pp. 3-6, 265). Barsalou et al. informs that, "embodiment refers generally to the entire physical context of cognition, including not just bodily states, but also modality-specific systems and environmental situations" (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 24). Within this also lies the statement that cognition depends on the sensuous experience of actually having a body, and that cognition does not take place without physical interaction (Varela et al., 1991, p. 73). The embodiment-theory states that there is no mind "separate from and independent of the body, nor are there thoughts that have an existence independent of bodies and brains" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 265).

1.2.2 PRACTICE

The turn to ‘practice’ in religious, social and anthropological studies has directed scholarly attention to actions, habits and disciplines that arise in the context of embodied actions (Bender & Taves, 2012, p. 5). This would mean that practice in the etic sense is anything the actors do in or with their bodies, and not simply oriented towards something done with intention. The yoga practitioners on the other hand, usually place a higher value on the intention of the practice, whether it is “spiritual advancement, stress relief or physical fitness”, in other words something they actively choose and set aside time to do (Strauss, 2005, p. 55). To make a distinction between the two, although the context often explains itself, I will clarify by using *yoga practice*, or *Ypractice* or *Ypractitioners* to note when I am talking about “their” emic actions, and simply *practice* when talking about the term in relations to etic, scholarly discussions.

1.2.3 RITUAL AND RITUALIZATION

Ritual is often thought of as “the repetitive, ordered performance of certain embodied actions similarly attached to social values and purposes” (Strathern & Stewart, 1998, pp. 237-238). Ritual is a term widely used, in religious context, in psychology, sociology and anthropology and ethnology among other disciplines (Rappaport, 1999, pp. 24-25). The many different variations of *ritual types* show how difficult and elusive the identification of either boundaries or centers of a ritual are. Bell uses the term *ritualization* to “draw attention to the way in which certain social actions strategically distinguish themselves in relation to other actions”. Ritualization then, could be seen as various cultural strategies for marking some activities as “set apart” from others, creating a qualitative distinction between the “sacred” and the “profane”, or a separation between what is “set apart as special” and the everyday life (Bell, 1992, p. 74). In this thesis, I argue that a modern ritual is an embodied physical act, such as yoga, made with intention and an idea of how these acts are set aside as something special, or in contrast to the ordinary everyday-life.

1.2.4 EXPERIENCE

The use of the concept *religious experience* is very broad, as it encompasses not only various religious, more distinct “types” of experience (often distinguished as *spiritual*, *visionary*, or *mystical*) but also a large range of feelings, moods, perceptions, dispositions and states of

consciousness (Sharf, 1998, p. 95). Robert Sharf lays out two distinct usages for the term “experience”, but Ann Taves distinguishes between at least three. I try to map out the different meanings here, as highlighted by Sharf and Taves. (1) Experience as different types where some are more abstract, some more concrete as exemplified by ‘religious experience’, ‘human experience’ and ‘work experience’ (Taves, 2009, p. 57). (2) Experience as something you have done in your life, highly linked to the social or public sphere where the referent participates, or lives through a context for the experience. This in turn can be separated by (1a) an accumulative abstraction of experience as exemplified by “My experience suggests, or “In my experience”, and (1b) a clarification of skills or what you have been doing as exemplified by statements such as: “I have combat experience” or “I have experience with diesel engines” (Sharf, 1998, p. 104; Taves, 2009, p. 57). (3) Specific experiences of ‘something’ as exemplified by “I experienced something”, or “the experience was special”, and (4) Experience as a (rough) synonym for *consciousness*, where the referent “directly perceive”, “observe”, “are aware of”, or “are conscious of” something (Sharf, 1998, p. 104; Taves, 2009, p. 57). The 3rd and 4th point are closely linked, but separated by the *something* in question, and whether or not it is talk about a conveyance in past tense, or in present (3 = “I experienced *something*”, 4 = “I am experiencing (*something*)”). In point 4 it could be questioned whether or not there is an actual experience worth looking in to, or if the referent actually could have used the term “I am observing (*something*)”.

In Norwegian, the word *experience* is more clearly separated by using different words for these various interpretations of experience [opplevelse, erfaring], thus the context is easier to understand in the light of the survey. In this thesis, I do not view ‘experience’ or ‘religious or spiritual experience’ as special experiences of “something” essential (as in; God, Spirit or the like), but they are valued as special experiences to the practitioners. I see this in the light of the notions of spirituality and valued emotions, or feelings as described below, meaning that for the practitioners or actors themselves, some experiences are set aside as special, in the light of the framework of knowledge (whether “religious”, “spiritual” or “secular”) in which they interpret their world. In other words, deeming an experience as religious or spiritual is highly up to the actors and the milieu to which they subscribe, thus the kind of experience in focus could be called an experience *deemed* religious/spiritual (Taves, 2009). This is based on the suggestion by Taves to break apart the concept of “religious experience”, and rather look at the components and processes that causes something to be deemed religious, magical, mystical,

spiritual, etc., which causes the focus to be on the interaction between the interdisciplinary directions surrounding the study of religion (Taves, 2009, p. 8). I find the definition set by Taves to treat religious experience as a kind of *religious thing* valuable to setting the frame for a point of departure for researching people's experiences. Taves uses *things* to "refer to any thing, whether an experience, object, act or agent" (Taves, 2009, pp. 16-17). By reframing the concept of "religious experience" as "experiences deemed religious", and then viewing the 'experiences deemed religious' as a part of larger processes where people set *something* apart as special, the analysis of experience can be pulled out from the *sui generis* discussion, and into a larger field of complex formations that lays the basis for 'religions'.

1.2.5 SPIRITUALITY / SOMETHING SET APART AS SPECIAL

Many in the modern world seek to set up a separation between their personal spirituality and dogmatic religion. There is no definite definition for *spirituality*, but as the root of the word derives from Latin, meaning "soul, courage, vigor, breath", it is obviously connected to the notion of something that is *set aside* from everyday life, adding dimensions of transcendent aspects to the mere biological and scientific understanding. Following Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead, the modern use of the word 'spirituality' is linked in the larger picture with the *subjective turn* in modern times from 'life-as' (objective roles, duties, obligations, as oft found in 'organized religion') to 'subjective-life' ("life lived by reference to one's own subjective experiences", which is emphasized within both modern times and 'spiritual' milieus) (Heelas, Woodhead, Seel, Szerszynski, & Tusting, 2007, pp. 2-3). A note here would be that the use of 'subjective-life-spirituality' and 'life-as-religion' is not always identical with the ways that *spirituality* and *religion* is used by all (Heelas et al., 2007, pp. 7-8). In this thesis, when I use the concept "spirituality" it is connected to the subjective turn in line with the rest of the societal development that focuses on the individual, and the individual's goals, values and meaning-markers. I build on the idea of spirituality as the modern blend of humanistic psychology, mystical and esoteric traditions and eastern religions with the emphasis on subjective experience. In other words, the concept of spirituality could be seen in the light of Courtney Bender and Ann Taves' notion of "something" that is to a certain degree set apart from everyday life and given value and meaning as "something special". This "something" can be related to actions, things or certain ideas or beliefs, often it is mixed together in a framework that makes sense for the individual themselves (Bender & Taves, 2012; Taves, 2009).

1.2.6 EMOTION

An emotion happens when something happens, whether external or internal (as connected to an embodied previous event) (Scherer, 2005). To move is to feel, in some way or another. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone emphasizes how “a movement-deficient understanding of emotion is an impoverished understanding of emotion” (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 274). Along these lines, in this thesis I will argue from the idea of emotion as a whole-body phenomenon that require approaches that captures the importance of bodily positioning, context and motivational factors in order to be captured properly. Because I am tying the affective or emotional stance to yoga and its associated practices, there is an element of event focus in the design feature of this thesis, meaning that I am addressing the modality – and event anchoring of emotions (Scherer, 2005, p. 700).

A distinction between emotions, feelings, moods and attitude might be in order, since these are confusing and intermingling concepts. A *feeling* denotes a subjective experience process, and reflects the cognitive appraisals as well somatic and motivational response patterns that underlies an emotional episode (Scherer, 2005, p. 699). In other words, feelings are a part of an emotion, but they are not synonymous with each other. In this thesis, the focus is mainly on these subjective feelings, and although I tend to use ‘emotions’ as a concept that includes the changes in the organismic subsystems (see Chapter 6.2.), feelings are the part that is most accessible via language and from the viewpoint of religion and culture. Where emotions are more fleeting, usually linked to an action, attitudes are relatively stable inclinations towards something (people, objects, actions). Moods have similarities with feelings, but are often more unspecific and tend to last longer. It is difficult to separate emotion from other affective phenomena, such as preferences, attitudes, affective dispositions and interpersonal stances (Scherer, 2005, p. 699).

Scherer suggests that one could separate emotions between *utilitarian* (common emotions related to survival, well-being and social interaction) and *aesthetic* emotions (emotions that come “on top” of basic needs, related to beauty and appreciation of intrinsic qualities in a thing or event) (Scherer, 2005, p. 706). In this thesis, the idea of how certain emotions are set apart as special and desirable – something one seeks to “get more of” - are intermingled with the idea of spirituality and motivation. As the emphasis is placed on intrinsic motivations, the aesthetic

emotions will also be of main interest regarding value-placement. Examples of aesthetic emotions are, according to Scherer, “being moved or awed, being full of wonder, admiration, bliss, ecstasy, fascination, harmony, rapture, solemnity” (Scherer, 2005, p. 706). Thus, a suggested alternative to the notion of ‘spirituality’ for this sub-group could be “set-aside-and-value-laden-emotions” (SAVLE), or “culturally-informed- set-aside-and-value-laden-emotions” (CISAVLE). Stating a clear difference between the affective phenomena is not of great importance in this thesis, since all of those, including emotions, are relevant to the process of evaluation and motivation (Scherer, 2005, p. 701). Although we tend to talk about “emotional states”, this is a way of fixating something that is actually fluid and adaptive in its form, depending on the circumstances, an aspect I will address in the analysis of the data. As previous research show that regular practitioners of yoga possibly hold a greater level of reflexivity and awareness, the survey questions are designed to make space and open to the respondent’s own reflections of the physiological components of emotional experiences.

1.2.7 YOGA & MODERN POSTURAL YOGA

The word yoga encapsulates and evokes a wide range of images and ideas, from meditating Indian men, to hippies, to skinny superstars in backbends on yachts - all of them valid, and none of them really more ‘correct’ than the other, since “its definition will always be located within a particular historical context” (Strauss, 2005, pp. 1-2). Yoga is a discipline grounded in a set of teachings about the body and mind, and has shown itself to be versatile and adaptable to many cultures, lifestyles and people. Some of the core ideas seem to hover around the same theme, as outlined simply by the meaning of the word yoga itself; which is most often translated from the Sanskrit root word ‘yuj’ meaning to “yoke” or “join together”. In this sense of the word, union usually refers to joining the individual self with the Absolute or Universal Self, or the balance and joining of body, mind and spirit (Strauss, 2005, p. 3). The idea of the joining of the self with the universe can be interpreted along the lines of both dualistic and non-dualistic forms of yogic philosophy, but the term also has room for more secular ways of interpretation (Feuerstein, 2008).

Say *yoga* to Westerners⁵, and most will think *yoga poses*, and they are in many ways right - never before in the history of *yoga* has the practice of physical postures assumed the importance that it has in the West (Singleton, 2010, p. 3). The physical practice of *yoga* is also called *Hatha yoga*, meaning *yoga* that incorporates the body and physical postures into its practices, in addition to pranayama (breathing exercises), kriyas (cleansing exercises) and meditation in various forms. The word *hatha* literally means “the *yoga* of force”, and many have understood the “force” of this to refer to the effort one is required to have to practice it (Birch, 2011, p. 527). An esoteric interpretation relates *hatha* to mean the union of the sun (ha) and the moon (tha) energies in the body (Birch, 2011, p. 527). This is linked to the notion of a subtle body of energies, sometimes linked to the neural system, which was in main focus in pre-modern practices of physical *yoga* (Singleton, 2010, pp. 29-33).

Elizabeth De Michelis categorizes modern *yoga* into three types: *Modern Postural Yoga*, which stresses physical exercises, and *Modern Meditational Yoga*, which stresses concentration and meditation (De Michelis, 2005, p. 187). These two focus on individual experience rather than on religious and philosophical doctrine, although you often find more than traces of this in these practices, it will be more visible in the third type De Michelis classifies as *Modern Denominational Yoga* (De Michelis, 2005, p. 189). Suzanne Newcombe and others point out the obvious overlap of these classifications by De Michelis, and that this should be kept in mind while researching various forms of *yoga* (Newcombe, 2013, p. 65; Sarbacker, 2014, pp. 101-102). Modern Postural *Yoga* (MPY), thus usually refers to “modern biomechanical systems of *yoga*, based on sequences of asana or postures that are, through pranayama or breathing exercises, synchronized with the breath” (Jain, 2012, p. 3), yet there is definitely an opening for modern *yoga* to be more than that for the individuals practicing it (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005; Jain, 2012, p. 3; Newcombe, 2013). In this thesis I argue that the lines between classifications are blurred, and will more often go by the term ‘*yoga*’ in order to keep the doors open for more interpretations of it, including ethical, philosophical and religious views.

⁵ As Newcombe says, “for the purposes of modern *yoga*, *Western culture* can be understood to primarily consist of Europe, the United States, and the anglophone Commonwealth nations; although *yoga* is now spreading in South and Central America and former Soviet states, this could be seen as a later phase of development” (Newcombe, 2013, pp. 57-58).

1.2.8 THE YOGA MILIEU

Many yoga practitioners that see yoga as a part of their “spiritual practice” probably have more or less involvement in the *alternative* or *cultic* milieu, which could for example involve the use of divination cards, astrology, healing and gems in addition to what could be mapped under “yoga”, meaning asana, mantra, meditation and breathing exercises. In this context, I have coined the term ‘the yoga milieu’, inspired by Colin Campbell’s term ‘the cultic milieu’, as a kind of cultural “underground”, or sub-milieu of society (Campbell, 1972). As Campbell says, “unorthodox science, alien and heretical religion, deviant medicine, all compromise elements of such an underground. In addition, it includes the collectives, institutions, individuals and media of communication associated with these beliefs” (Campbell, 1972, p. 122). In the context of yoga, the “heterogeneous assortment of cultural items” are brought together by the label “yoga”, but the participants might have very diverse practices and beliefs (Campbell, 1972, p. 122).

The commonalities in this loosely tied milieu is the notion of individual freedom, emphasis on subjective experience and practice, and an ideology of seekership (Campbell, 1972, pp. 122-123). A strong tendency within the ‘cultic milieu’ is also the blending of religion and science, a point in which modern yoga has greatly expanded upon, as I’ll further map out below (Campbell, 1972, p. 124). Yoga can be seen as one of the “items” within the cultic milieu, but in order to be more specific, I see that a separation is in place. So in addition to using MPY, I will also use the (very large) umbrella term: the ‘yoga milieu’, or simply ‘yoga’, in a way that combines all of De Michelis’ categories when the subject cannot be made distinct for just MPY. The ‘yoga milieu’ works as a more general statement which combines the modern theories on the cultic milieu with the general modern yoga field, that includes all three types of modern yoga as categorized by De Michelis. This means that I see yoga as a phenomenon that orients itself somewhere between the secular and the religious, depending on the practitioners own interpretation and value-placement.

1.3 STRUCTURE

Chapter 2 introduces the fields of research along with several of the most prominent researchers in these areas. Although several of these are overlapping, I have divided them into 2.1.1. Yoga, 2.1.2. Embodied Cognitive Science & Phenomenology of Experience, 2.1.3. Emotions, and 2.1.4. Ritual theory. The third chapter introduces my choice of methods for this survey, along with reflections on the methodological issues I have faced while working on this thesis. My main method is a 27-question long survey with both open-ended and closed questions, where the majority of the respondents replied online.

Chapter 4 gives a deeper insight to the yoga context in the West. In addition to identifying the practitioners with some use of the survey results, I am locating yoga in the modern context, with some specifics for the Norwegian context, as some of the factors that could be relevant for the pre-conceived experiences of the practitioners separates itself from research from other countries. Because research on yoga as an embodied phenomenon is still a relatively new disciplinary field, a proper introduction and overview is in order. Here I am also giving the historical and religio-philosophical context of yoga practice. This is relevant for the later analysis of the results from the survey.

Chapter 5 and chapter 6 introduces the main bulk of theoretical resources that builds up the hypotheses for this survey. Along with the yoga context, these chapters function as the basis for the analysis. The fifth chapter addresses “The Body”, where the theories of cognitive embodiment, phenomenology and ritual form are integrated. Here I am introducing one of the main theories from Mellor & Shilling about *body pedagogics*, a theoretical foundation for several sections of this thesis. I am also emphasizing the theories on embodied knowledge, and how a practice influences body schemas and body image. The sixth chapter encompasses a rather large section of theories, focused in three main areas; 6.1 Experience (deemed religious), 6.2 Emotions and 6.3 Motivation, combining them in the context of body pedagogics in 6.4. I am placing some emphasis on the aspect of awareness and mindful intention and motivation as highly relevant to the notion of spirituality in the embodied practice of yoga, in addition to clarifying what kinds of beliefs motivate the practice of yoga.

Chapter 7 serves as an overview and a complement of the previous theories and a structuring of the notions of motion, emotion and motivation in the context of yoga. On the basis of the previous chapter's theories, I discuss how this comes to play in the yoga context, and clarify the framing of why I have chosen to focus on emotions as the main aspect of the survey.

Chapter 8 is a presentation and analysis of the data that was collected for this thesis, analyzed and discussed in the light of the theories and contexts that has been presented in the earlier chapters. I am also reflecting on some of the issues in interpreting the data. The last chapter serves as a short concluding discussion, setting the findings in a greater research context, with suggestions for future research on similar grounds.

2 FIELD OF RESEARCH

2.1 THE FIELDS AND THE RESEARCHERS

2.1.1 YOGA

Research on yoga is a vast field of studies, from traditional text-based approaches, or textual influenced research (White, 2012) to historical, social, spatial and more clinical (health-oriented) contexts. There is a distinction between historical and textual approaches and modern, situated and embodied research on yoga, and it is the latter that I focus on in this thesis, a field that is still relatively ‘new’ by academic standards. Because the concept ‘yoga’ includes such a diverse set of practices, and because they appeal to a variety of social groups, ages, sexualities and bodies, the research on yoga is, and has the potential to be just as diverse. A recent academic conference in Krakow was arranged by the Jagiellonian University and the “Modern Yoga Research” group⁶ (UK-based) aimed to present the diversity within the field of yoga research, but these events are still rather rare (Wildcroft, 2016).

Elizabeth De Michelis’ *A History of Modern Yoga* from 2005 and Mark Singleton’s *Yoga Body, the Origins of Modern Posture Practice* from 2010 stand as two of the most noticeable and influential studies on modern yoga that locate the practices both in history and present. While De Michelis focuses more on the style and context of Iyengar Yoga, Singleton has a broader approach, but leans towards exemplification through the practice of Ashtanga-Vinyasa, both styles of which originate from the same lineage. Sarah Strauss’ book, *Positioning Yoga. Balancing Acts Across Cultures* does much of what De Michelis’ book does by positioning yoga in its modern context. Strauss focuses on Sivananda Yoga and the interesting meeting between East and West as a case study. De Michelis, Strauss and Singleton clarify the way yoga as practiced today has been shaped in the meeting between East and West.⁷ Andrea Jain informs a more modern approach to yoga and the consumer-oriented business path that modern yoga has taken. In this thesis I’m informed by a shorter, but concise article of hers, but she also published a book named *Selling Yoga. From Counterculture to Popculture* that highlights the

⁶ This group consists of many of the researchers that are the sources for this thesis: Elizabeth De Michelis, Mark Singleton, Susanne Newcombe, David Gordon White, and more.

⁷ Some poses do of course have older origins; as is evident through among others, the Hatha yoga Pradipika (fifteenth century CE), which is speculated to draw on older works (Singleton, 2010).

mainstreaming of yoga today. The approach towards yoga as a kind of modern secular ritual, or as a part of the ‘esoteric’ or ‘alternative milieu’, providing the practitioners with tools for their own ‘spiritual practice’ has been explored by several, including Suzanne Newcombe (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005; Newcombe, 2013), Benjamin Richard Smith (Smith, 2007), Lars Jørun Langøien (Langøien, 2012), Stuart Ray Sarbacker (Sarbacker, 2014), Jennifer Lea (Lea, 2009) and Hanna-Leena Ylönen (Ylönen, 2012), in addition to those mentioned above. I build on the research from all of these in this thesis.

The paradigm shift to the focus on *practice* within modern sociological, religious context includes yoga and similar bodily practices as a natural location of research. Many anthropologists have included “the sensual approach” to yoga studies and are practitioners themselves, or do case studies based on their immersion in a chosen milieu and period (Cossette, 2014; Kern, 2012). I have been in contact with a few that are currently doing research on yoga, and who are long-time practitioners themselves. Among these are Amara Miller (University of California) and Theodora Wildcroft (Open University, UK), who are currently writing their PhD’s with yoga as the subject matter. Miller writes from the angle of Sociology with a “special interest in issues of access and inequality within yoga”, and Wildcroft from the angle of Religious Studies to explore “the relationship between physical practice, animate bodies and systems of religious authority and transmission” (Miller, 2016; Wildcroft, 2015). I have done my best to follow up on current ideas and research on modern yoga, examining both blogs and social media, in addition to the current streams within the milieu itself. Many of the recent discussions within the milieu revolve around yoga and cultural appropriation, whether or not yoga is religious (hindu), and yoga and inequality regarding body image, race and social status.

2.1.2 EMBODIED COGNITIVE SCIENCE & PHENOMENOLOGY OF EXPERIENCE

The term experience is a rather new one, and a particular “religious kind of experience” is, much like the concept of “religion”, a modern, Western invention (Sharf, 1998). In the wake of twentieth century essentialist thinkers such as Otto, van der Leeuw, Eliade and Smart, many religious scholars abandoned the focus on religious experience, and rather set it in the context of sociology, anthropology, philosophy and psychology (Taves, 2009, pp. 3-7). This caused a lot of focus within the research on religion to be placed on external and interpersonal relations, such as ritual, thereby ignoring (internal, subjective) experience as a factor (Taves, 2009, p. 8).

More recent work within the interdisciplinary field of cognitive science has focused on the biological, evolutionary aspect of experience, and researchers such as Ann Taves (Taves, 2009), George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999), Raymond Gibbs (Gibbs, 2005), Shaun Gallagher (Gallagher, 2005) and Francisco Varela, Evan Thompson and Eleanor Rosch (Varela et al., 1991), all work in the borderlines between cognitive embodied research and a phenomenological philosophy of knowledge about the experience of the self and the world as situated in the body's modality-specific systems (such as vision, action and emotion) (Barsalou et al., 2005).

In this thesis, along the lines of Ann Taves, I am attempting to “break apart” experience and focus on the emotional aspects of a practice, heavily influenced by the leading researchers on embodied cognitive science, sociology and psychological phenomenology. In addition, I am adding literature from neuroscience and psychosomatics that address the cross-sectional point between cognitive science, yoga, mindfulness, embodiment, motivation and intention with researchers such as Gard (Gard et al., 2014), Mackenzie (Mackenzie et al., 2014), Schmalzl (Schmalzl et al., 2015), Solomonova (Solomonova, 2015), Touré-Tillery & Fishbach (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014) and more.

2.1.3 EMOTIONS

Emotions seem to have similar definitional issues as ‘experience’ does, and “scholars from different disciplines in the humanities and the social and behavioral sciences rarely agree on how to use [the concept]” (Scherer, 2005, p. 697). As with the idea of the self, emotions are often linked to our spacious interior, and the gap between the interior creation of emotion versus how emotions show themselves in contact with the outside – in our bodies, with other people or surroundings, seems to be a central problem of emotions research (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, pp. 6-7). Spackman & Miller indicate that cognitive theories on emotions in philosophy or psychology tend to either view emotions as disembodied (meaning that emotions can exist without somatic stimuli) or as conceptual (meaning that emotions require, and build upon language, beliefs and appraisals) (Spackman & Miller, 2008).

Spackman and Miller point to the immediateness of our emotions as best explained through the notion of embodiment, since they are most often not the result of mediated representations of

the brain, but rather of the bodily engagement with the world (Spackman & Miller, 2008, pp. 70-71). As Spackman and Miller says, “this conception of embodiment suggests that emotions are the result of the coming together of our embodied selves with our environments” (Spackman & Miller, 2008, p. 70)⁸. Taking an embodied approach towards emotions includes taking practice and phenomenology into consideration, and thus seeing the moving body as essential to the emergence of emotions (Simonsen, 2007, p. 177). This is a theory backed by several ‘embodied cognitive science’ researchers, among them Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr., Francisco Varela, Shaun Gallagher, Paula Niedenthal (Niedenthal, Winkielman, Mondillon, & Vermeulen, 2009) and more.

What appears to be a growing field of emotions in relation to movement, includes: emotions in rituals (Michaels & Wulf, 2012), emotions as related to artificial intelligence (Spackman & Miller, 2008), emotions and motivation (Gorman, 2004), emotions and spatiality (Simonsen, 2007). Some also directly focus on emotions and movement, such as Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999), Paula Niedenthal and Klaus Scherer (Scherer, 2005). Scherer has been leading within the field of research on the relationship between cognition, culture and emotion for some decades, and have developed models for categorizing emotions (Geneva Affect Label Coder, or GALC), on which I built the emotion categories in the survey. Paula Niedenthal alongside Piotr Winkielman does groundbreaking work with emphasis on the embodied emotional mind. In other words, the concept of ‘embodied emotions’ cross-sections between various fields of research, among them anthropology, ethnography, sociology, ritual theories, phenomenology, cognitive science, psychology, bio-psychology and psychotherapy.

2.1.4 RITUAL THEORY

As stated in the introduction, I build this thesis from the idea that yoga is an embodied ritual, thus I rely on and include the theories on ritual that see ritual as an embodied practice, that is, a set of movements that gives meaning and conveys certain systems of beliefs and values to the practitioners. Both Roy Rappaport and Catherine Bell are among my main sources for ritual theory. They claim that by definition, religious ritual separates itself from the secular by being given meaning by the practitioners as ‘sacred’ (Bell, 1992; Rappaport, 1999). I would argue

⁸ Kirsten Simonsen notes that it is important to be aware of how the mutuality in creating emotions between the self and the environment does not necessarily indicate a harmonious relationship and that the whole spectrum of different emotions should be taken in consideration (Simonsen, 2007, p. 177).

that it might be preferable instead to build upon the theories of Ann Taves and her definitions of ‘things set apart’, ‘special things’ or ‘things of value’ in the context of religious ritual (Bender & Taves, 2012; Taves, 2009). This is especially relevant for this thesis, as I build upon the idea of yoga practice as a form of ritual that locates itself somewhere between religion and secularity (De Michelis, 2005). Applying Taves’ building block theory to ritual theory means looking at the components and processes that cause something to be deemed religious, magical, mystical, spiritual, etc. by both researchers and by the practitioners, through the process of placing value on various practices, thereby ‘setting them apart’ from everyday life (Taves, 2009, p. 8).

I also rely heavily on the theories by Barsalou et.al. and Strathern & Stewart about ‘embodied knowledge’ and ‘body pedagogics’ through ritual practices. I elaborate on these terms in chapter 5.1 and 7.1, but in short, they focus on the idea of rituals as transmitters and creators of knowledge, and both generators of- and expressions of emotions. The book *Emotions in rituals and performances. South Asian and European perspectives on rituals and performativity*, edited by Michaels and Wulf has been informative in the meeting between rituals and emotions. Michaels and Wulf make a call for “case studies from different areas that help to better understand how emotions are embedded in specific cultures”, meaning that there is a gap in the research regarding emotions in the context of embodied rituals (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 5). As my supervisor Gabriel Levy made me aware of, not many have done research of the cross-sectional point of this thesis: the meeting between the embodied ritual practice of yoga, the emotions and motivations involved, all informed by cognitive science.

3 METHODS

3.1 CHOICE OF METHODS

In this thesis, I make use of a survey with both quantitative and qualitative aspects, in addition to the study and use of relevant literature. Since there is a lack of data about yoga in Norway, the need for gathering a larger portion of quantitative data related to demographics seemed both necessary and highly relevant to map the Norwegian field in the context of research done in other countries and areas (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014). The survey is thus designed to both “examine the distribution of traits and characteristics in the population, and to estimate its prevalence” (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 402). The purpose of using a survey in this study is to get a better overview and understanding of the traits, opinions and beliefs in the specific sample (the ones that link spirituality and religion to their physical yoga practice) out of the larger group (people who do yoga) (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 396). The survey questions were created on the basis of similar research projects on yoga practitioners (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014; Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005; Langøien, 2012; Ylönen, 2012), material analyses of diverse marketing material, course descriptions and blogposts from the yoga milieu, in addition to my personal knowledge of the milieu itself. The main bulk of data came from a specially developed survey I created at the website *SurveyMonkey*, and it was posted mainly online (Facebook). Some were also placed in paper format at one local yoga studio.

3.1.1 SAMPLE SURVEY WITH PHENOMENOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Through the online survey I was able to gain access to a larger selection of practitioners than I would have in person, and I spread the survey the best I could within the yoga milieu in all of Norway. In addition, a main reason for the choice of this type of survey, was to avoid leading the informants with my language and reactions (other than the questions formulated in the survey), and rather have them reflect on their own experience and emotions related to their yoga practice. Several researchers suggest a greater degree of reflexivity as an emergent quality of embodied mindful practice such as yoga, and the survey questions for this thesis has been shaped to give space for the possible embodied reflexivity of the respondents.

Of the 27 (28) questions in the survey, half were adapted for a possible qualitative analysis (closed questions), while the rest required personal answers (open-ended questions) (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 409) (See Appendix 2 for the complete survey in Norwegian. Appendix 3 and 4 elaborate on the contents of the survey and the connections between the questions). This survey is thus a mix of ethnographic data collection and a standard survey, since it aims to gather both some general data of this particular sample group within the specific sample of the population, and to get some insight into the specifics of subjective experiences (Schensul & LeCompte, 2013, pp. 243-245). In his chapter in *RHResearchM*, James Spickard names four steps in the phenomenological method: 1) locate and question informants with similar experiences, and 2) to help these informants focus on the experience, before 3) comparing and analyzing these accounts to identify the structures of these shared experiences and 4) possibly summarize some common basics (Spickard, 2014, p. 338). Phenomenology seeks patterns in subjective descriptions, “without imagining that they refer to anything but subjective consciousness” (Spickard, 2014, p. 335). This is an important point, because although the survey enables patterning, it should be clear that I can only say something about these particular informants, and make hints at general societal trends (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 397).

3.1.2 FRAMEWORK FOR GATHERING DATA

One of the first challenges to overcome was the one of culturally informed language in relation to formulating the survey questions. Obviously, after nearly 15 years of practicing yoga, and being a part of the milieu, my language and ways of expression are informed by the milieu, but to depart from this basis and shape interview questions from my own language would be too leading and pre-set. I took a new tour through the yoga milieu with more academic eyes and ears, and found popular expressions to re-integrate them into the interview questions from that angle. I went into several yoga-related blogs, journals in addition to workshop and course advertisement to notice tendencies.

I have “mashed up” academic and “emic” concepts in the language of the survey, heavily influenced by both the Geneva Affect Label Coder (by Klaus Scherer), and the framework of the more “emic” Non Violent Communication (NVC), a communicative system that bases itself on learning to recognize and communicate basic needs and feelings, or emotions. Although I do not have extensive knowledge about the NVC system, the categorization of various needs

and emotions came in handy, since they mirror both motivational theories, and the expressional tendencies that I have found within the yoga milieu. Some of the questions for this thesis were important in order to contextualize the respondents, and to have a comparative basis with other similar research. Even though the comparative aspect with other research is not emphasized in this thesis, these factors work as a confirmatory framework to see if the respondents that I acquired are a similar group to what others deem as the main group of yoga practitioners in the West.

Not everyone that replied to the survey agrees with, nor understands, the terms of the survey, and commented that it was “too out in the alternative-world”, while some took the other angle, saying it is “too asana-oriented”, with not enough focus on the “everyday practice” of yoga. Because I have based the survey in the embodiment theory, with emphasis on emotions as an emergent product of movement, this narrowing down with emphasis on the physical part of yoga practice was a necessity.

3.2.2 ANALYSIS & DATA MANAGEMENT

Due to the limited possibilities for analysis in *SurveyMonkey*, and that I chose to gather the answers both online and on paper, I needed to make use of a separate data analysis tool to fill in my data. I chose to work with Excel for the structural analysis and Word/Excel and Canva (online graphic tool) for the graphic representations of the data. The data from some questions have been viewed in the larger context, and some have been set in comparison to each other. The questions were shaped in correlation to each other before it was published, and this ‘map’ was used in order to ascertain which questions I should focus on when analyzing the results (See Appendix 3).

SurveyMonkey allows for downloading each reply as a pdf, which means that I have both every individual answer, and overall lists of the questions at hand. Since almost half of the questions were open-ended, this meant that I needed to place every individual answer in more general categories in order to give them recognizable ‘codes’ (numbers) in order to compare the results and correlations (See Appendix 4). I went through all the questionnaires and created some structure for the open-ended questions, though several of the categories I have chosen overlap, and at times, the meaning behind the answers made them difficult to categorize. All the

individual answers were plotted into an excel sheet, which enabled an easier overview and comparison of the questions (See Appendix 8). I worked both on-screen in Excel and manually (printed out version) with the comparison of the questions and the individual answers in order to double-check and find more connections.

3.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

3.2.1 REACHING OUT

I gathered informants through various Norwegian yoga related groups and sites on Facebook (online), and one local yoga studio where I was allowed to place out the survey in paper-format. At the local yoga studio, I also made a poster, with “strips” to tear off with the web-address, in case some preferred to take the survey online. The paper version was gathered in a closed box, clearly marked. I also got help from my yoga network on social media to spread the survey through their personal pages, or public sites, to reach a bigger group.

3.2.2 SURVEY SITUATION

Because the questions posed in the survey require time and space for personal reflection, the survey was mainly done in the informants’ own time and selected space. The survey could be answered via both smartphone, pad or computer. The in-paper versions were answered on site at the yoga studio, most likely in the rest area of the studio.

It was important for me not to offer rewards or payment for answering the survey, since I wanted the motivational aspects for answering the survey to be rooted in their personal interest in the subject matter, not an external reward. This would not only create a mismatch with the ideals of the yoga milieu, but would also conflict with the basis of the questions in the survey. Thus, all of the respondents did it by their own will.

3.2.3 INFORMANTS

Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin name the population that the researcher wants to reach “the universe” (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014). I have chosen to focus mainly on the general

public within the selected subgroup that constitutes the yoga milieu in Norway, however, a larger section also consists of elites, i.e. yoga teachers and possibly also yoga studio owners. With the questions I have shaped, my ideal target universe is those who view their yoga practice and the emotions related to it as “something set aside as special”, and that gives yoga values that reflect their ‘spiritualities’. This means that the ideal informants in this survey make up a section of the sub-group that is the yoga milieu in Norway. It is difficult to find out what percent this section within the sub-group makes out, and as such, this is not a focus in this thesis.

The selection of ‘the universe’ was by self-selection, since anyone with access to the link was welcome to answer. The same goes for the paper version, where people chose to answer if they had the time and interest. I assume that already on page one of the survey, where I introduce the project and its framework I have lost some of those that do not care for their yoga practice as much more than physical activity. Though I had some that did in fact answer the survey who mainly did yoga for the physical advantages, I would surmise that they perhaps did not read the introduction beforehand. Many did not finish the survey as a whole, but I was still able to make use of the numbers produced in the statistical sections, to have a broad as possible reach. As I will discuss later, the demographic section of informants that replied to the survey are also the same group as I both hoped would answer, and that previous research shows are the main section of yoga practitioners in the West (women, aged 30-45 years with higher education). Very few men replied to the survey.

3.2.4 REPRESENTATIVITY AND ANONYMITY

Out of 225 respondents, 57 of them were incomplete and 168 were complete. This number is not high in relation to a rough estimate of how many yoga practitioners there probably are in Norway⁹ (around 2-350 000), yet high enough to leave some clear similarities in the answers.

⁹ Statistical research on yoga in Norway is not present, and thus there are no exact numbers to follow. A rough estimate would be that around 250 000 - 350 000 people are familiar with yoga practice in Norway today, not separating those who practice at home, in yoga studios or fitness centers and including meditation and relaxation. This is a number that I base on statistical research from our neighboring country, Denmark, where 6 percent of the adult population listed that they practice yoga in 2011 (<http://www.idan.dk/vidensbank/downloads/danskernes-motions-og-sportsvaner-2011/5f85b653-3bc0-4749-a385-a1b10098a64a>). Since Denmark has a higher population number than Norway, I reduced the number accordingly. 6% of the adult Norwegian population in 2016 makes ~ 254 195 people (<https://www.ssb.no/befolkning/nokkeltall>). As mentioned above, statistics on “spirituality” in Norway are also lacking, which makes it impossible to know the proportion of the yoga milieu that is inclined to subjective spirituality.

The survey is created in such a way that other than general personal characteristics like gender, age (only specified by bulks), and education (only specified by years, not profession), people are difficult to identify. I have also taken several precautions as to not compromise the anonymity of the respondents, and I do not have access to specific personal information.

As already mentioned, the nature of the questions in the survey will probably have sifted out many of those who do not care for yoga other than as physical activity. Hasselle-Newcombe observe though, “undoubtedly, a number of practitioners do consider their practice simply a series of physical exercises”, thus the findings in this survey might not be representational for the whole of the population that has some sort of experience with MPY (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 314). This will make my pool of data already colored by people inclined to place special value on their yoga practice. The other factor that is important to this, is that I have used my network within the yoga milieu to spread this survey online, mostly via Facebook. This means that I have reached many yoga teachers, several of them my colleagues, and possibly some of my own students, both from regular classes and teacher trainings. 39% (or 88) of the informants in this survey are, or are becoming yoga teachers. An interesting note is that out of the group that did not finish the survey as a whole, almost half of these were yoga teachers or in training to become yoga teachers.

A comment here is that yoga teacher trainings are not standardized to a common level of knowledge and practice, nor is ‘yoga teacher’ a protected title. In addition, few teach yoga full-time, meaning that this does not make yoga teachers typical ‘elites’ in the ‘traditional’ sense of religious leadership. The high number of teachers might be related to the forums through which the survey was spread, but quite possibly this group is more likely to be inclined to take their time for self-reflection, since this is a major part of their profession. Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin actually makes the opposite point about elites – that they are less likely to cooperate due to business or because they do not want their answers and opinions to be identified (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 399). The nature of the survey makes me unable to recognize them personally, but whether or not their role as teachers has colored their answers is difficult to say. None of the questions asks for statements regarding organizational decision-making, thus I consider this bulk of teachers to be a subset of the general population (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 399).

3.3 METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

3.3.1 APPROACH

Since this study is in such a cross-section of fields of research, I needed to move away from the typical comparison-created survey that corresponded with previous research, and rather built a specialized framework for the survey for this project. Without revealing too much of the contents or the main purpose of the questions, I did present an overall purpose and introduction to the project on the first page of the survey (See Appendix 1). There, I explained that the purpose of this study is to gain knowledge on how yoga practitioners in Norway place value to their physical practice, and also how the interaction and correlation between physical and spiritual practice plays out in today's modern world. I presented it as a study subject to the institute for Philosophy and Science of religions at NTNU, and made clear that the questions would deal with yoga, spirituality and the informants' perception of- and experience with these themes. I did not mention terms such as embodiment, motivation, rituals or emotions, which are the theories that lie behind the questions.

Navarro-Rivera and Kosmin point out how questionnaires should have certain characteristics in order to be effective, and lists 'length, clarity and variety' as those of main importance (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 408). In the process of developing this survey, variety and clarity became of particular focus, as to be able to uphold a certain level of interest and to get as clear answers as possible, in other words to leave as little room for misinterpretation as possible. As all beginners in the field of survey-research though, in retrospect I can see how this could have been processed and clarified to a greater degree. The questions in the survey are both open-ended and closed, and the nature of the subject theme of this thesis is not easy to frame in short and simple questions, thus the need for a general narrative seemed like an obvious approach in order to create a certain flow, and also create the space needed for self-reflection for the respondents. Some of the possible answers beneath a few of the questions (Q 21 & 23) became quite lengthy due to the high number of emotions listed, yet in order to give each respondent as great of a freedom of choice without leading the outcome too much, it was deemed necessary. These lengthy questions might be the reason for a large number of

unfinished questionnaires, though a complimentary idea behind these lists was to see whether or not the respondents would be willing to browse through and answer, and if that would reflect the tendencies in their previous (and possible later) questions. More on that in the presentation of data later on.

3.3.2 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

LANGUAGE

A main problem with a survey is the language, and the many possible interpretations of the words presented in the questions. Because there is a lack of consensus and precision in defining both religion, spirituality and emotions, both in emic and etic context, the individual interpretation could be widespread (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 398). By asking via a survey, there is no room for the explanatory dialogue that one can explore in a interview-situation. As Taves notes, the data we can find from experiences is not only related to linguistics, but can also be found “in facial expressions, gestures, movement and nonverbal sounds” (Taves, 2009, pp. 68 - 69). The additional dimensions are not available to the researcher in the survey-context, and thus a large amount of possible data are not collected. In addition, the short sentences that the respondents used to elaborate and describe their opinions and experiences might be misinterpreted by me, in the framework that I have set.

TRANSLATION

Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin highlight the issue of how religious surveys often include theological or specialist terms, and that this may cause a higher level of non-response (don't know and refusals) than might have been the case if the language and words were more adapted to a wider audience (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 398). To bypass as much as possible of this issue, a lot of work went into adapting the questions to an everyday-language. Apart from some concepts (such as ‘spirituality’ and ‘yoga’) that were presented as open for personal reflection, no ‘foreign’ or Sanskrit words were implemented into the survey. The survey was shaped and distributed in Norwegian, since it aimed to reach Norwegian yoga practitioners. The language used in the survey was adapted from English academic sources, and in some cases from emic expressions. This presented the issue of how some words are not easily translatable into Norwegian. ‘Awe’ and ‘Bliss’ are, for example, words that are commonly used to express

or advertise for the experience of yoga practice, but there are no similar expressions in Norwegian. I will elaborate on this point further in the presentation and analysis of data.

SOCIAL DESIRABILITY

Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin point out how social desirability and social pressure “might lead people to falsify answers and so provide inaccurate estimates” (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 398). In this thesis this would probably have been a problem whether the data were collected via semi-structured interviews, group-interviews or a survey. Even though the initial plan was to gather the data via semi-structured interview as a main method, the issue with possible social pressure (as self-imposed or experienced in the meeting with the interviewer) was a main reason as to make use of a survey instead. The idea was that perhaps, when people can sit by themselves and answer, they will not experience quite the pressure of presenting themselves a certain way for the interviewer, but at the same time – having more time might make people think more about how they present themselves. Yet, how people see themselves is not necessarily who they are, but their own description of themselves could say something about the influence of the milieu.

MARGIN OF ERROR

Since the topic is not highly charged or laden with general societal or political opinions, it is difficult to imagine how anyone would “bother” answering these questions for “the fun of it”, especially because of the length of the survey as a whole, in addition to the complexity of some of the answers. The fact that this is a relatively small sample from the population might introduce a higher level of uncertainty when it comes to the results, but this is more applicable for a strictly quantitative survey than this kind of mixed survey (Navarro-Rivera & Kosmin, 2014, p. 401). Again, misinterpretation of questions and words and meanings both from the respondents’ side, and from mine, makes the possibilities for errors highly plausible, and more relevant for this mixed survey. The question of *moral shortfalls*, as described by Bird and Scholes in *RHResearchM* is of course difficult to address, since there might be blind spots in my approach, especially when it comes to generalizing and categorizing subjective answers (Bird & Scholes, 2014, p. 82). As a result, I have not emphasized the representation of the answers that are difficult to interpret, nor have I reproduced the highly personal answers in this thesis, but I might still have made mistakes in my assumptions.

One of the errors I made in this survey, however, is that I did not state in question 16 (motivational ‘statements’) that the respondents needed to cross out at least 3 out of the 16 ‘statements’, even though the question was programmed this way in the online survey. This made some cross out almost all questions out of spite, or think there was something wrong with the survey (as I got some comments on). Many also wanted to specify their own reasons to practice yoga, which probably means that there was a high ratio of people that did not understand the reasoning behind the question and the nature of how these sentences were shaped.¹⁰ This makes this control-question of ‘motivational types’ more uncertain than it could have been. Many of the statements made by the respondents in the ‘other’ comments could however easily be generalized to match one of the 16 statements that relates to different motivational ‘types’. This occurrence of misunderstanding might mean that there is a dissonance between the shape of the questions in the survey and the respondents answering.

In addition, a few other language mistakes had snuck in, like for example how “Belonging” (tilhørighet) was listed twice in the online version, and “Satisfaction” (tilfredshet) was not listed at all online, but it was included in the paper version. In the paper version most (10 out of 13) crossed out “Satisfaction” as an expectation – a need and a feeling that ranked high both in the “during” and the “after” yoga section (See 8.4), which leads me to think that “Satisfaction” would be high on the above list, had it been included.

POST HOC DATA

Taves suggests several ways to categorize and collect data about experience: (1) Neurological data (real-time), (2) Observable data, either/both unintended and intended expression (verbal and other expressive behavior in real time), (3) Unobservable data, not expressed (real time) and (4) Post hoc data, e.g. self-reports or collective reports after the event (Taves, 2009: 69). Most often, the data we in humanities collect about experience is largely the post-hoc self-reports from interviews, and this survey does exactly that. Because I am interested in what keeps the practitioners motivated – and if what they are feeling during and after yoga is a part of the motivation, this collection of data is the most obvious one. I am not questioning whether

¹⁰ The ‘statements’ were shaped in accordance to the three typical yogic ‘types’ (social, lifestyle, achievement) as proposed by Bjerrum and Pilgaard, and with an overlay of the general health paradigm (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014). This is explained in length in several sections in this thesis. An example of the statements in question 16: I do yoga because.... My body looks good because of it / I prefer to focus on the process of what I do / I feel included. An example of how the question was misunderstood is for example presented well in the answer of a woman who wanted to answer ‘strength, balance and flexibility’.

or not they are ‘actually feeling’ or ‘actually experiencing’ something, rather asking what they themselves describe and think about their experiences. Descriptions are not the same thing as experiences, and the post-hoc data will be influenced by memory, how well one remembers, how one wants the experience to be re-told, and how one has interpreted and cultivated the experiences.

3.3.3 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

Talking about emotions with people might soon become a therapy session, and that was not my intention with the data in this thesis. Thus, to give people enough space and time to reflect on their emotional experiences, I decided to eliminate myself as much as possible as an influencing factor in the equation, in order to lay a groundwork for this kind of framework. The fact that I myself am a long time practitioner and teacher, in addition to having been a studio owner of one of Norway’s largest studios does not make me famous, but it makes it easy to figure out that I am more than “a bit interested” in yoga by a quick google search. This dimension made it important for me to create some distance between me and the actors, since I did not want to be an influential factor on how the respondents presented themselves in the answers. I did, however, sign with my name and added my email in case anyone wanted to contact me, a conscious choice of research ethics (Bird & Scholes, 2014).

In the survey for this thesis, there were no questions that asked the participants to identify the different traditions or styles they had experience with, or what type they found themselves practicing most often. The reasoning behind this was faceted, but the main reason was to have an as neutral perspective on all of the answers as possible, not allowing my own experience of the various styles and types influence and color the way I interpreted the questions. Although this was to serve as a precaution regarding research ethics and separating my role as a yoga practitioner and teacher versus an academic, I fear that this lack of distinction between styles and traditions have left a hole in the data material. Yet, if this were taken in to account, the framework of this project would have to have been expanded quite a bit, since each answer would have to have been categorized by style and tradition - and even then, the type of styles might not be in correspondence with the actors’ own view on philosophy and body. In other words, distinguishing styles and traditions of yoga might enrich the data material, tracing the type of body pedagogics each style of yoga promotes on a general level, but it also

complicates the data material and theoretical framework, since there is no existing “map” over all the yoga styles that say something specific about what theories each build upon, or even, to what extent the individual teachers promote the baseline philosophy.

Having high ethical standards is not only important as a researcher, it is crucial for the execution of a proper research project. In this thesis, I have tried to balance the line between respecting the dignity and integrity of my research subjects, and in addition keeping a sympathetic, yet critical distance from the ontological and philosophical contents (Bird & Scholes, 2014). In the context of this thesis, this means taking a distance to the overhanging ideas of how a “proper yoga practitioner” should be and reply to the questions in the light of the religio-philosophical “aims”, and rather approach the subject from the baseline of embodied research on emotions and motivations. Building the survey on comparative grounds based in research, I am opting for the results to be both available in the presentation and analysis of data, and in the appendixes, while at the same time protective of the individual participant’s privacy.

4 THE YOGA CONTEXT

4.1 IDENTIFYING THE PRACTITIONERS

4.1.1 SOCIAL CLASS AND ECONOMY

The respondents to the survey largely consist of people with long higher education, meaning a University or College degree of around 4 years or more. Keeping in mind that this is also the segment of the population I too belong to, and that the people and places I have reached out to for answering my survey more or less mirrors that status, this is not surprising. This is also a general factor to note in Norway, where almost 1 out of 3 have higher education, and nearly half of women between the age of 25 and 39 have higher education (SSB, 2015). Because of these high numbers in Norway, it is difficult to say that yoga is related to a particular social class here, yet the tendency is definitely there. In a rapport from 2014, Statistics Norway (SSB) notes the correlation between higher education and physical activity, where there is a tendency that the higher one's education is, more emphasis is placed on exercise (SSB, 2014). This seems to be evident among the respondents to the survey as well, where 125 of the 192 (out of 225 respondents) with higher education rate physical activity as very- or extremely important. Out of those 192 respondents with higher education, 148, or 77% do yoga 2 times or more per week¹¹.

In addition to having a high number of people with higher education, Norway has steadily found itself on the lists of the richest countries in the world, and thus paying for fitness-memberships is common. All of the respondents in the survey practice yoga in some way or the other, but not all practice in a yoga studio, and some even note that they prefer home practice, occasionally accompanied by online videos. There are several Norwegian and English online yoga sites with various pricing, and in addition there are many videos on Youtube that can be watched for free. Thus, since the accessibility for yoga videos (this includes meditation, breathing, mantras and physical exercises) is easy, the pricing is not such a barrier anymore. Still, the issue of class and economy plays an important factor in describing the kinds of Ypractitioners I am looking closer at in this thesis, since these are the ones that belong to a kind of 'leisure class' that has the

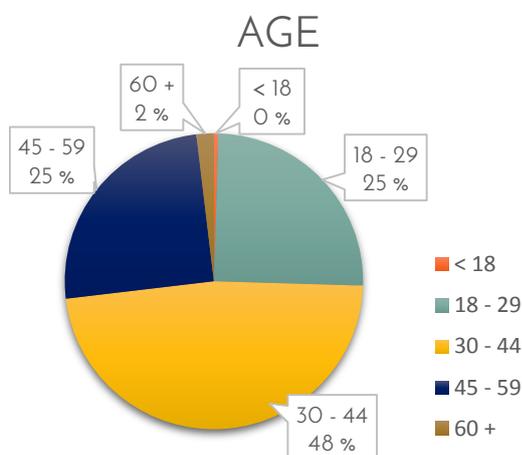
¹¹ Again, I cannot confirm that this is only physical yoga, as I have left that interpretation open for the respondents.

possibilities (time, money and a reflexive framework) to reflect upon their experiences (Troelsch in Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 318).

4.1.2 GENDER

Yoga was traditionally taught and practiced by men, often younger, nimble, Indian men (Singleton, 2010). In the West, the number of men practicing MPY/yoga is low in comparison to the number of women doing the same. Looking to the images used in yoga-advertisement, it is easy to see that the MPY has to some degree alienated men from practice, as it is usually young, Caucasian women displayed there. After the 1970's, the number of women practicing yoga rose, and has continued to do so. My questionnaire (Q1) has a 90% answer rate from women (of these, 151 completed the survey, 52 were incomplete), meaning that only 22 men answered the survey, where 4 out of those were incomplete. Although this might not be representative for the *actual* numbers of men versus women practicing yoga in Norway today, it is interesting either way, since this seems to confirm that yoga is especially attractive to women, as indicated in most research done on modern yoga

FIGURE 1: SURVEYRESULT: AGE



4.1.3 AGE

In my survey (Q2), 48% of the respondents are ages 30 – 44 years old, with 25% on each side of the main bulk, meaning either between the age of 18-29, or from the age of 45 and up (See Figure 1: **Surveyresult: Age**). These are numbers consistent with other research projects on yoga, and the numbers can also be confirmed from my own teaching experience (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014).

4.1.4 'TYPES' OF PRACTITIONERS

A rapport from Copenhagen in 2014 identifies three superordinate 'types' of yoga practitioners relevant for this thesis, where attitudes can be arranged more or less to subscribe to the different categories (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014, pp. 58-61). Bjerrum and Pilgaard name the *Achievement-yogi*, the *Lifestyle-yogi* and the *Social yogi*. These three 'types' overlap, and the tendencies for

each person will probably change within their years of practice as well (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014). In addition, Bjerrum and Pilgaard included the *Unmotivated yogi*, meaning those who are not really motivated to do yoga anymore, an aspect I haven't covered in this thesis (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014, p. 59).

The *'Achievement-yogi'* covers yoga practitioners that focus on progression and optimization of bodily mastery and bodily challenges, in regard to both asanas, health and bodily appearance and beauty (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014, p. 58). Although most practitioners would identify partly with this group with regard to health and some exercise, there is a higher number of fitness practitioners in this group. There is also a tendency for younger people to be in this group, according to Bjerrum and Pilgaard (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014, p. 61). The *'Lifestyle-yogi'* is known by the fact that yoga plays an important role in their lives, and they see yoga and the philosophy as an integrated part of their identity (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014, p. 59). These practitioners do not place as much focus on outer achievements and input as we see in the two other type-groups, and are most likely to place some 'spiritual' value to the practice, thus they are the yoga practitioners I am most interested in in this thesis. The *'Social yogi'* see yoga as a part of their social life, meaning that the interaction with the group before, during and after practice is a motivational factor for these yogis (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014, p. 59). There is a tendency for older people to be in this group, according to Bjerrum and Pilgaard (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014, p. 59). Separating the social aspects from the others is not clean cut however, and aspects of social motivation for the different types will be evident and dependent on various personalities, access to milieus and where they find themselves in the course of life (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014).

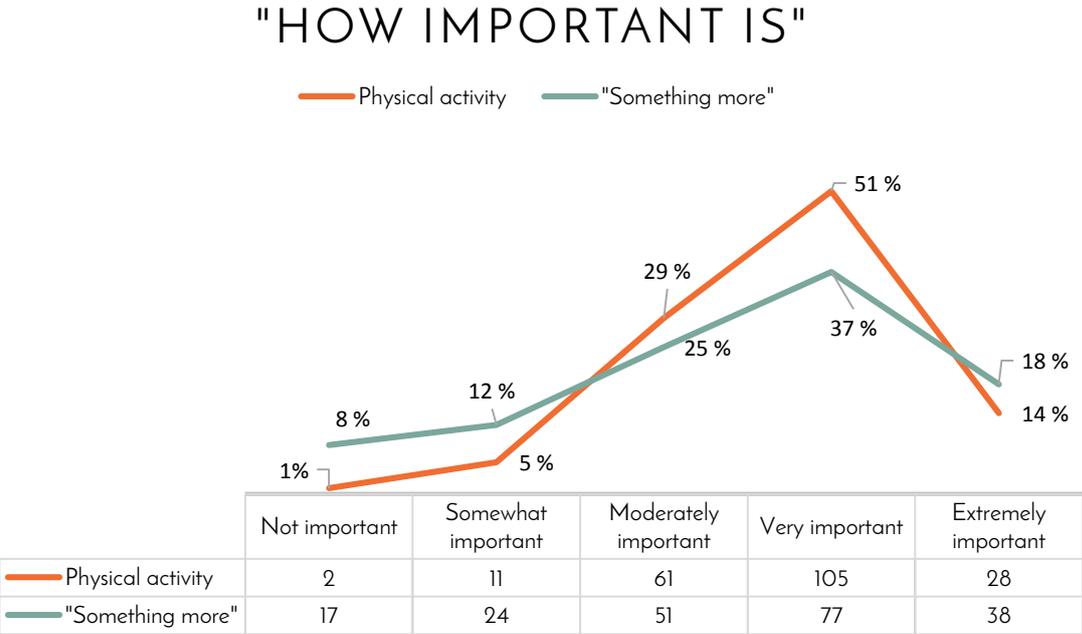
4.1.5 REASONS FOR PRACTICING YOGA

Health and well-being are factors that stand strong for most practitioners of MPY. This includes not only exercise, but also stress-relief, mental and emotional balance and yoga as a tool for working with (smaller) injuries and rehabilitation (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014; Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005). This also seems like the factors that are most likely to motivate practitioners, as became evident through the survey, where (in their own words) many note that mental and physical well-being is what motivates them to practice yoga (Q17). Most of the respondents (51%) replied that physical activity in general is very important to them (Q7), and only two

persons replied that physical activity is not important. (See Figure 2: **Survey result: The importance of physical activity versus "something more" in yoga**).

In the survey the respondents were also asked how important it is to them that yoga is 'something more' than physical activity (Q15), without elaborating the meaning of 'something more'. Although the narrative of questions in the survey would indicate that this is laden with a sense of "spirituality", this might not be the case for all of those who responded. Here, the spread appears more even, yet the largest number (37%) have said this is very important. Adding it up with the 18% who answered "Extremely important", this means that 55% of the respondents finds it very- to extremely important that yoga offers something other than physical activity for them, and they also find this to be a major motivational factor (Q16). Only 8% responded that it is *not* important that yoga is "something more" than physical activity, and although yoga has a reputation to be "spiritual" in the emic sense, several people did not feel that the spiritual label fitted their way of life, even though what they described in its place could be considered a part of the alternative milieu. Similar to Hasselle-Newcombes' findings in 2005, my respondents answered that yoga provides a space for stillness and reflection, thus for most, yoga facilitates awareness around thoughts and emotions (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 311).

FIGURE 2: SURVEY RESULT: THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY VERSUS "SOMETHING MORE" IN YOGA



These numbers are based on the 207 that answered both questions (Q7 + Q15) in the survey.

4.2 LOCATING YOGA IN THE MODERN CONTEXT

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Seeing modern yoga as a hybridized and emergent “product” of a meeting between cultures, and its evolving from a sub-culture to a part of popular culture indicates that there are many factors that can be pulled upon to locate yoga in the modern context (Singleton, 2010, p. 81). Among the transnational and historical influences we find regarding the physical practice of yoga, we can include British military calisthenics, modern medicine, and the physical culture of European gymnasts, body-builders, martial experts, women’s stretching exercises and contortionists (Jain, 2012; Singleton, 2010; Strauss, 2005). Research indicate that physical postures were not emphasized in the yoga tradition to a great degree before the meeting between the East and the West (Singleton, 2010). One could make the link between early texts, where postures of the body are named asana in Sanskrit, and the asanas modern practitioners do today, but as Mark Singleton and several other scholars point out - doing asanas and doing modern yoga postures are two seemingly similar, yet very different practices (Singleton, 2010). The asanas practiced “back then” had much more to do with the ideas of a subtle physiology of the energetical body and little to do with the emphasis on the body and its anatomy as we see today (Singleton, 2010: 29-33).

The co-creation of yoga between cultures can be seen as a “pizza-effect”¹² - a cyclical flow of yoga history creates familiarity, exoticism and an openness to ever evolving concepts within the frame of yoga (Sarbacker, 2014, p. 99; Strauss, 2005, p. 8). MPY thus finds itself in an interesting dynamic intersection, due to its ability to be ever evolving yet rooted in a form of tradition that makes it both “new and interesting” and at the same time able to legitimize the practice due to historical attachments (Aupers & Houtman, 2006; Strauss, 2005, p. 138). Yoga increased its popularity in the West from the 1950s to mid-1970s¹³, where the British-American counter-culture called for a “religiosity radically distinct from what were perceived as the oppressive, puritanical orthodoxies of the previous generation” (Jain, 2012, p. 5). The 1960’s West (especially the United States, the United Kingdom, and France) see an increase in

¹² Like how pizza is thought of as Italian and the product of the people and the culture, but it was actually created and elaborated in a different context, and in a dialectical interaction (Strauss, 2005, p. 8). In other words, yoga could be seen as an “invented tradition”, where these gradually become “cross-cultural, transnational and in many cases mundialized” (Brown & Leledaki, 2010, p. 128).

¹³ In what De Michelis calls the ‘Popularization phase’ of yoga (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 191-192).

immigrants and therefore also yoga teachers from India, as the restrictions on immigration were largely lifted (Jain, 2012, p. 5). Popular culture began including yoga in the media already back then, as exemplified by The Beatles, Elvis and The Rolling Stones in the late 60s and early 70s. Yoga gradually became a part of the bigger societal scene, being included by celebrities, in gyms and in media, and today yoga is rather mainstreamed, as I will show below. Yoga as we find it in most places in the West today, has gone from a counter-culture to a consumer-culture, yet this does not mean that the practice itself is necessarily less meaningful for the practitioners (Kern, 2012, p. 34).

Yoga has roots in religious and philosophically oriented practices that usually involved a lot less physical postures than what we recognize as yoga today, and although I'll cover some of the historical background further down, it will not be in main focus in the discussion in this thesis. Rather, contextualizing the societal factors that likely influence the practitioners of yoga in Norway today is of greater importance for later discussions. As already mentioned, yoga serves as a vast umbrella-term and within the yoga milieu many various factors could influence the individual practitioners. In this thesis, this is not a main focus, but still important to recognize, as they are somewhat different from for example USA, where a lot of studies on yoga are conducted.

4.2.2 THE HEALTH PARADIGM

In the nineteenth century, Europe saw an eruption of interest in cultivating the body as a means of mental and physical fitness and health. In the West, the modern attitude of individualism, health and freedom became key values, as a way of approaching the world “that assumes that unlimited progress is both possible and desirable” (Strauss, 2005, p. 12). Body enhancement has been set in correspondence with self-development, and there has been an increasing societal focus on active self-control, or self-grooming, through diet and exercise (De Michelis, 2005; Singleton, 2010). To meet the ‘fitness-revolution’ in the West, yoga was packaged and adapted in such a way that the aims of postural yoga came to include popular modern conceptions of physical fitness, stress reduction, beauty, and overall well-being and self-improvement (De Michelis, 2005, p. 219; Newcombe, 2013; Singleton, 2010). The earliest teachers to bring physical yoga to the West, such as Tirumalai Krishnamacharya (1888–1989) and Swami Sivananda Saraswati (1887–1963), benefited from this development, as "MPY started to be

seen by even more people as a safe and balanced way to keep fit and improve well-being" (De Michelis, 2005, p. 201). De Michelis names these developments "neo-hatha yoga", meaning the modernistic and secularized form of hatha yoga, where the physical effects of postural practice are highlighted (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 227-230).

McGuire points out how modernity has brought with it a rationalized and an institutionalized way of dealing with health and the body, where "arenas of human action have become separated into functionally specialized institutions" (McGuire, 1993, p. 146). Rationalized biomedicine usually makes a mind-body differentiation, where the issues of the mind and body are dealt with as separate fields. The separation made between body and mind is ingrained in our metaphor-based language as well, and the language-like quality of the stream of consciousness may suggest and affirm the idea that the "I", the conscious self, is something separate from the body (Gibbs, 2005, pp. 239, 263; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The biomedical discourse has come to influence Modern Postural Yoga to a great degree, and the techniques practiced are often explained on anatomical and biomechanical levels. The idea and trend of validating yogic philosophy and practices through science was introduced early in the Western yoga tradition as a way to heighten the value of yoga, and is even more popular today (Strauss, 2005, p. 120).

The conceptualization of the body in contemporary consumer culture is an important factor for understanding why MPY has become such a popular activity (Jain, 2012, p. 6). This can be seen both in relation to (more simply) the emphasis in yoga on physical self-development and self-control, but also in regards to gaining *a feeling* of self-control through the body in a world where societal factors are reflected on and in our bodies (Jain, 2012; Miller, 2015). The fast pace of modern urban lifestyle can be overwhelming for the individual on various planes, and 'stress' is a term that has been recognized as a specific problem related to this (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 249-250). Both emic claims, and scientifically based research, speak to the positive effects of yoga and meditation regarding health and stress reduction, another important factor as to why MPY has gained such a boost in modern society (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 249-250; Jain, 2012, p. 8). This also becomes evident in the survey-results for this thesis, as "keeping body and mind in shape", and to "destress" are some of the most prevalent answers as to why the respondents say they practice yoga. The health paradigm is well ingrained in the Norwegian culture of being outdoors and engaging in sports, and several of the respondents to the survey note how being

in nature gives similar experiences as yoga – the combination of physical activity, introspection and spaciousness all in one.

4.2.3 THE CONSUMER-BASED LIFESTYLE

The socio-economic shift toward mass production and mass consumption, following the general modernity of society in the 20th century have a major significance in the discussion on what makes yoga so popular in today's modern society (Jain, 2012, p. 6). In the second half of the twentieth century, economies increasingly shifted from being industrial and based on mass production to a more personalized model, based on "customized products for individualistic consumers" (Russell 1993 in Jain, 2012, p. 6). What emerged was a group of consumers that "increasingly exercised choice with regard to the products and services they purchased" (Jain, 2012, p. 6). In addition, consumers construct in a larger scale a desired self-identity by consuming what they think signifies that self-identity (Russell 1993, Bocoock 1993 & Baudrillard 2002 in Jain, 2012, p. 6). The self and the development of the self seems to have become one of the great markers of modernity, as we are mostly practicing our freedom of choice on an everyday basis (Langøien, 2012, p. 28). With this exercise of choice, a desire for immediate access to direct experience, and that this experience should take as little time and effort as possible, became a common factor with regard to the consumer-oriented way of life (Wilson, 1979 in De Michelis, 2005, p. 147). Interestingly enough, regarding early Asian accounts on 'experience' is that the 'experience' itself is not weighted, rather the process is. If one were to have an experience, this was not considered the goal of the practice, and did not serve as reference points for their paths (Sharf, 1998, pp. 98-100).

When B.K.S. Iyengar released his first book, *Light on Yoga*, in 1966 it became an instant bestseller and also a milestone for MPY, since it "brought the performance and teaching of asana, on which MPY relied so heavily, to new, impressive standards of completeness regarding range of postural variation and performance proficiency" (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 197-199). This development in conveying Postural Yoga through step-by-step, DIY type of instructions further established MPY practice as a form of psychosomatic self-help, and spoke well to the consumer culture of immediate experience (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 198, 211). This point also shifted an important part of the way asana is practiced: with more popularity, there was a need for creating group practices, rather than having the one-on one guru-student relationship (Jain,

2012, p. 6). With less focus on a guru and a lineage, people ‘shop’ for both what they want, and what is most convenient, meaning many people do not particularly care what lineage and style of yoga they are attending, as long as the attraction points are desirable enough (Jain, 2012, p. 6). As a response to and result of our multicultural and globalized (Western) world, yoga has become a vast diversity of practices of various yoga styles, schools, methods and combinations of yoga and other forms of exercise or activities (Jain, 2012, p. 6).

4.2.4 THE ALTERNATIVE MILIEU AND INDIVIDUALISM

The shift to a more commercialized focus also resulted in a further ‘secularization’ of the yoga practice, concerning the more ‘public’ face of MPY (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 193-194). Nevertheless, New Age oriented focuses continue to be standard in most MPY milieus (De Michelis, 2005), meaning that, “many asana practitioners would also affirm that there is something to the transformative experience of yoga practice that cannot be reduced to biomedical ‘scientific’ mechanisms” (Newcombe, 2013, p. 69). Many practicing yoga will not see it as an “all-encompassing worldview or system of practice, but as one aspect of self-development, which can be consumed in combination with other worldviews and practices” (Jain, 2012, p. 6). Yoga as it is known today is eclectic, since it borrows images, symbols, rituals and healing practices from diverse sources, something that we see with other practices within what can be called the ‘alternative’ or ‘cultic’ milieu as well (McGuire, 1993, p. 148). This syncretism especially pulls upon the sources of a combination of religious and philosophical ideas, and inherits and acceptance of various religions and ways of life (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 317). The syncretism that happens in yoga is not by any means a new modern phenomena, it can for example be clearly traced back to Swami Vivekananda’s teachings in the wake of his introduction of yoga to the West at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893 (Newcombe, 2013, p. 60). Vivekananda lived and worked in the US the years after this presentation, and his initial teachings became heavily influenced by the Western esotericism of the people who ‘took him in’, shaped in accordance to Western ideas of freedom, physics and religion (De Michelis, 2005, p. ch. 5).

Naming yoga as a religion is not quite correct, but it is not totally wrong either. The philosophical systems of yoga usually do not shy away from concepts of God, reincarnation or the soul, and these ideas have taken root, or are mirrored in the Western esoterical or alternative

milieu (Jain, 2012; White, 2012). In contrast to the classical Western idea of identification with the soul and the intellect and the mind, the Indian dualism (*Samkhya, Patanjali*) does not seek to identify with what is individual but rather with what is transcendent. This makes the Indian dualism something similar to, but not the same, as Western dualism. The non-dualist tradition (*Advaita Vedanta, Tantra*) places more emphasis on the idea that “God is (within) you”, an idea well ingrained in both the eclectic alternative milieu and the yoga milieu. In fact, the Advaita Vedanta philosophy aligns very well with the popular “green wave” that has grown over the past 20-30 years, also emphasized in the alternative milieu (Strauss, 2005, pp. 131-134). In other words, treating the spiritual aspect of yoga as a part of a religious framework such as with the alternative milieu, opens to enabling religious theories on yoga practice.

The notion of yoga as a form of psychosomatic self-help is an important aspect of why yoga is such a popular activity, even ‘tool’ for modern Westerners – it corresponds very well with the overall ideals of health, freedom and immediate access to experience. This appears to be a particular important point for many of the respondents to the survey in this thesis, as I’ll elaborate on later. The yoga practitioners leaning towards the ‘alternative’ tend to seek out various means of achieving a “direct, inward and present experience”, both in regards to the practice itself, and to various tools (health supplements, treatments, diets, medicine) for dealing with their own health (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 317; Jain, 2012; McGuire, 1993, p. 149). A notable correlation between all the various religious and quasi-religious movements that can be classified as part of the ‘alternative’ or ‘cultic’ milieu is the assertion of a holism of mind, body, and spirit (McGuire, 1993, p. 148). These aspects are often viewed as mutually informing and integrated aspects of each person’s self, and people that ascribe to these views tend to have a holistic approach to ideas about health, healing and well-being (McGuire, 1993, p. 148).

As already explored in 1.2.8, the fuzzy ‘alternative’ or ‘cultic’ milieu in which yoga can be included as one of the possible practices, holds a notion of “radical religious individualism”, and a strong sense of *seekership* (Campbell, 1972; Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 317). An important point to note, is how this aspect of *seekership* usually appeals to the ‘leisure class’, meaning those who have time and money to spare and can “seek spiritual refinement for its own sake” (Troelsch in Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 318). As already mentioned in 4.1, with

a high number of people with higher education, and a low number (1 out of 10 in a household) of people with low income, the majority of Norwegians are a product of the welfare state (Sandvik, 2015). The majority of the respondents to the survey for this thesis would probably be classified as a part of the leisure class, and when having this privilege, it is obviously easier to ascribe to the fundamental ideas of opposing to “the materialism and ‘selfishness’ of ‘the world’”¹⁴, as the basic needs are covered in their lives (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 317). More on that later.

4.2.5 MAINSTREAMING

The focus on the individualistically adapted consumerism and on instant access more than lineage and gurus, gives room for further commercialization and creating a brand out of a yoga style, which in itself creates authority not by persons, but by popularity of brands (Aupers & Houtman, 2006; De Michelis, 2005, pp. 193-194; Jain, 2012, p. 4). De Michelis names this the ‘Acculturation phase’ of modern yoga history (1980s to today), where a tendency is for yoga schools to be more specialized and professionalized (De Michelis, 2005, p. 193). Though Norway seems to be a bit behind on the trends in North American yoga milieus, there has been clearly noticeable changes over the past 10 years or so, as yoga’s popularity has grown. MPYoga imagery tend to reflect the dominant trends we have grown accustomed to in the larger cultural space, which means we can talk about a clear mainstreaming of yoga. Advertisers, celebrities and a general media focus on being fit and beautiful acquires yoga imagery¹⁵ to promote a certain kind of lifestyle. This makes yoga even more visible, accessible and attractive for a larger crowd.

Visual representations of yoga poses seem to be used to display internal states, which makes the comparison between this and other performative acts, such as rituals, dance or acting an easy leap. The presentation of a subject in advanced and ecstatic poses seemingly tells a story about the subjects’ dignity and moral bearing, as they “probably” have worked the body through pain and patience in order to achieve these poses (Remski, 2016). In addition, the interaction and sharing of yoga and lifestyle related topics on various social media will probably set you in

¹⁴ Collin Campbell’s key points concerning Troeltschs’ ‘mystical religion’ includes the opposing of materialism, and this is complemented by the two focal theoretical features from *The Light on Yoga* by BKS Iyengar as relevant and central to most modern yoga elaborations: "(a) that practice of yoga should go hand in hand with the performance of voluntaristic 'good works', and (b) that 'self-improvement' is at the heart of yoga practice" (De Michelis, 2005, p. 219).

¹⁵ The aspect of visual media that ‘asks for’ yoga as a demonstration or performance is not a new concept, it goes way back to yoga asanas’ early modern yoga history (Remski, 2016; Singleton, 2010).

contact with others within the milieu, leading to the creation and maintaining of one's own identity (Strauss, 2005, p. 138).

4.4 MAPPING HISTORICAL INFLUENCE

4.4.1 PRE-MODERN HISTORY OF ASANA

Yogi scholar Georg Feuerstein divides the pre-modern history of yoga into four broad categories, where we follow the Indian history alongside Hinduism and its many branches, meaning that yoga does have religio-philosophical and ritual origins. Feuerstein first introduces *Vedic Yoga*, ca.1750–8/500 BCE where several of the oldest texts relating to Hinduism and its rituals (with mentions of physical prostrations) was written. Then there is *Pre-Classical Yoga*, ca 800-500 BCE, where the creation of the Upanishads points out some of the key points regarding the bigger picture on yoga as a philosophical discipline, without any notable mentions of physical postures other than those regarding ritual. The Upanishads brought with them a shift in the hinduistic mindset, as they focused on internalizing the Vedic ritual - “the outer objects of ritual were but symbols of the inner offering, and the inner practice was now understood to be far more powerful for the transformation of one's own understanding” (Keller, 2002, p. 30). In the *Classical Yoga* era, ca 100 BCE - 500 CE, yoga is present as one of the main six schools of philosophy (*darsanas*) of Hinduism, which focused on yogic practices regarding control of the senses, mainly with the use of meditation, discipline and bodily restrictions (Feuerstein, 2008; Singleton, 2010; Strauss, 2005). When one has referred to yoga before the MPY, it has been in reference to the eight basic stages (*ast-anga*¹⁶) of the yoga system as a means of enlightenment, and the physical practice of postures, or asana, is just one of the steps and not a main practice (Jain, 2012; Singleton, 2010, pp. 26 -27; Strauss, 2005, pp. 3-4). A few centuries later, we find the turning point to the body as seen in the *Post-Classical Yoga* period, where practices that are more physical are formed, as it seems that the practitioners were finding the hidden potential in controlling and moving the body and the breath in specific ways. This could be set in contrast to earlier thoughts, where the “goal” had been to leave the body behind to focus on the spirit (Feuerstein, 2008). Several texts, between the fifteenth and the eighteenth

¹⁶ The eight limbs as found in the Yogasutra of Patanjali are: 1. Yama – ethical restraints (the don'ts) 2. Niyama – ethical observances (the dos) 3. Āsana – physical postures. 4. Prāṇāyāma –regulation and exercise of breath 5. Pratyāhāra – mastery of sensory organs, withdrawal of the senses from external objects 6. Dhāraṇā –concentration, introspective focus, one-pointedness of mind 7. Dhyāna – meditation 8. Samādhi – complete blissful awareness of one's mind and liberated being, superconscious state (Singleton, 2010; Strauss, 2005).

century AD concern the practice of hatha yoga exercises that are (distant) relatives to what we find practiced today in Modern Postural Yoga.

In other words, prior to the twentieth century, posture practice was not central to any yoga tradition, although we do find (in addition to ritual practices) a variety of postures that were often linked to the tantric aspects of practice, all of which was a preparation for the manipulation of the “subtle body” (Jain, 2012). In nineteenth-century India, the tantric manipulation of the subtle body began to be elided from popular yoga practice because of the negative view of tantra and hatha yoga among orientalist scholars and Hindu reformers (Singleton, 2010, pp. 41-80). Due to the negative attitudes around the practice of hatha yoga and asana, even as late as the 1930s, postural yoga “was ridiculed so much that only a few select people were practicing it”, according to B.K.S. Iyengar (Iyengar, 2000 in Singleton, 2010, p. 80). Even Swami Vivekananda, who introduced yoga to the West, expressed negative sentiments about those practicing hatha yoga, claiming that “its practices are very difficult [...] and, after all, do not lead to much spiritual growth” (Singleton, 2010, pp. 70-71). What is interesting when studying modern yoga practice then, is the tension between how modern yoga practitioners use yoga as a tool for healing in the body and a way of adapting to the stresses of life, versus the premodern and theoretical yogic aspiration towards transcendence of body (and mind) (Remski, 2016). Since the emphasis on physical yoga (MPY) as we see it today stands out as such a different type of practice, it may signal difficulties when trying to clarify the religio-philosophical influences yoga practice might have on the individual.

5 THE BODY

5.1 BODILY KNOWLEDGE

5.1.1 BODY KNOWLEDGE AND APPROACH TO THE BODY

Cognitive psychology, social psychology and cognitive neuroscience all seem to agree that knowledge is based in the body and the brain's modality specific systems (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 48). The physical experience of the body will always be modified by, and work as a medium sustaining certain views of a particular society and culture (Mary Douglas in Varga, 2005, pp. 214-215). That is to say, when a particular body state occurs, our socially informed bodily schemas of knowledge are activated and may trigger a range of related emotional states, which in turn may influence a variety of cognitive processes (Barsalou et al., 2005, pp. 31-32). Knowledge about the body and the environment are often central to religious beliefs and frameworks. Whereas some religions see the increased awareness of the body and its environment as essential, some do not, but then the body becomes significant just by the fact that it is being peripheralized (Barsalou et al., 2005, pp. 41, 48). Beliefs about the body are central within religion, yet vary widely between them, and these beliefs are central to the way people practice their religions, meaning how the practices and rituals are shaped and experienced, and how the practitioners experience their bodies and the world around (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 39). In spite of societal changes and scientific knowledge, traditional and religious views are still influencing many prevailing ideas about the body today, as we see with the case of mind versus body as opposed to the embodied mind paradigm (Varga, 2005, p. 214).

Ivan Varga takes inspiration from Rommeru and stipulates two broad approaches to the body within western philosophical and theological ideas: horizontal and vertical (Rommeru, 1992: 7-12 in Varga, 2005, p. 211). The vertical approach to the body has two different hierarchies, from top to bottom, and from the bottom up. The first concerns the idea that the lower parts of the body are less noble, a 'mind over matter' kind of approach, where the head (intellect, "self") is placed as superior to the heart (emotions). In this approach, the notion of an essential "spirit" is also superior, as it is lighter, and "higher" than the body, which pulls down to the earth (Varga, 2005, p. 211). The yogic dualist approach indeed has a highly hierarchical and vertical assortment of the body, where the gross elements of the body and the world is at the bottom,

indicating an idea of ‘overcoming the body’ (Larson, 2012). The second vertical approach, from the bottom up, regards the body as a “springboard allowing humans to liberate themselves from it” (Varga, 2005, pp. 211-212). This can be found in the non-dualistic tradition of yoga, and the saying “your body is your temple” indicates how bodily hygiene and care is important to the religious or spiritual path (Timalsina, 2012). The horizontal bodily approach is characteristic for cultures in close relationship and communion with nature, as the human body is not treated as ‘higher than’ animals or other life forms, but more as an integral part of the whole (Varga, 2005, p. 212) . This view does not make clear distinctions between spirit and matter, or body and soul, and, I would say, is a quite less common approach within Western, post-enlightenment societies. Still, the horizontal approach would align better with the ideas of embodiment and tantric philosophy, and can indeed be traced in some of the answers in the survey for this thesis, where several weighted the notion of “connectedness” as an important part of their ‘spirituality’. One respondent writes that spirituality for them is to “*experience being like a part of the world, experiencing that you are a part of a bigger ‘universe’*” (quotation marks by the respondent). I will elaborate on this in chapter 7.

The internalization and integration of religious beliefs about the body through practices is key to linking together cognitive embodiment theories and ritual theory. Because of the typically abstract nature of religious ideas, it is theorized and highly likely that rituals and practices are ways of expressing and making central ideas concrete through bodily actions (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 46). In this way, by creating religious practices that include bodily actions in a special location, “religions increase the chances that their abstract ideas will be learned and remembered” (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 46). The embodiment of abstract ideas also relates to a larger mass of people, which makes the transmission of abstract concepts and ideas easier and, I would add, more meaningful to the individual participant. There will always be a continuous exchange and reinforcement between social factors and the physical body, and the social body influences and restricts the way the physical body is perceived.

Phillip Mellor and Chris Shilling draw on Durkheim and Weberian theories to propose a framework of the body in the context of religion as a social phenomenon that possesses the “potential to produce culturally sanctioned embodied orientations to self and world, characterized by a transcendent configuration of immanent social realities” (Mellor & Shilling,

2010, p. 28). They thus propose the view of religious life as a form of embodied pedagogics, or 'body pedagogics' (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 28). The study of body pedagogics, or bodily knowledge then, is to recognize and acknowledge the "distinctive ontological properties of what is involved in the attempted transmission of religion, in people's experiences, and in the actual embodied outcomes of this process" (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 30). The external manifestations of what can be called religious or spiritual ideas is therefore not of main interest in the study of body pedagogics, but rather to orient the research around how subjects may experience these ideas in an embodied manner (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 30). The integration of certain ideas or facts, as Mellor and Shilling describe it, can be referred to as 'religious habitus' (as inspired by Bourdieu), and this will predispose people to certain ways of knowledge and acting in to the world¹⁷ (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 30). Mellor and Shilling focus in particular on the practitioners feelings and bodily sensations, and their interpretations and internal reflections on these experiences, an approach I have integrated in the survey for this thesis (Archer in Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 30).

The question at hand is thus how and if these experiences change people's values, and if the *means* (practice, practical ritual techniques) and the *experience* (emotions, bodily sensations) influence the *outcome* (the bodily knowledge, self-identity and habitus in other parts of life) (Mellor & Shilling, 2010). These factors (means, experience, outcome) are not as simple as cause and effect, as I'll discuss further later on. Barsalou and his co-editors link this with the simulation principle (as a part of embodied theories of knowledge), where it is assumed that modality-specific neural states become active in our schemas as people perceive and experience a certain object or situation in interaction with the environment (Barsalou et al., 2005, pp. 22-23). This idea links well together with the idea of how knowledge (as possibly enacted in ritual) cannot be found in one field of human activity, but rather as a product of several fields, meaning that knowledge (in ritual) happens somewhere in between body, mind, society, tradition and culture (Bell, 1992, p. 83; Varela et al., 1991, pp. 178-179).

¹⁷ Mellor and Shilling say that, "it is important to note, however, that the production of a specific religious habitus is not a guaranteed outcome of any single set of body pedagogic means and their associated experiences: people's dispositions and orientations are dependent upon all manner of social influences, as well as upon how their bodily capacities and vulnerabilities react to religious forces" (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 30).

5.1.2 BODY SCHEMAS AND BODY IMAGE

The positioning and movement of the body helps us to organize the world in a meaningful way, and the body has an inherent intentionality, of which Gallagher uses the example of seeing from Husserl's principle of intentionality to explain further (Gallagher, 2005, p. 140). To see something, for example, is not just seeing, but seeing from somewhere, "that is, under conditions defined by the position and postural situation of the perceiving body" (Gallagher, 2005, p. 140). Body schema and body image are two closely related, but different, systems of referring to the socially informed body, and its functions in the context of intentional action (Gallagher, 2005, p. 24). To clarify further, a body image is how a person views their own body, and this "consists of a system of perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs" in regards to their own body. The body schema "is a system of sensory-motor capacities that function without awareness or the necessity of perceptual monitoring", meaning that body schema is informed by habit and abilities that "enable and constrain movement and the maintenance of posture" (Gallagher, 2005, p. 24). The body schema of posture and movement goes beyond the narrow boundaries defined by body image, and most movements will bounce back and forth somewhere in between the space of awareness and unawareness (Gallagher, 2005, pp. 36-37).

As stipulated above, religious knowledge and practice aims to influence not only the individual body image, but also the body schema. Movement (action) is essential to perception and to the influence of our bodily schemas. Although not all movement is the result of consciously reflected choices, repeated movement will still have an altering effect on our proprioception and body schemas (Gallagher, 2005). Even though body schemas involve complex neurological components, Gallagher argues that they are not reducible to neurological functioning. Since the body itself is doing the perceiving, then the body and the environment work together to "deliver an already formed meaning to consciousness" (Gallagher, 2005, p. 139). Tracing a physical practice's influence on individual's body schemas and body image might, as Mellor & Shilling suggest, tell us something about the degree to which the ontology and philosophy of the practice has been integrated. The performance of conscious movement such as through ritual-like practices brings a greater section of our body schemas into consciousness, as opposed to everyday habitus, which makes the controlling and alteration of the schema possible to a greater degree. The practice of having an attentional focus on and awareness of both external (*proprioceptive*) and internal (*interoceptive*) body sensations, through ritual-like practices, such as yoga, brings areas of our body schemas that has been habitual into conscious action (Impett

et al., 2006; Mehling et al., 2011, p. 1). This means that when involved in conscious movement, the effect and affect this has on the individual's body pedagogics and body schema is probably greater than if performed without awareness and intention. In the context of this thesis, this is an important point, since doing something with awareness and intention is closely linked up with motivation and being more aware of how the practice makes one feel.

5.2 THE BODY IN YOGA

Yoga cultivates attentiveness to external or bodily sensations as well as internal sensations and various states of mind, emotions and consciousness (Heelas et al., 2007, p. 3). In early yoga oriented practice, the body would often be seen as something to 'overcome' and control in order to be freed from distractions (Jacobsen, 2004; Remski, 2016). Although indulging in the senses and emotions are not a goal in itself in yoga, the introspective and reflective spaciousness of a yoga practice enables the practitioner to explore the internal landscape as well as the external practice and placement of the body (Jacobsen, 2004). Some styles of yoga might focus more on inner experiences and the embodiment of various philosophical concepts, such as *ahimsa* (non-violence), *saucha* (cleanliness) or even self-love, or concepts of the subtle body, such as *chakras* ('wheels' of energy in the body). This seems consistent with the idea of how psychosomatic practices (such as ritual or yoga) influences the body schemas of the practitioners, both by practice, but also by inducing a particular set of ideas as a framework for the practice. As already mentioned, the approach to the body in various yoga styles may vary quite a bit, with regard to style, focus, theme, poses and what the teacher or students wants and brings with them to the practice. In MPY, the biomedical discourse that holds a grip over modern bodily practices causes a great focus on external factors, where many styles of yoga have adapted an alignment-oriented type of practice (Jain, 2012). Either way, the increasing of body awareness is key to yoga practice, both when it comes to physical discipline and the embodiment of the philosophical or religious knowledge (Mehling et al., 2011, p. 1).

5.2.1 HOW YOGA AFFECTS BODY SCHEMAS AND BODY IMAGE

The embodiment of the inherent ideas, philosophies and ontologies of yoga traditions through Ypractice is similar to what happens in religions and through ritual, and research shows that yoga affects both body schemas and body image in a similar manner as in rituals (Barsalou et

al., 2005; Gallagher, 2005; Impett et al., 2006). The mindful self- or body awareness of the techniques of a yoga practice brings the otherwise habitually regulated aspects of corporeal spaces into our conscious perception (Smith, 2007, p. 38). Impett et al. says that in fact, a more frequent yoga practice is associated with increased awareness and a positive affect towards the body (Impett et al., 2006, p. 40). As Solomonova notes, the repetitive yoga practice “consists of systematic change and of deconditioning of the “lived body” from its earlier habit patterns and creating new patterns and neural connections”(Solomonova, 2015, p. 1). Through the repetition and training of both the body and the skills to notice, differentiate and discern, the practitioners of yoga are engaged in a practice that leads to embodiment (Mehling et al., 2011, p. 7). Because modern yoga is often taught and practiced in group-settings, the practice tends to orient itself towards a more disciplinary way to move, with instructions and focus on “right or wrong”, which creates new body schemas that work together with- or replace the old schemas (Gallagher, 2005, p. 141). As Smith points out, usually what brings our attention to the body are disruptive moments such as dysfunction or bodily discomfort and pain, whereas modern yoga’s emphasis on responsiveness to bodily sensations, emotions and internal awareness in general cultivates ‘positive’ modes that systematically enhance bodily experience (Leder, 1990 in Smith, 2007, pp. 38-39). This indicate that experiences with and in the body would possibly be a greater part of the motivational factors of modern yoga practice than seen in earlier yoga traditions.

In addition to the conscious changes of bodily habits, the practices themselves will alter the appearance of the body (and possibly some of the functions, or what the body is able to do), as is visible in other regular practitioners of different sports. Lloyd makes an interesting comparison between long time practitioners of pranayama (breathing exercises, often linked to the practice of yoga) and swimming, where both seem to gain a larger upper body, not only from the physical exercises, but also from the enhanced lung-capacity (Lloyd, 2004). Here we can see how an intentional practice, although not extreme like say, scarring, may change the human body. In this case we can clearly see how something that is more or less an unconscious action (breathing) can be transformed into a practice (breathing exercises) aligned with motivation and discipline, and that this has potential transformational powers upon the body itself.

5.3 THE RITUAL BODY

5.3.1 DEFINING AN EMBODIED RITUAL

Ritual is embodied action, but not the only embodied action there is; embodied action is not necessarily ritualized (Rappaport, 1999). What links the two together though, besides the body, is the question of meaning and motivation behind the various actions, practices, movements, or words as a part of what Strathern and Stewart call a ‘conveyance matrix’ (Strathern & Stewart, 1998, pp. 237-238). The embodiment of rituals and ritualization often appears to metaphorically convey a mental state that is religiously important (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 43; Mellor & Shilling, 2010). Ritual behavior is not necessarily an entirely different way of acting, but its significance is created by how such activities constitute themselves as different, in contrast to other activities (Bell, 1992, pp. 90, 92 104). Bell and Bourdieu talk about ‘ritual-, or practical mastery’ to “indicate the systems of classifying schemes that act as instruments for ordering the world that ‘every successfully socialized agent’ possesses” (Bell, 1992, p. 107). Bell designates the use of this term to the mastery of the schemes that comes with an embodied knowing of the structures that happens within a social, practical context of interaction, as is the case of ritual.

Theories of religious cognition have made distinct separation between once-in-a-lifetime rituals and repeated mundane rituals (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 46). What we can see in relation to this distinction in rituals is that the goal of a ritual may determine the form of the embodied act, and that practices are, and can be, tailored to match the goal of the ritual and the belief system behind it (Barsalou et al., 2005). The once-in-a-lifetime rituals attempt to make great impact on people’s cognitive and conceptual systems, and typically, individuals undertake this dramatic, intense and perhaps shocking experience once. Certain initiations and pilgrimages are examples of this, where one changes the daily routines and possibly environment for an extended period of time. These radical religious experiences involve the participants’ body at a highly individual and personal level, and tend to “induce powerful motivational forces for personal change” (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 46). The mundane rituals, in contrast, may typically be performed over and over, creating a habit, and as a result, potentially change our habitus, or the matrix of our socially integrated, yet partly unconscious, behavioral patterns - closely linked to the notion of body schema (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 47; Bourdieu in Bell, 1992, pp. 79-80). An example of this might be the almost automatic signing of the cross when passing a religious symbol. These mundane rituals may often be designed to help people understand, and integrate - embody -

religious ideas via metaphors (Barsalou et al., 2005). Making the mundane rituals easy, enjoyable and even addicting to perform increases the potential of establishing the underlying beliefs into the practitioners' referential schemata. While these kinds of "mundane" practices, such as meditating with rosary beads, could become a habit, it should also be noted here that transforming an act into a habit and incorporating it fully would also possibly take an enormous amount of personal discipline and motivation. At the same time, one can perform tasks out of habit and skill, not necessarily by motivation (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014, p. 336). I will go further into the motivational aspects in chapter 6.3.

5.3.2 THE RITUALIZED SOCIAL BODY

Bell names the circular production of a ritualized body which "in turn produces ritualized practices" as essential to ritualization (Bell, 1992, p. 93). This circular production of a ritualized body means the interaction between the socially informed body "within a symbolically constituted spatial and temporal environment" (Bell, 1992, p. 93). The constituting and positioning in ritual is highly group-oriented, but the "specific strategies of ritualization come together in the production of a ritualized social body" (Bell, 1992, p. 107). In the wider social context, this ritualized social body has the ability to unfold and convey the schemes internalized in the ritualized environment (Bell, 1992, p. 107). With the body as a point of departure and interaction, participants in rituals orient and situate themselves in time and space, and they personify who they are and what they (intend to) become in relation to their situated orientation (Werbner 1989 in Strathern & Stewart, 1998, p. 239). As pointed out by both Bell and Strathern and Stewart, through ritual people can create bodily transformations that in turn are, or can be, communicated and shared with others (Strathern & Stewart, 1998, p. 239). These bodily transformations can be linked to, and enhanced by, the sensory stimulating process of practice and ritual. As Bruno Latour says "... to have a body is to learn to be affected, meaning 'effectuated', moved, put into motion by other entities, humans or nonhumans" (Bruno Latour in Lloyd, 2004, p. 556). In other words, as confirmed by empirical evidence of "a singular muscle-brain 'effort-circuit'", movement and emotion has a fundamental concordance that "lies in the fact that bodily movement is expressive" (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 262).

5.3.3 IDENTIFYING YOGA AS RITUAL

A typical organized MPY class will be one to one-and a half hour, but a practice can be anywhere from 5 minutes to 3+ hours. De Michelis divides the standard session into three parts: “(i) introductory quieting time: arrival and settling in (about ten minutes); (ii) MPY practice proper: instruction in postural and breathing practice given by the instructor through example, correction and explanation; (iii) final relaxation: pupils lie down in savasana (‘corpse pose’) for guided relaxation, possibly with elements of visualization or meditation (ten to twenty minutes). This period includes a short ‘coming back’ time at the end of the relaxation” (De Michelis, 2005, p. 251). A classical layout of ‘(ii) MPY practice proper’ appears similar to any other group-workout, with warm-ups, main “work” and cool-down. In the beginning of a class, often it is a goal to “pump up” the mood, warm up and work towards a ‘peak pose’¹⁸ while later in the class, the focus will be on a cool-down and calming, both body and mind-wise. The warm-ups usually consists of flow- and active poses, and the main-body of the class tends to build up through standing poses, while the cool down tends to be seated and supine poses.

The emergence of the threefold pattern De Michelis refers to is explained with reference to Arnold van Gennep’s work on rites of passage, and the three stages defines the fundamental structure of a ritual. De Michelis further builds on Victor Turner’s theories on the creation of *liminal space* to argue how a modern yoga class functions as a space set aside from everyday life, where the practitioners actively attend or actively engage in a Ypractice, often in a designated place or space (De Michelis, 2005, p. 252; Jain, 2012, p. 8). Jain even argues that the yoga mat is a significant “tool” for the marking of liminal, or set aside space in the yoga practice (Jain, 2012, p. 8).

A ritual indicates a mode of attention, either from the group as a whole, or the attention one brings to oneself and one’s body, through the planned movements and presence, which gives way to embodiment. In the ritual space of a yoga practice, the “body and the mind are strengthened and trained, time after time, by cycle upon cycle of repetitive practice” (De Michelis, 2005, p. 255). In this sense, regular yoga practice in classes or at home aligns with the idea of *mundane rituals* as outlined by Barsalou et al. above, yet various intensive courses, workshops, retreats and teacher trainings will most likely have more the effect of *once-in-a-*

¹⁸ The different styles of yoga classes might have different contents in the ‘(ii) MPY practice proper’, and not all classes or styles builds to a peak pose, but the outline above gives a general idea.

lifetime rituals, and both of these are core elements in the yoga milieu. From my own experience, it is common that intensive workshops will have a strong effect on the participants, and many see these experiences as pivotal and transforming.

5.3.4 MEANING THROUGH MOVEMENTS

Lakoff and Johnson say that meaningful conceptual structures arise from two sources: “(1) from the structured nature of bodily and social experience, and (2) from innate capacity to imaginatively project from certain well-structured aspects of bodily and interactional experience to conceptual structures” (Lakoff & Johnson in Varela et al., 1991, p. 178). This would mean that certain postures, behavior and movement will induce various (more or less) meaningful structures, which in turn can be linked to the emotive aspects of meaning and experience. Gibbs notes that the “meaning a person gives to a situation depends on the bodily sensations experienced in that context” (Gibbs, 2005, p. 265). These bodily sensations (through movement) are most often highly influenced by the movements and the following sensations that are informed and transmitted through the contextual arena (Lingis in Lloyd, 2004, p. 557). Ylönen relies on Geertz (2005) to assert how the transmitting of meaning through movement such as in yoga or ritual, can change a person and their ‘being’ in the world, another way of talking about what Mellor & Shilling call body pedagogics (Mellor & Shilling, 2010; Ylönen, 2012, p. 41). Both De Michelis and Ylönen state that whether or not the body techniques as practiced in yoga are able to convey the philosophical background to the individual practitioners, the “holistic body–world relation transmits through the practice” (De Michelis, 2005, p. 251; Ylönen, 2012, p. 41). In other words, although a practice can be performed without a specific intention of the actor, meaning and value will inform the level of integration of the religious principles the individual is able to do.

Since movement is essential to perception, the way we place our bodies will also be essential to how we perceive our surroundings. What both yoga and religious practices do is to offer tools and meaning for positioning oneself and one’s body in a place from which to view the world (Ylönen, 2012, p. 42). The human ability to create practices and structures which influence and change, or even transform our bodily schemas and thereby our interpersonal relations is therefore a highly interesting link between the cognitive sciences and ritual theory. These types of ritual practices usually entrench a belief-system into the practitioner's cognitive system, which in turn creates a stimuli-loop of sorts, where bodily placement and practices

induce certain associated beliefs. But it can also be the other way around - approaching a certain emotion, need or belief produces the impulse to perform a certain bodily act (Barsalou et al., 2005, pp. 30, 47). This can be seen with kneeling for instance, as this may help people understand a certain kind of submissiveness, and people may use this stance as a way of expressing what they are feeling and experiencing. Yet people can also kneel as a way of showing submissiveness in a social setting, without actually incorporating it and experiencing it, placing the meaning at a different level than what perhaps most of the viewers perceive as a game of power play (Barsalou et al., 2005, pp. 22-23; Strathern & Stewart, 1998, p. 238). As Bell points out above, this conveys the ritualized social body, and the level of individual reflexivity can vary a lot. The body becomes a sign that is indexical of the values expressed, and thus the “body technique’s ritual movements are never empty of meaning” (Strathern & Stewart, 1998, p. 238; Ylönen, 2012, p. 41). What is of particular interest in this thesis is thus how yoga practitioners weight their experiences as something they set apart from everyday life as special, and if this “specialness” stems from the body pedagogics of Ypractice, or if it is something the practitioners bring with them from other parts of their life-experience. In chapter 6, I look at the notion of “something set apart as special”, emphasizing emotion and motivation.

6 SOMETHING SET APART AS SPECIAL

6.1 EXPERIENCE DEEMED RELIGIOUS

Looking at experience *deemed* religious or spiritual, rather than simply as religious or spiritual experiences, shifts the focus from the question of whether or not there is ‘something more’ over to the question of how people set things apart as special (called simple ascriptions), and how this set-apartness acts within continuous practices, larger groups and cultures (called composite ascriptions) (Taves, 2009, p. 9). Distinguishing between simple and composite ascriptions opens up for a greater understanding of how “things set apart as special” work as building blocks to create more complex formations that usually take the shape of religion or spirituality (Taves, 2009, p. 9). Often, what is deemed special, valuable, or religious, are “things” that are noticed and even sought out by the individual or a group or culture. Since the body is always laden with meaning, the amount or level of *awareness* one places on particular “things” are shaped through the lens of the particular context the individuals find themselves in. Linking this up with Mellor & Shilling’s concept of body pedagogics, the idea is that when looking closer at people’s experiences (such as emotions and bodily sensations), one can get a sense of what is valuable (to them), and possibly why it is valuable within the specific frame of knowledge.

6.1.1 AWARENESS

The concepts of ‘experience’ and ‘consciousness’ are closely related and sometimes used interchangeably, and Taves notes that considering these together, and creating a clarification between them are central to characterize experiences in a more precise way (Taves, 2009, p. 57). We can distinguish between intransitive and transitive ways of talking about consciousness, where intransitive denotes consciousness as a state of being, not related to an object, and transitive consciousness is to be conscious of something (an object, or the like) (Taves, 2009, p. 58). Gallagher names a similar experiential structure “pre-noetic” (pre-mental), meaning how the majority of bodily movements usually operate without the help of body awareness, and our body schemas tend to remain outside of our perceptual awareness (Gallagher, 2005, p. 28).

Intransitive presence is either present or absent, meaning that if it is absent, we are either dead, in coma or in dreamless sleep (Taves, 2009, p. 58). Gallagher's opposite term is "phenomenal" structure of experience, that concerns the same as Taves transitive experience, meaning that "when we become aware of something, including our own awareness, we become transitively conscious" (Taves, 2009, p. 58). By considering experience as a consciousness of something (transitive) we may divide this into a primary and secondary level of experience, attention or awareness, as a subset of transitive consciousness. In other words, when looking into religious experience, or an experience deemed special, there should be made a distinction between simply being aware (consciousness), and consciously being aware that we are being aware (meta-consciousness), to clarify the field further (Taves, 2009, pp. 59-60).

In mind-body training such as yoga, the focus on mindfulness and developing a meta-awareness (or self-awareness) is greatly emphasized, and is usually applied as a tool for self-regulation (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012, p. 1). The idea of mindfulness is that "the mind is present in embodied everyday experience", and that "mindfulness techniques are designed to lead the mind back from its theories and preoccupations, back to the abstract attitude, to the situation of one's experience itself" (Varela et al., 1991). Varela et al. say that, "what mindfulness disrupts is mindlessness – that is, being mindlessly involved without realizing what one is doing" (Varela et al., 1991, p. 32). In other words, by being mindful and reflective through an embodied practice, the practitioners are pulled out of their habitual schemas and into their moving and feeling bodies in the present. Smith suggests that the moments of self-awareness may be translated to a kind of *self-encounter* – through the awareness and embodiment of a practice, one "meets" oneself, an experience that practitioners often identify as 'spiritual' (Smith, 2007). The framework for the practitioner that has this awareness of "something" indicates how this "something" is interpreted, whether it is the meeting with God, meeting with "something bigger", feeling connected with other people or one's own 'soul' or self. Varela et al. names the experience of a panoramic awareness and of space as "natural outgrowths" of mindfulness/awareness practices, and several yoga researchers mention this kind of meta-awareness or mindfulness as the point at which the practitioner is said to be "really doing yoga" (Smith, 2007, p. 40; Varela et al., 1991, p. 26). This also seems the case for the practitioners themselves, as the results from the survey show.

6.1.2 SOMETHING SET APART AS SPECIAL AND VALUE-LADEN

Taves explains experience as a “vaguely defined subset of transitive consciousness”, meaning that an experience is most often marked as being of value when the subject inherits awareness towards what is happening (Taves, 2009, p. 62). Examining the relationship between representation, awareness and experience is thus an important factor to explore subjective experience. What marks value for the subject will not necessarily be something that indicates value for the society, and although they will overlap, in this context, placing value and looking at “what matters” for the subject is closely linked to the subject’s experience and mindfulness. The processes of experiencing things of value is something that for many people takes shape in “tandem with identifying their various projects and pursuits as secular, religious, or spiritual (or some combination thereof)” (Bender & Taves, 2012, p. 2). In addition, the emotive and the calculative aspects of valuing often overlap, meaning that value can be placed on both what we cherish and prefer, and what we rank as valuable in reference to hierarchy, services, and more (Scherer, 2005; Wyschogrod, 1998, p. 365). This means that to understand the process of valuation, we need to examine not only events and interactions, but also the “various resources, processes, and structures that enable the articulation of value” (Bender & Taves, 2012, p. 11).

While some subjects feel that some things appear to them already laden with value, there are various degrees of self-reflexivity by the subjects to take into consideration when attempting to understand people’s experiences and placement of value. This means that many actively “pursue, make and engage in things of value”, even though they are aware that what they value is shaped by social processes and their own individual preferences. (Bender & Taves, 2012, p. 17). Taves and Bender note that, “the actions of these reflexive actors, both secular and religious, suggests that misrecognition and mystification is not a necessary condition for holding something to be of value” (Bender & Taves, 2012, p. 17). In the narrative of modernity, with its focus on knowledge- and science-based information, it might appear as though ambivalence towards what we know and learn is a mark of the secular society (Bender & Taves, 2012, p. 17). Self-reflexivity and ambivalence should seemingly gradually erase religion and ‘spirituality’ (as in the secularization theory), yet this has obviously not been the case. Langøien emphasizes that a common theme among yoga practitioners is that “the truth of yoga can’t be understood (intellectually); it has to be felt and experienced (physically)”, and that these experiences serve as proof for yoga’s claimed effects (Langøien, 2012, p. 32). In light of how yoga practice works with embodiment through mindfulness or awareness, the results often tend

to be that the practitioners are brought closer to their ordinary experiences. In other words, the process of setting something apart as special and giving it a certain value (as in spiritual or religious), might not be related to something extraordinary in “traditional” religious experiences. Hanna Ylönen describes the conveyance of subjective experience in the yoga milieu as ‘ideas of a desired phenomenological state’, described by practitioners with words such as “solidity, steadiness, stillness, presence, grounding, balance, centeredness, movement, flow, release, openness, expansion, and spaciousness” (Ylönen, 2012, p. 41). Identifying the subjective, phenomenological states as something special seems to be given particular value in the context of the “subjective turn” of society and people’s approach to religious or spiritual matters. In other words – how, what and why they are feeling and experiencing what they are experiencing seems to be of particular interest to the seekers in the leisure class. The placing of value on the immediateness of subjective experience speaks to both individualism and to the consumer-based expectations of instant gratification.

6.2 EMOTIONS

With the idea that knowledge is grounded in the brain’s modality specific areas, we can see that when a particular bodily state occurs, it will activate patterns of social knowledge and value related to the particular movement. When these patterns become active, Barsalou et al. say, “they trigger related emotional states that can then influence a variety of cognitive processes” (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 32). Emotions and consciousness can thus be said to both be directly tied to human action (Gibbs, 2005, p. 267). Owen Lynch notes that “emotions are essentially appraisals, that is, they are judgements of situations based on cultural beliefs and values” (Lynch, 1990 in Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 5). This means that the nature of emotions are highly evaluative, meaning that they allow or enable us to act in certain ways in response to these emotional evaluations (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 6).

In the framework of emotions as ‘component processes’, Scherer defines emotion as “an episode of interrelated, synchronized changes in the states of all or most of the five organismic subsystems in response to the evaluation of an external or internal stimulus event as relevant to major concerns for the organism” (Scherer, 1987 & 2001 in Scherer, 2005, p. 697). In other

words, emotions hold an evolutionary significance to motivate to action both through evaluative aspects, and the physiological reactions (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 73). The five subsystems as mentioned by Scherer are: (1) *Information processing* (appraisal and evaluation, linked to the central nervous system - CNS); (2) *Support* (bodily symptoms and system regulation, linked to the CNS, neuro-endocrine system and the autonomic nervous system), (3) *Executive* (action tendencies and motivational component, linked to the CNS); (4) *Action* (bodily and vocal expression, linked to the somatic nervous system); and (5) *Monitor* (subjective emotional experience, linked to the CNS) (Scherer, 2005, p. 698). This holds a highly embodied and contextual interpretation of emotions, as emotions are indeed not separate substances, but connected with everything that makes a person; body, language, consciousness, imagination and other people and culture (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 13; Scherer, 2005; Sheets-Johnstone, 1999).

6.2.1 EMOTIONAL AFFECT & EFFECT

Linked to the body, and the body schema, emotional states need not be conscious or reflexive at all, yet how they show up in a person's body will have an effect on the context and the surrounding environment as emotions are “critical elements in social interaction and decision making” (Berthomé & Houseman, 2010, p. 58; Christie et al., 2008, 2297 in Kern, 2012). Emotions are an essential part of the “constitution of individuals, communities, societies, and cultures” (Harré, 1986 in Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 3). François Berthomé and Michael Houseman suggest that we must consider rituals as “dynamic interactive contexts, and emotions as both emergent properties and integral components of ongoing human interactions”, which means that emotions tend to be fairly short-lived in that they are highly relational and caused according to bodily awareness in interaction with the environment (Berthomé & Houseman, 2010, pp. 57-58). This is to say, “emotions are neither ‘actions’ nor ‘passions’ (understood as forces beyond our control that simply happen to us)—they are both at once” (Simonsen, 2007).

In other words, one aspect is that *social information processing produces embodied states*, the other one is that *embodied states affect social information processing* (Barsalou et al., 2005, p.

30). The first shows how various perceptions of social stimuli trigger associated embodiments, in other words how social information produces embodiments as effects (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 30). This thus cannot be reduced to physiology or conscious control, since what triggers emotion is highly contextually related, and the responder triggered will have a whole spectrum of linguistic, historical and personal experience informing their response, both on a schematic and self-image level. An example here is a study made on how students that get good grade tend to be more erect in their posture, while when they learn that they got a bad grade, they slump (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 30). Information and our emotional and cultural response thus effects how we position our bodies. The latter (*embodied states affect social information processing*) shows that embodiments also function as potent causes, and the placement of the head, facial expressions, arms, torso and posture in general all affect social processing (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 30). Studies done on the performance of various movements while relating to information, show that positive movements give more positive results regarding the information conveyed, and negative movements will have a more negative effect on the information (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 30). This can be exemplified by nodding (positive) and shaking (negative) of the head while listening to music, or pushing (approach) and pulling (avoidance).

A study made on posture shows how the participant's confidence and the pride in their performance is influenced by whether they have an upright posture or a slumping one. The upright posture produces positive affect and judgement, while the slumping posture produces negative affect and judgement (Barsalou et al., 2005, p. 31). Gallagher explores the concept of "being upright" even further, as this has an interesting moral metaphorical connotation linked to it, not just postural-wise (Gallagher, 2005, pp. 140, 147). It would seem that "perception and attention cannot be uncoupled from the body's postural attitudes" (Gallagher, 2005, p. 140). In the light of this, we can see how modality-specific systems might underlie rituals deemed religious, as movement and emotions are intertwined and not possible to remove from the embodied experiential sphere of human existence (Gallagher, 2005; Gibbs, 2005, p. 273). Allison Winters claims that " (1) embodying specific postures can induce affective states; (2) witnessing others in affective states can also induce affective states within us; (3) whether we are observing or embodying, similar neurological functions are being activated" (Winters, 2008, p. 91). While Winters' study builds on Dance Movement Therapy, there are many similarities between yoga and dance in regards to awareness and embodiment. This means that the asanas in themselves may cause emotions, based on how expressive they are performed,

and how the form of the body is interpreted in a societal light and by previous experiences of similar body-positioning.

There is a tendency for MPY to orient itself towards an extensive type of practice, meaning reaching, stretching, end-range motion, edge play and expansion, often with emphasis on heart opening and elongation of the spine (Remski, 2016). The counterpart is “compressive”, meaning seated postures, folds, binds, restorative, weighted, internalization (Remski, 2016). De Michelis notes that, depending on which of these patterns the practice takes, people will experience either a focused calmness and relaxation (compressive), or a fairly durable state of mild euphoria (extensive) (De Michelis, 2005, p. 257). There is a tendency for certain poses to be associated with certain emotional states, or ‘ideas of desired phenomenological states’, as Ylönen says. Asanas that categorizes as “backbends” are often described as “heart-openers”, or “opening”, indicating not only the physical advantages, but also an expansive “openness”, and a “proudness”, as seen with the examples earlier from Gallagher and Barsalou et al. The asanas categorized as “forward folds” are often described as having an aspect of “humility”, where the head and heart are lower to the ground than usual. Movement can be a “combination of efforts”, as Rudolph Laban has described these as indirect or direct (space), light or strong (weight), sustained or quick (time), free or bound (flow). The seemingly opposites that are often described in yoga practice between light (extensive) and heavy (compressive) are a natural result. The double view is also a “shift between concentration/flow and reflection/conscious practice”, which goes to explain how both mindful awareness and flow are embodied “states” described by yoga practitioners (Langøien, 2012, p. 36). A “well-rounded” yoga class will vary between extensive and compressive types of asanas, meaning that an emotional variation and change will also be expected.

Neurologists and psychiatrists David Vago and David Silbersweig point to growing evidence from a variety of self-reports, physiological and neuroimaging methods, that mindfulness training such as in yoga improves self-regulation skills and the awareness of emotions (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012, p. 18). One explanatory mechanism is that mindfulness-based techniques strengthen neural systems that are important for emotion regulation, especially the evaluative, expressive and experiential aspects of emotion (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012, p. 18). Because the yogic body is mainly a moving body, the leap to embodied emotional exploration is a short and

relatively sure one, even though it is not ontologically or philosophically “correct” by tradition, as discussed above.

6.2.2 THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Although emotions to a degree can be traced through universal traits, the individual experience of emotions are highly subjective, and culturally dependent. What is clear, is that pre-existing ideas, beliefs and values ingrained in each actor, the particular milieu and the overall society will strongly influence the emotions that come to surface in a ritual context (von Scheve, 2012, pp. 62-63).

Michaels and Wulf claims that our modern society has an overall approach towards emotions that is disembodied, meaning that we tend to separate matters of body and mind when it comes to both institutions and socially constructed and accepted behavior (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 8). A modern notion of emotions is that humans should not allow themselves to be at mercy of their own emotions, and that they should curb their emotions and adjust and shape them according to contemporary moral criteria (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 8). This builds under the vertical hierarchical placement of emotions, where the mind, or intellect is seen as superior to the heart (emotions) (Michaels & Wulf, 2012; Varga, 2005). Michaels and Wulf places further ‘blame’ on both Christianity and industrialization for the disembodiment of emotions in our modern society, where Christianity upholds a strict morality of the hierarchization of the body versus the soul, and industrialization caused alienation and a focus on discipline and moral of the body (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 8).

In regard to the yoga tradition, the Indian Samkhya system describes more of a materiality to emotions, and similar to Christianity, it sees emotions as subordinate to the intellect (Larson, 2012). The Advaita Vedanta sees emotions (both positive and negative) as illusions and as one of the bonds that binds people to the material world (Larson, 2012). As seen above as well, neither experience nor emotions were originally in focus in traditional yogic pursuit, but in modern practice this has changed, and experience and emotions are highly valued by the practitioners. Thus, modern yoga might be a counter-reaction to the traditional and prevalent disembodied approach towards emotions, and exploring the emotional states in Ypractice might increase the experience of the practice as special and set apart from everyday life.

6.2.3 RITUAL, EMOTION AND INTENTION

Rituals often function as set aside spaces where certain emotions are allowed and encouraged. Rituals are also important practices for the generation of certain emotions, and these emotions will often be modeled and reincorporated through repetition (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 14). In addition to conveying a religio-philosophical background, rituals work to create emotions of commonality and belonging in order to strengthen and encourage participation (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 18). As already pointed out in defining the difference between *once-in-a-lifetime rituals* and *everyday-life rituals*, a ritual in itself is no indication of how strongly the individual is affected. The *once-in-a-lifetime rituals* tend to leave stronger and more lasting emotions and moods, but the *everyday-life rituals* may in fact require a stronger motivational foundation to uphold a continuous practice.

Michaels and Wulf comment on how “people seem to experience an intensification of their emotions due to the fact that their emotions, which are in part intimate, are publicly shown and seen by others”, meaning that the experience of emotions might be easier to ‘notice’ in more public situations (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 11). Emile Durkheim called the basis of the similarities of emotions in particular cultures, groups or communities the “collective conscience”, and the talking and sharing around emotions might actually build under, and elicit emotions in others (von Scheve, 2012, pp. 62-63, 67). As Langøien notes, much reflection and ‘sense-making’ is done through talking with others in the same milieu, and this social discourse builds up much of what is the modern yoga milieu (Langøien, 2012, pp. 36-37). Langøien also says that it is through the social aspects of the milieu one is able to “recognize and acknowledge the physical changes that the practice brings, and also to frame these changes in philosophical or religious language and understanding” (Langøien, 2012, p. 32). This sense-making will in turn quite probably affect the performativity of the ritual practice, and one could talk about the setting of an intention for the ritual (deemed religious) as similarly important to the influential effects the ritual has: the individual chooses the focus and awareness for the practice they are engaging in, thus having a more purposive plan for the action, steering more the outcome of the experience (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012, p. 16).

In phenomenology “intentionality” is understood as an “aboutness” of consciousness, or as Taves would put it, a transitive awareness (Solomonova, 2015; Taves, 2009). In the cultic or alternative milieu one of the key points is the subjective experience, and how this subjective

experience can be chosen and shaped by the individuals themselves in a kind of reflexive transformation of the self (Campbell, 1972; McGuire, 1993). In the yoga milieu and in contemplative practices in general, “setting and maintaining of intention plays an important ritualistic and motivational role, especially in the early stages of practice” (Solomonova, 2015, p. 2). This means that one has decided upon a purpose or an attitude toward the effect of one’s actions beforehand. As originally proposed by Shapiro et. al. (2006), Vago & Silbersweig describe intention as “one of the fundamental building blocks out of which an array of neurocognitive mechanisms may emerge to effectively cultivate mindfulness” (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012, p. 15). In other words, having an intention when participating in a practice will enable the practitioner to be better aware of the processes in their own bodies, both before (motivational), during (experiential) and after (bodily expression and habitus). The encouragement that lies with intentionality, expectations and motivations before doing a Ypractice will possibly lay way for the practitioner to experience emotions they *would like to have*, not only what they bring with them.¹⁹ The application of metaphoric language towards bodily postures as Lakoff & Johnson explores is also highly employed as a tool in yoga for talking about the body and the intended experience the postures could or should induce in the practitioners (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Thus the Ypractitioners will, or have the possibility to, actively engage in certain techniques and expressions of the practice in order to achieve the desired phenomenological states, or cognitive-affective changes²⁰ (Michaels & Wulf, 2012, p. 12; Solomonova, 2015, p. 2). Varela et. al. also note how practice makes the connection between intention and the act closer, and that the feeling of difference between the two can become difficult to separate with time (Varela et al., 1991).

The theoretical and ritual “framing”, or setting of intention for the practice, is common in many yoga classes, and also in personal practice (De Michelis, 2005, pp. 255-257). As already explored, intention is a valuable tool for framing the subjective experience and motivation in ritual, to create a space for mindful reflection and awareness of particular “things”, or things that are, or could be made valuable, to the subject (Solomonova, 2015; Taves, 2009; Vago &

¹⁹ Many asanas have simple Sanskrit names that are put together by the basic function, or visual display of the pose, while others are inspired by various shapes, animals or saints. In the latter case of Sanskrit names, we meet a more elaborate notion of integrating yoga’s Hindu origin, and the Indian culture in which yoga emerged in the beginning. Some poses also say something (usually in the Sanskrit-form) about what you are supposed to physically feel and/or experience in the pose, while other poses again say something about the “mental” or spiritual experience and feeling you ought to have/expect from a pose. The names of these poses are, or can be used as, emotional markers and inspirational backdrops for yoga practices.

²⁰ Whether this is a subjective desire, or through the guidance of a teacher.

Silbersweig, 2012). In many cases, this “framing” can be mindfully getting aware of specific body parts or bodily sensations (proprioceptive, interoceptive), but also “getting at” specific emotional states and needs in the framework of philosophy and mythology as represented by the particular teachers and sub-culture. The angle of the individual’s placement of value through intention and motivation is not only a subjective experience, but also an expression of the integration of a cultural and sub-cultural body pedagogics and symbols (See Figure. 4). Since yoga often is practiced in a group setting with planned ritual-like elements, yoga postures cannot be seen as direct and spontaneous subjective expressions of emotions, but the body-pedagogics and the neural correlates of the practice indicates that certain postures lay the basis for certain emotions and moods (Solomonova, 2015, p. 2). What is clear then with a sub-culture such as the yoga milieu with its widespread and diverse approaches towards yoga, is that the most constant symbol is the body, and the most comparative aspects are the subjective experiences the individuals encounter when they engage in the practice.

6.3 MOTIVATION

Because motivation tends to play an important role as a backdrop as to why people choose to seek out and practice anything that is an optional part of their daily lives (such as yoga), clarifying the types of motivations and needs that might lie as a basis for the different reasons to practice yoga is highly relevant. Since individuals are integrated into the complex formations of religious or spiritual practices, they are usually involved in a way that is grounded in their embodied cognition and emotions (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 29). Thus, Mellor and Shilling say, “people’s experiences of ‘religious life’ can inform the core of their practical dispositions and beliefs, and *motivate* them to structure the world in particular ways” (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 29, my italics).

6.3.1 THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

Theories of motivation center on three distinct but often interrelated concepts: a) *instinct/ drive*, b) *arousal*, and c) *incentive* (Gorman, 2004, p. 3). The *instinctive* motivation (a) is related to the basic physiological needs in life: food, drink, air, shelter, warmth, safety. These needs will come first in all situations, and when these are covered, we can attend to other needs. Although

behavior may be driven by biological factors, this can only explain some of the more basic examples of behavior (Gorman, 2004, p. 57). The motivation for *arousal* says something about the quality of one's experiences – are they good or bad? And in what context? As Gorman says, “this approach combines the desire for changes in your physiological state with individual differences in psychological assessment of the situation to explain these behaviors” (Gorman, 2004, p. 4). The *incentive* motivation holds a decision to act in a particular way in order to gain satisfaction or reward. This approach indicates how certain forms of behavior are encouraged and sought because they provide us with something we want, not from a biological perspective but by other needs related to cognitive factors and external factors (Gorman, 2004, p. 57). The incentive motivation can be separated into *external* or *extrinsic* and *internal*, or *intrinsic* motivation. External motivation “arises from the desire to approach (avoid) an externally imposed reward (punishment)”, while internal motivation “arises from a more automatic, internally driven desire to obtain reward, or satisfy one's needs” (Gorman, 2004; Vago & Silbersweig, 2012, p. 16). The internal motivation is often more process-focused through either a means-focused motivation on doing it right or properly, and an intrinsic motivation that is more about enjoying the experience (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014). The external motivation is usually more outcome-focused, meaning completing a goal and “getting it done” (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014).

6.3.2 YOGA AND MOTIVATION

In the light of the different “types” of yoga practitioners, as introduced earlier from the research by Bjerrum & Pilgaard, the achievement-yogi is probably more related to the outcome and the physical performance (external), the social yogi emphasizes the social aspect (also an external motivational factor), and the lifestyle yogi orients itself more towards the progression and intrinsic kind of motivation for practice (see Appendix 7). With regard to yoga practice, both goal-oriented and process-oriented motivational factors will probably be informed by the level of pleasure (arousal) in an activity, but the extent to which this is focused on within the practice might be dependent on the style of yoga, the teacher and the individuals themselves (Gorman, 2004, p. 86). As already mentioned, an idea of a “desired phenomenological state” seems to be prevalent among Ypractitioners, indicating that the milieu upholds certain kinds of expectations of what one “gets out of” practice (Ylönen, 2012). Matthew Remski indirectly points to the goal- versus process-oriented motivational factors by identifying the strange relationship between ideals of “acceptance and self-care” (meaning “being good enough”) and the “narrative

of progress and transcendence” (meaning “to get better, to achieve something”) that is visible in the yoga culture (Lea, 2009, p. 82; Remski, 2016). Whereas the self-care oriented type of practice emphasizes inclusion, integration, acceptance, nurturing, and support, the self-transformation oriented type of practice tends to orient itself toward desirable or undesirable states (do’s and don’ts) (Remski, 2016). This dual approach within the yoga milieu as a whole has not only resulted in many different types of yoga styles, but it has also created some ambivalent points in the way yoga is taught, as both self-care and transcendence are appealing to the practitioners.

The goal that is *transcendence*, or enlightenment, in traditional yoga is a distant goal and thus it can be difficult to find motivation by that. As one of the respondents to the survey writes: “*Will I ever be enlightened? Who has become that [enlightened]?*”. Setting the goal of yoga as therapeutic, de-stressing and calming, or achieving certain poses seems to be “closer” and “easier” goals for the modern yoga practitioner (De Michelis, 2005, p. 219). Since yoga is mostly not a competitive team activity with rewards, but a highly individual practice, it would be likely that the longer one practices yoga, a more process-focused motivation comes to surface. The means-focused motivation part of the process-oriented line would probably work very well with people engaging in biomechanical and alignment focused style, whereas the intrinsic motivation might be more available for those who place stronger emphasis on their experiences while doing the practice. In the survey for this thesis, I am attempting to see some differences or indications of the various motivations to see if there is a link between intrinsic motivation and a spiritual approach towards Ypractice, as research suggests. Obviously, people have very unique motivational factors which cannot be found through a simple and impersonal survey, yet as Vago Silbersweig suggests, “however, through advancement of practice, motivation is proposed here to become more internally driven (i.e., suggesting increased control) and less focused on outcome” (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012, p. 16). This might indicate a certain traceable postural attitude towards the practice, as acquired through the body pedagogics of the Ypractice.

6.3.3 POSTURAL ATTITUDE

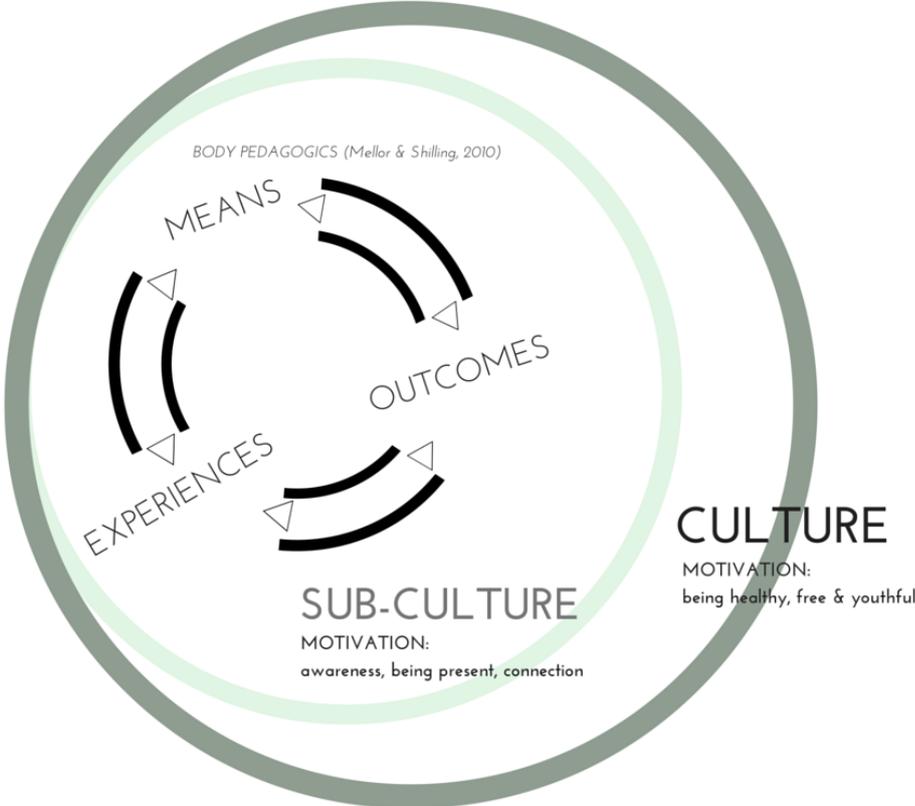
As already established, action does not necessarily stem from a clearly formulated motivation, it can be a part of the prenoetic performance of the body and the intransitive part of our consciousness. Movement through the body orients itself back and forth from conscious and unconscious actions. Sheets-Johnstone emphasizes the notion of ‘postural attitude’ as a generative source of emotion and a “readiness toward meaning”, in other words, a felt “urge to do something — approach something, strike something, touch something, run from something, and so on” (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 265). An attitude is usually relatively enduring towards specific things (objects, activities, persons), and Scherer singles out the three components of attitudes based on social psychology; “a cognitive component (beliefs about the attitude object), an affective component (consisting mostly of differential valence), and a motivational or behavioral component (a stable action tendency with respect to the object, e.g. approach or avoidance)” (Scherer, 2005, p. 703).

Postural or emotional attitudes about something, thus do not have to be triggered by specific events, although they tend to become more notable and significant when one is actively engaging in the specific event. This is something many Ypractitioners in the survey note as well, as I will elaborate on later. Emotion then is not identical to an action, but can be seen as bodily happenings that originate in experiences of being moved to move, and these behaviors stem from various motivations. Emotion is thus a motivational-affective source of actions, and co-creates a way of being in the body (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 265). The form that is expressed can thus be said to be a result of “the qualities of movement and of the way in which they modulate and play out dynamically” (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 265). Without these motivational intentions and emotions, (whether consciously aware or unaware), we would not be able to have social dynamic and empathic interactions and a basic understanding in these interactions. Whether the movements correspond with motivational intentions or not, or whether or not the motivational factors are clearly formulated when the action is performed is another case. As already mapped out, emotions may be bodily experienced without a particular corresponding movement, or they can be mimed through movement but not actually felt (Barsalou et al., 2005; Sheets-Johnstone, 1999).

6.4 MOTION-EMOTION-MOTIVATION

Mellor & Shilling’s concept of body pedagogics and its three levels (means, experiences and outcomes), are marked by contingency, and is not a “simple chain of cause and effect” (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 34). Figure 4 shows the dialectical relationship between the body pedagogics, and the body pedagogics’ relationship with social realities - first, within the sub-culture, and within the greater culture-specific-context. In this thesis, the means are the yoga practices, the experiences are the physical sensations, emotions and feelings that the Ypractitioners have, and the outcomes are the influence the practices have on people’s lenses of interpretation and bodily schemas and images. The sub-culture in this thesis is of course the yoga milieu, and the culture is the Norwegian culture. The notes on motivation in the figure, reflect the previous chapters’ attempt at contextualization. Much more could be said about the overall desires of the modern society, but here I have exemplified some motivations that link to both the culture and the sub-culture.

FIGURE 3: THE DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BODY PEDAGOGICS AND SOCIAL REALITIES

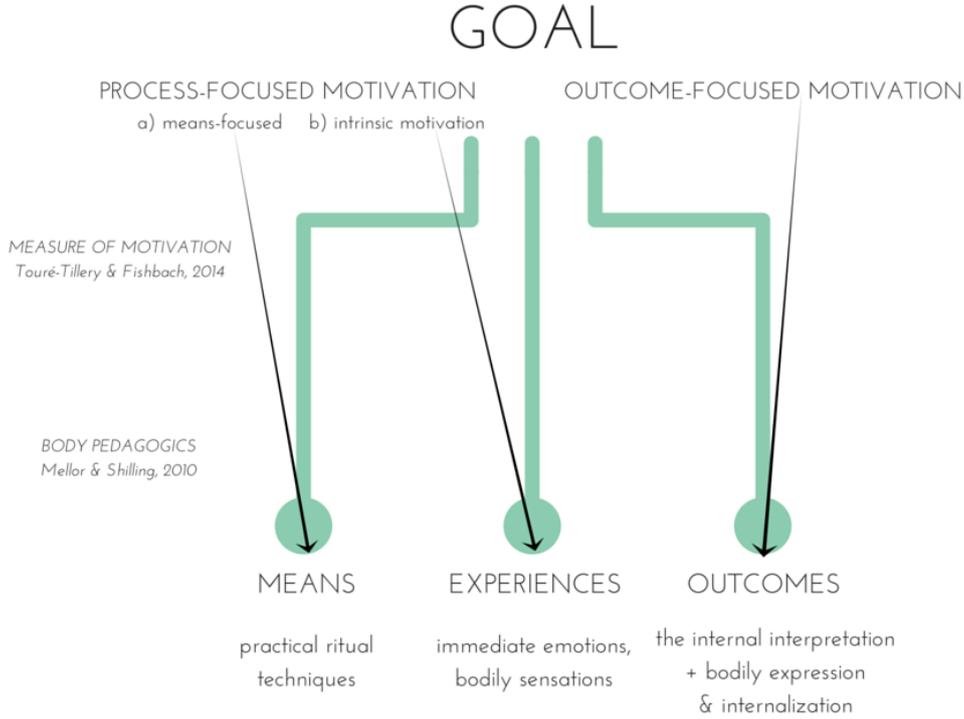


Visual representation by S. Haugen based on Mellor & Shilling (2010).

There is no automatic relationship between the three levels of body pedagogics, meaning that the means (practice or ritual) in itself might not be the reason for the experiences (emotions), and the experiences might even happen without the means. The outcome does serve as an emergent phenomena, and is always a mixture of the means and experiences, and the context (existing social realities) in which the means and experiences happen will inform how the experiences are interpreted and how they are valued (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 34). Thus, individuals can participate in certain practices, such as yoga, which is the case in this thesis, and not experience or be influenced by the philosophical or spiritual conveyance matrix of the practice. What is certain is that motion and emotion in the body makes up the basis for experience, thus the closely related play between means and experiences can be highlighted. (Varela et al., 1991, p. 151). The separation between motion (means) and emotion (experience) is more fruitful as to address whether what is happening is expressed first through the body's movement, or through an outside factor that engages an emotion that encourages movement, again with reference to the dual loop between 'social information processing that produces embodied states', and 'embodied states that affect social information processing' (Barsalou et al., 2005).

Because "religious body pedagogics never operate in isolation to other cultural and societal influences on people's experiences and [...] habitus", pinning down the exact startpoint for an experience is practically impossible (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 35). Yet one can still see certain dispositional trajectories and influences from the specific body pedagogics for a certain practice through understanding the relationship between the factors (Mellor & Shilling, 2010, p. 35). Tracing the emphasis the actors place on either of the three levels, and seeing how each level influence each other, links well to Ann Taves concept of composite building blocks, tracing practices and the motivations behind them via the external practices themselves, through the experiences of the practitioners, and the behaviors that come out of such practices and experiences.

FIGURE 4: MOTIVATIONAL MEASURE AND BODY PEDAGOGICS



Visual representation by S. Haugen based on Mellor & Shilling (2010) and Touré-Tillery & Fishbach (2014).

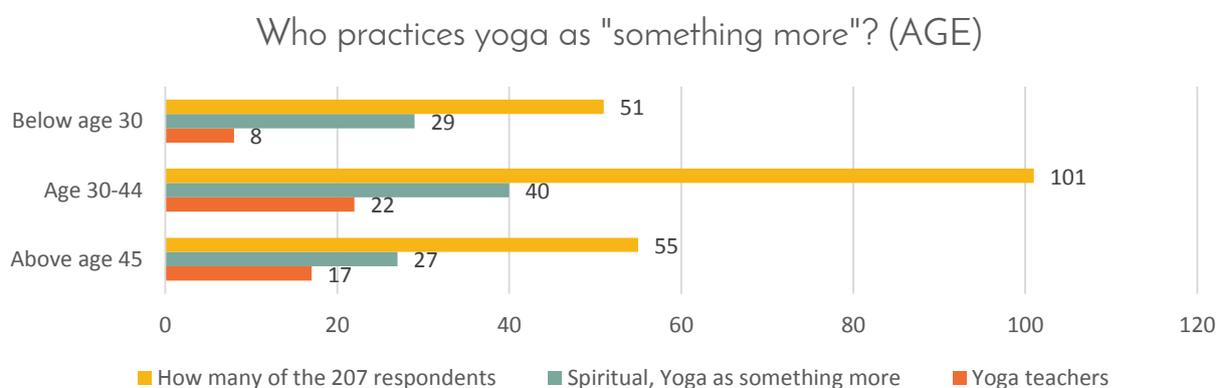
In the context of practices and rituals deemed religious and spiritual, Mellor & Shilling’s concept of body pedagogics allows us to link motivation with means, experiences and outcomes. Figure 5 shows an attempt at combining Mellor & Shillings theories with Touré-Tillery & Fischbach's theories on motivation. The type of motivation that drives the individual (which is likely several components), could say something about what part of the body-pedagogical circle the individuals focus on – or, noticing *what* the individual focus on could make clear the motivational reasons for continuing a practice. The dual approach to practice between achievement (goal) and presence (experience, emotions) within the yoga milieu obviously makes clear distinctions difficult, but to a degree possible. As already mentioned, a process-focused type of motivation will likely be occurring more often with those who have practiced yoga for a longer period, oriented towards either means or experience. The ones focusing on extrinsic goals and outcomes are less likely to emphasize the spiritual aspect of Ypractice. Thus, looking closer at how people report and emphasize their emotions and bodily sensations might reveal what kind of motivation the practitioners have, and thus one might be able to see some correspondence with views on spirituality.

7 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

7.1 WHO PRACTICES YOGA AS 'SOMETHING MORE'?

As already stated, the majority of respondents for this survey are women (90%), from the age 30-44 (48%), whereof 91% of those have higher education. Out of the 83 women that completed the survey who were in the age range of 30-44, 43 of them, or 52% said that it is very- to extremely important that yoga is “something more” than physical activity. In this “something more”, it becomes obvious that the respondents include de-stress, relaxation and calmness into this concept, and some point to the more spiritual and philosophical aspects of the practice, such as meditation and mantra. Of the 207 responses in all that had answered Q15, 115, or 56% said that it is very- to extremely important that yoga is “something more” than physical activity. 96, or 83% of the 115, also note that they see themselves as spiritual. 30% of the 96 are below the age of 30, 42% of the 96 are 30-44 years, 28% of the 96 are aged 45 and up. Out of the 96, 47 (49%) are, or are becoming yoga teachers. Figure 6 shows the distribution of the respondent’s ages, and how many of these who see themselves as spiritual and find it very-to extremely important that yoga is “something more” than physical activity. Figure 6 also shows how many within each age-section that are yoga teachers.²¹

FIGURE 5: YOGA AS "SOMETHING MORE"

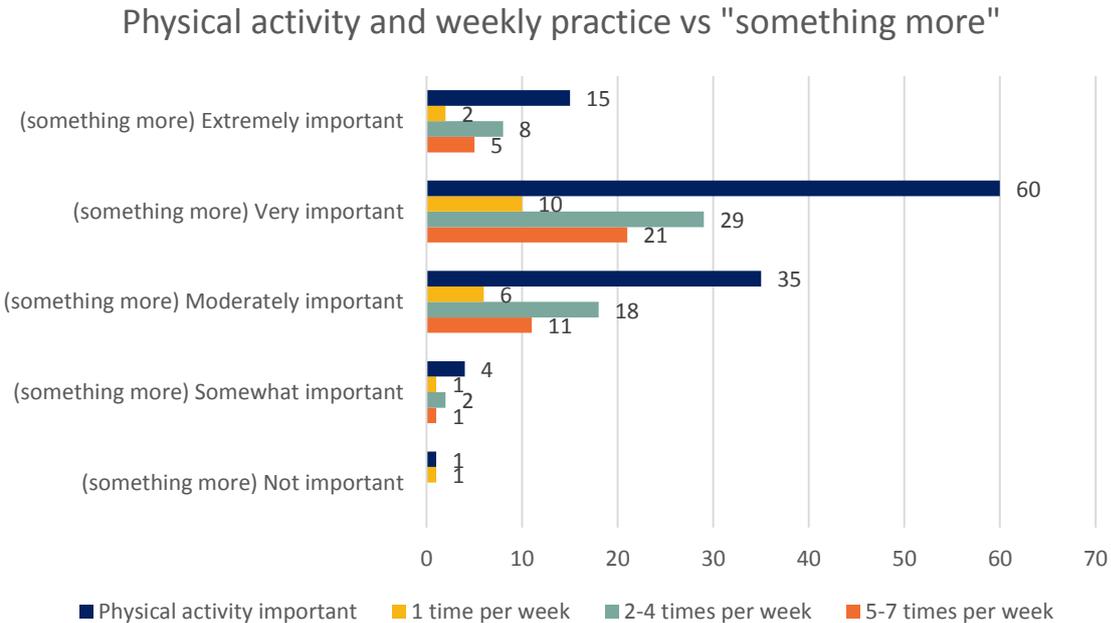


²¹ These are the yoga teachers who sees themselves as spiritual, and they value yoga as being “something more” very or extremely important.

Seeing these numbers up against the 207 respondents that answered the survey as far as Q15, 57% of those below the age of 30 see themselves as spiritual and value yoga as “something more” than physical activity. 40% of the core-group, those between ages 30-44 see themselves as spiritual and value yoga as “something more” than physical activity, while 49% of those aged 45 and up that responded to this survey see themselves as spiritual and value yoga as “something more” than physical activity. This indicates that the core-group of yoga practitioners (aged 30-44), are not necessarily those who mainly use and value yoga as something more than physical activity.

Out of the 115 that replied that it is very- to extremely important that yoga is “something more” than physical activity, the majority also value physical activity to a great degree, where 75 of 115 (65%) see physical activity as very-to extremely important. 21 (28%) of these 75 are below the age of 30, 31 (41%) are ages 30-44 and 23 (31%) are above ages 45. Figure 7 show the correspondence between the valence of yoga as something more versus the importance of physical activity, where the question of “something more” works as the baseline for the other numbers. In addition, seeing how many times per week the same respondents say they practice yoga per week gives an idea of the regularity of practice versus valence of physical activity, that could indicate something about the integration and embodiment of the body pedagogics of the practice.

FIGURE 6: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND WEEKLY PRACTICE VS "SOMETHING MORE"



The numbers on weekly practice seem to reflect the valuation of physical activity, and I would surmise that those who rate physical activity as very-to extremely important do other activity as well. Now, the question of what “doing yoga” means has not been clarified in the survey, thus “doing yoga” could be anything from physical postures, meditation, breathing, relaxation, singing, and also studies and lifestyle choices. Yet, if the respondents viewed yoga and physical activity as different, one might have more that did not value physical activity so much, yet practiced “yoga” a lot (as in, literature studies, living by the philosophy, etc.). It cannot be said for sure whether this is the case, or if, in the society we live in, physical activity and health just is *that* important for a majority.

Out of the 207 that responded to both Q7 and Q15 (in the ranges between not important to extremely important), 38 (18%) note that yoga as “something more” than physical activity is extremely important, 77 (37%) note it very important, 51 (25%) moderately important, 24 (12%) says somewhat important, and 17 (8%) say it is not important that yoga is “something more” than physical activity. (See Table 1 **The importance of «something more» vs physical activity**). What is interesting to see is that the majority of respondents note both physical activity and yoga being “something more” than physical activity as very important.

TABLE 1 THE IMPORTANCE OF «SOMETHING MORE» VS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

How important - yoga as "something more" than physical activity ↓	How important is physical activity in general →	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Somewhat	Not
Extremely		8	14	15	1	0
Very		7	46	20	3	1
Moderately		7	28	12	3	1
Somewhat		4	9	8	3	0
Not		2	8	6	1	0

Of the 122 (out of 201 that replied to Q1-Q16) that replied that they see themselves as spiritual, 16 (or 13%) of the respondents did not mention “something more” as a motivation in Q16. Out of the 77 (of 201) that did not note themselves as spiritual, 30 (or 39%) did not mention “something more” as a motivational factor for doing yoga.

7.1.1 SPIRITUALITY

The word “spirituality” or “spiritual” in itself actually had some negative connotations for many of the respondents. One respondent mentions how the negativity around these words especially is the case in Scandinavia, an interesting idea considering how common the words are in the US, where a lot of other research has been done on yoga. This might indicate that the comparative values of the use of the notions on spirituality and being spiritual are not directly transmissible between cultures, even though they belong to similar kinds of cultures. Some of the respondents did not want to note themselves as spiritual, but what they describe instead would easily be included into the categories of spirituality as the *subjective turn* of modern society (Heelas et al., 2007).

Another interesting thing to note is that several see self-development and growth as separate to spirituality, which of course makes these categories highly subjective and difficult to interpret in the context of a survey. Three that marked themselves as atheists gave similar answers to the notion of self-growth; (78) *“For me, spirituality is about believing in a higher power. This is something I barely do, but I am very engaged in self-development”*; (204) *“I focus on my own growth, and use yoga philosophy as a guideline for how to relate to each other and the world, independent of spiritualism and religion”*; (110) *“I definitely get a meditative peace out of yoga, and I link it to personal growth and see that part of yoga as very different for other exercise – but I see it as a physiological result and not as something ‘unexplainable’ or ‘spiritual’”*²². Several say that they belong to a religion (Q11) (mostly Christianity), and do not see themselves as spiritual, a clear indication that religious categories might be more related to notions of tradition than practice, and that some do not place value on the subjective aspect of religion. It might also be due to negative, or “new age” associations with the word spirituality.

I therefore asked the respondents to give some explanations of what they mean by the word “spiritual”, a question that seems difficult to answer for many. Several simply said that being spiritual is to be ethereal, or “åndelig” in Norwegian – in other words, they explain it by a synonym, not by a closer explanation. In order to acquire some answers, I gave 3 examples for what ‘spiritual’ can mean: “there is ‘something more’ than the material world”, “emphasis on personal growth” and “gathers inspiration from different cultures and religions”. Several

²² In chapter 7, I am marking the quotes from the various answers from the respondents in the survey in *cursive*. All the quotes are originally in Norwegian, and where I have been unsure of the translation, I have given more examples and added the original Norwegian phrase.

seemed to agree with my first two examples - whether or not this is due to the easy access to an answer is a bit difficult to say. 64 out of 200 who answered Q13 say that spirituality is about openness, and being open to “more” in this life than what science and the material world has to offer. Out of those 64, 77% also note that they are spiritual. The second example is also the second most answered alternative, though I included a bit more to the category when coding, that is, a “focus on personal growth, inner reflection and being conscious and aware”. In other words, many see being aware as something spiritual, which makes an interesting connection to the previous theories on intention and awareness through the mindful, embodied practice of yoga (Gard et al., 2014; Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Becoming aware is seemingly a result of being immersed in an embodied practice, but whether or not the awareness the respondents note as spiritual emerged from the yoga practice itself is difficult to say from the limited nature of the survey. What Vago & Silbersweig propose, is that the step from developing self-awareness, to self-regulation is a short one, thus the emphasis on growth and awareness is linked not only through subjective experience, but also through neurobiological mechanisms (Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). The third most answered idea of what spirituality is, is *connectedness* – either to oneself, to the nature, the world or the universe, or simply to “something bigger”. As already noted, Smith describes the notion of a sort of “self-encounter” when doing the embodied practice of yoga, in which this “self-encounter”, or connectedness, are interpreted in light of the practitioners own framework of knowledge (Smith, 2007). As one respondent writes, (138) *“In yoga or meditation I sometimes experience that I come in contact with something that is bigger than me. Some call it God, others [call it] energy, the universe and more. It’s not so important what we call it, it’s the experience that is important”*. Another respondent says something similar, with emphasis on the connectedness as a centering: (107) *“Yoga makes me open and explorative. The physical practice can express my spirituality through an experience of a centering in myself, a centering that I also relate to a centering with the essence (“spirit”) in all that there is. I also want my practice to be honest and heartfelt, so that this connection/awakening can [enter me] [norsk: slippe til].”*

Hasselle-Newcombe states that “long-term practitioners are no more likely to have a ‘spiritual’ interest in their practice than beginners. Therefore, it is likely that those who feel that their yoga practice is spiritual had a pre-existing orientation towards spirituality” (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 312). This seems to be evident for the respondents in this survey as well, as some of the most “spiritually-oriented” respondents in this thesis have less than 3 years of practice experience. The survey got 225 respondents, 57 of them were incomplete, and 168 were

complete. Out of all the answers, 133 call themselves spiritual, 106 of those are complete answers. Almost half of those who did not complete the survey who also noted that they were spiritual, were long-time practitioners (over 8 years). Of the 90 respondents that had practiced for over 8 years, 59 of them, or 66% note that they see themselves spiritual (5 of the 90 were unanswered on Q12), meaning that there actually is a slight overweight of long-time practitioners that consider themselves spiritual (that answered this survey). 131 of the 225 respondents have practiced less than one, up to 7 years. Out of these, 72 people answered that they see themselves as spiritual. Out of the 88 teachers that replied to this survey (both complete and incomplete), 63 (72%) of them say they are spiritual, and 36 of them have more than 10 years of practice experience, all with a practice more than twice a week, half of them 5-7 times a week. The teachers are perhaps naturally those with the most regular practice, since this is what they work with, and dedicate themselves to on a presumably regular basis. It is unfortunately difficult to say from this survey to what degree the body pedagogics of yoga influences the individual, a point that would have to be explored further in in-depth interviews.

7.1.2 EMBODIMENT

I designed the survey for this thesis based in the theories that indicates how people who regularly practice mindful, embodied activities such as yoga gain a greater level of (self-) reflexivity. In addition, if the practitioners have the sense of self-reflexivity as the research indicate, they should be able to reflect upon the “parts” of their practice (such as emotions), and still be able to see the “parts” as a part of the “whole” embodied picture. As exemplified by one respondent, who says that, “[It feels] *Like a wholeness working composite* [sammensatt]. *Euphoric thoughtlessness and attentive here and now.*” What is clear with many of the respondents is that they apply metaphoric and culturally informed language when talking about body and soul, or body and mind (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). Some of those that do not see themselves as religious and spiritual even say they achieve harmony between body and *soul* when doing yoga. Thus, with only textual data from a survey, it is difficult to “get at” whether or not the respondents have answered in a reflective or habitual manner when it comes to information that can indicate whether they reflect upon their practice (and/or spiritual life) as embodied or not, a methodological problem with using only a survey for this thesis.

In asking how they express their spirituality through their Ypractice, a majority say that they do it by being present and open, both while practicing physical yoga and in their everyday life. One respondent writes that, (147) *“Through practicing presence. This is something I think is the foundation for spirituality, as I see this term. Presence in one’s own body and mind requires understanding of one self, mixed in with an accepting attitude (or practice of such) there is a foundation for understanding other people and incidents. For the life and the world in general.”* In a way this could be evident of how some aspect of the Ypractice has influenced the “outcome” of the body pedagogics, as this possibly indicates an internalization of an overall philosophy that is conveyed in yoga.

A few through say that they do not blend their spirituality and their yoga practice, and that spirituality is not something to be expressed, rather internalized. One respondent says that, *“It isn’t expressed- it is an internal practice”*, while another one say that, *“I don’t express my spirituality through yoga practice, but I experience yoga as something more than a mechanic workout.”* What is not clear enough through this survey, is the matter of actual embodiment, or at least how the Ypractitioners think about the concept of embodiment in their practice. Some mention that they value the experience of the “merging” between body and mind in the practice, as one respondent writes: (42) *“...the feeling of body and head working seamless together as one (versus that the body is doing one thing, while the head is filled with thoughts about something else)”*. It might seem as though words such as “balance”, “harmony” and “centeredness” reflect this kind of “merging”, or feeling of embodiment, as these are used by several to describe their experiences. When asked about how the various emotions feel in her body, one respondent says that, *“It feels like landing. Coming home. Gives calm and safety and harmony.”* However, many do separate the physical part of their practice from the other aspects of the yoga practice, and in fact, most indicate that the “most spiritual” aspect of the practice is not while doing asanas, but while either meditating, singing, focusing on the breathing, behavior outside of the mat, or “stopping” to reflect and explore the “internal landscape”. A few note how exploring the stillness of the mind in the physical practice creates a spiritual experience for them, as one respondent says: (137) *“By respecting the stillness of the mind I can allow the energy free outlet through the body in the poses and in meditation. Yoga is a spiritual experience, every time.”* The separation of body from spirituality might indicate that they are influenced by a particular kind of hierarchical body pedagogics of yoga that emphasize “mind over matter”, or it can be a reflection of the Christian body pedagogics heritage that is prevalent in Norway.

Although several mention the “contact” and the “connection” they get in their yoga practice as something important and valued as special for them, a few also note how they separate between their (physical) yoga practice and their spiritual practice, and that their spirituality is not something expressed (or embodied?), rather that it is an internal practice. This divide between internal and external is, as cognitive scientists and phenomenologists such as Lakoff & Johnson suggests, a common one, and thus it might not be as easy to describe how emotions feel in the body, i.e. the physical sensations connected with the emotions, since the emotions viewed as being a part of the internal landscape. One respondent says: (146) *“I can feel that I accommodate many emotions, but that that is totally fine – accept [sic]. But I don’t know if I beyond that feel it physically.”* Some even reply that the physical sensations feel like what they crossed out for emotions. It is difficult to say whether or not this means that they have a dis-embodied approach towards their emotions, or if it is due to the fact that they might not have reflected upon the connection between emotions and the body. For example, a majority say that the physical experience of the emotions they have during and after yoga practice feels like the Norwegian word “lett”, making it difficult to see whether they mean this in the sense of *light*, that the quality of the emotions have a flowy lightness to them, or if it is *easy* to feel the emotions in the body during the yoga practice. A large number of practitioners simply note that the emotions “feel great” in their body, so they “want to do it again”, with no further explanations. Again, this shows the problematic issues of language, translation and approaching such subjects through a survey.

7.2 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

Tying the theories of the emphasis of subjective experience in modern spirituality with theories on motivation, there could seemingly be a stronger correlation between intrinsic, process-oriented motivational types and the notion of placing spiritual value on these experiences (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014). In other words, people who place emphasis on enjoying the experience of what they do are more likely to value and seek out the aspects of something (the practice) that give them the kind of experience they want. In light of the theory of body pedagogics, this would mean that the more awareness one puts on the experience rather than the means or the outcome, the experience will be experienced as something special in context of the overall philosophy and milieu (Mellor & Shilling, 2010). Since the emotional aspect is a

major part of the subjective experience, and the emotion lies as a motivational-affective source of actions, the motivational inclinations of the respondents seemed relevant to include and look closer at in the survey for this thesis (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 265).

The motivational “type” a person inclines to would inform how they interpret, value and experience their practice, and could possibly make it easier to trace the body pedagogics of the practice in their statements. Based on the three “types” of yoga practitioners, as categorized by Bjerrum & Pilgaard (the social yogi, the achievement yogi, and the lifestyle yogi), and with basis in Newcombes reearch, I created some “statements”, listed as “reasons” for doing yoga, that could be associated with each “type” of yoga practitioner and their assumed motivations for doing a practice (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014; Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005). Unfortunately, in the rush of publishing the survey, I left out some of the more distinct “spiritual”, or lifestyle-yogi “reasons” to do yoga, which makes some of the correlative questions more diffuse and harder to interpret than they could have been (See Appendix 3). As expected though, the majority of the respondents (out of the 201 that answered Q16) answered the two response alternatives (alt. 15 and 16) that I had set up as the probable baseline for most Ypractitioners, regarding health, well-being and the societal focus on prevention or avoidance of physical and mental problems (See Figure 7: **Reasons for doing yoga**). These answer options are closely followed by the idea of getting “something more” out of yoga than other physical exercise (alt. 5). Only a couple of people added “spiritual” reasons for doing yoga, in the “other” section, and some added well-being, or de-stress in the “other”-section, meaning that the label of “something more” might not fit their ideas entirely. The top ranking answer options seem to reflect the expectations that the respondents note in Q20 (see more on that in 7.2.2. Many also note how they prefer to focus on the process of what they are doing, and learning new things, which could indicate a majority of process-oriented people in this survey, but the results are unfortunately not conclusive enough. Figure 8 show a scatter diagram of the answer options in Q16, where each respondent was free to answer as many as they wanted, but needed to answer least 3 options (in the online survey).

FIGURE 7: REASONS FOR DOING YOGA

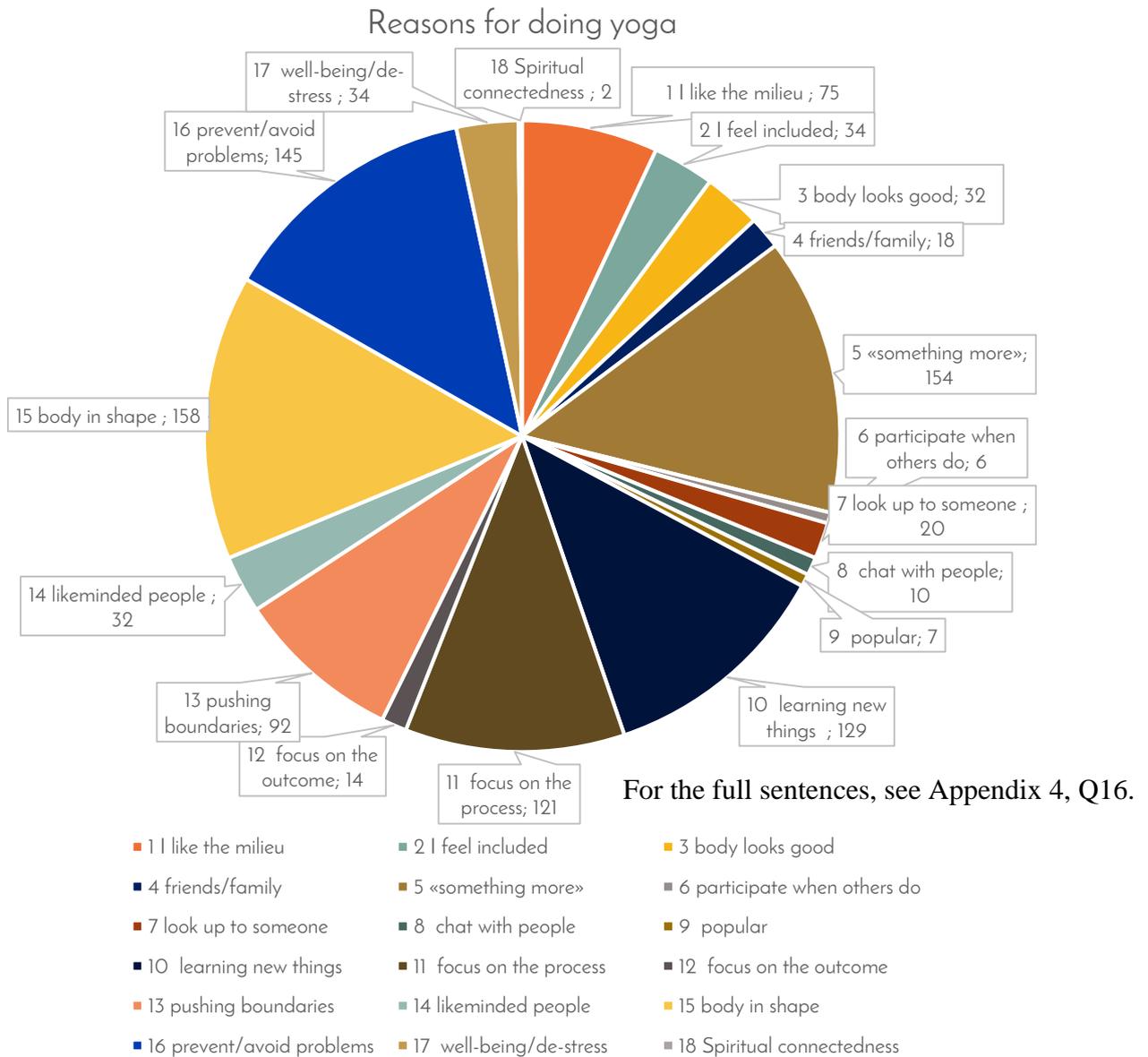


Figure 8 further show how only some have listed social aspects as reasons for doing yoga, but many say that they like the milieu itself, a socially oriented, yet somewhat diffuse statement. The earlier Q9 show how many see the group dynamics and social aspect as an advantage with participating in group lessons, but Q16 and Q17 seems to convey more of the individual aspect of motivations for doing yoga. In Q9 several mention how the practice in fellowship create a special kind of energy and encouragement to complete the practice, but when talking about connectedness in their practice, few seem to be talking about the social connectedness, rather about the personal feeling of connectedness towards their bodies or “something bigger”.

7.2.1 NEEDS OF THE MODERN YOGA PRACTITIONER

As mapped out in 4.1.5, and as seen above, in Figure 8, there are numerous reasons for practicing yoga, and these reasons can be traced to different kinds of human needs. The needs prompt some kind of expectation or intention, which creates motivated actions, whether conscious (aware) or unconscious (habitual). It seems highly unlikely that someone would engage in such a narrow activity such as yoga without any pleasure aspect (arousal) involved, but one can't exclude how social pressure, creating an identity, and aspects of self-punishment through bodily pain might be in focus for some individuals (Gorman, 2004, p. 64; Remski, 2016). For the majority of the respondents in the survey in this thesis, the pleasure-aspect seems to be an overhanging motivational factor. Out of the 193 that answered Q17, a majority answered something along the lines of "I like it", "it makes me feel good" or "it gives over-all (mental and physical) well-being". In addition, many note how the calmness, focus, stress-regulation, even inner peace is motivational factors for practicing yoga. This majority of answers in the survey address a need for (physical) well-being (Gorman, 2004), and also mirrors the current modern focus on stressing down, and gaining a feeling of a certain control of oneself (and one's body) (De Michelis, 2005; Miller, 2015).

As seen above (8.1), most of the practitioners place high emphasis on the physical aspect of yoga, and also the outcomes of it, such as such as strength, flexibility, balance and energy, bodily control, pain-regulation and to be physically challenged. This seems to reflect the societal context to a great degree, with the emphasis on the health paradigm, and the focus self-control, or self-grooming, through diet and exercise (De Michelis, 2005; Singleton, 2010). This societal pressure on individuals to hold up a certain level of self-control and also a certain kind of body image might also indicate why so many of the respondents orient the reasons to practice yoga towards the physical aspects, as indicated through the statements (15) "I keep my body in shape", (16) "I want to prevent/avoid one or more problems (mental or physically)" and (3) "My body looks good because of it" (See Figure 7: **Reasons for doing yoga** and Appendix 4). These statements (in Q16) also addresses the notion of the duality of the *need for rewards, or the fear of consequences*, factors related to extrinsic motivation (Gorman, 2004). The lack of external rewards in yoga practice and the highly process-oriented progress of a practice, would make it difficult for someone very oriented towards external rewards to keep up their motivation for practice in the long run (Gorman, 2004). Thus, having "closer" goals, such as self-development (or self-improvement), bodily progress and preventing or removing factors such

as stresses or injuries seem to be “enough” motivation for most Ypractitioners (De Michelis, 2005, p. 219).

The sense of mastery seems to be an essential motivation for many, whether spiritual or not, and this “feeling of mastery” is what many note as the *feeling* that motivates them to yoga practice. So even though the majority in this survey say that the feelings they have related to yoga is what motivates them, the idea of what a feeling is are unclear, and thus the results are inconclusive. As one respondent says, (133) “*Yes, feelings motivate to do yoga, because it keeps me in shape*”, while another one (48) describes a special experience to her as mastering headstand, and compares it to “*like getting a good grade, only here mastery on one’s own premise, no one else who decides what you can do or not*”. Another respondent emphasizes the aspect of actually being able to do the practice as very motivational; (205) “*Yoga was one of the first physical things that I felt like I mastered and became unbelievable good at, and that fits my body and my abilities.*” Many addresses their bodily “needs” when it comes to exploring their home practice (Q10) – as one writes, “*I get to do more of what my body needs*”, and several talk about how the room for adaptations to their body and their current shape and state creates a greater sense of control and mastery through the practice.

Having *control* of their own practice and body is also a common answer regarding what they get out of their home practice. Linking this to the notion of the subjective turn in a modern world where the body has become highly public, both in regards to the social symbols reflected upon the body, and with the institutionalized separation of the body, the need for a feeling of self-control through one’s own body could maybe be seen as a modern, yet very human need (Miller, 2015). In this need for control also lies a need for freedom, a factor that several emphasize in Q20, when asked about their expectations for their yoga practice, the sense of freedom ranked among top 10 expectations for the surveys. What is interesting about freedom, is that 50% of those who see themselves as spiritual in this survey crossed out for “freedom”, but only a few of those who did not see themselves as spiritual crossed out for the same (See Table 2 **Expectations**). This seems to correlate well with the idea of the subjective turn in modern spirituality, and that having a sense on self-control, mastery and freedom could actually be the experience and the outcome from integrating the spiritual philosophies of yoga into the embodied practice (Heelas et al., 2007; Mellor & Shilling, 2010).

7.2.2 EXPECTATIONS

There is a prevailing idea in the yoga milieu that you should not have expectations, and also let go of your fruits, in other words – to be in the present (De Michelis, 2005). Even though a few (7 people) responded that they do not, or try not to have expectations, most crossed out several points on Q20. One respondent notes that (137) *“I don’t have any expectations, but I am open to new learning and every time is different. Thus no yoga class is the same!”* This is an interesting integration of the pedagogics of the practice, as our society is highly oriented towards the population’s wants and needs, thus creating expectations of what one “should” or “could” get. The “expectations” listed for Q20 is based on the “needs inventory”-list by Non-Violent Communication, and a collection of often used words in the yoga milieu, adapted to the Norwegian context (Hanson Lasater & Lasater, 2009; Pan, 2013).

The top ranking expectations for the whole group of respondents to the survey are “Being present” and “Physical well-being” (See Table 2 **Expectations**). As seen in 7.1.1, it seems as though most respondents in this survey see the “something more” as being present and aware, thus there is consistency between Q16 and Q20. The answers between Q16 and Q20 can’t be measured exactly however, since compared to the 201 that answered Q16, “only” 168 answered Q20. While not all link “being present and aware” with spirituality, many of the respondents do, and the group that do see themselves as spiritual (sE, spiritual expectations) has a notable larger emphasis on “being present” over “physical well-being”, whereas the section of respondents that do not see themselves as spiritual (NsE, not spiritual expectations) have the same emphasis on both aspects (See Table 2 **Expectations**).

TABLE 2 EXPECTATIONS

General EXPECTATIONS: (out of 168 answers)			Spiritual EXPECTATIONS: (out of 105 answers)			Not spiritual EXPECTATIONS: (out of 62 answers)		
1	Being present	80% (134)	1	Being present	82% (86)	1	Being present	79% (49)
2	Physical well-being	68% (115)	2	Physical well-being	64% (67)	2	Physical well-being	79% (49)
3	Harmony	53% (89)	3	Joy	54% (57)	3	Learning	68% (42)
4	Learning	53% (89)	4	Inspiration	52% (55)	4	Joy	53% (33)
5	Joy	52% (88)	5	Freedom	50% (53)	5	Inspiration	52% (32)
6	Inspiration	51% (86)	6	Harmony	49% (51)	6	Harmony	47% (29)
7	Freedom	42% (71)	7	Learning	46% (48)	7	Self-expression	39% (24)
8	Self-expression	40% (68)	8	Growth	45% (47)	8	Playfulness	35% (22)
9	Playfulness	39% (66)	9	Playfulness	45% (47)	9	Safety	34% (21)
10	Growth	38% (63)	10	Self-expression	44% (46)	10	Lightness	31% (19)

Separating between spiritual and non-spiritual is related to how people see themselves, not whether or not this can be measured in anyway. This is about what kind of framework people enable to interpret their experiences, and how they value them. Although the differences between the two “groups” (spiritual vs not spiritual) are small, there are some points to elaborate on. As seen in Q16, 129 of 201 say that they like to experience that they are learning and understanding new things (See Figure 7: **Reasons for doing yoga**). Where “Learning” ranks as number 3 for the NsE-group, it ranks as number 7 for the sE-group. This poses an interesting question about whether this means that those who see themselves as spiritual prefer the subjective experience and the acquired knowledge through personal practice rather than “being told” what to do; something that could explain the high ranking of “Freedom”, but does not explain why “Self-expression” doesn’t rank higher than it does. The NsE group does not rank “Freedom” among the top ten, but rather, “Safety” makes the list. Percentage-wise, self-expression is similar with both groups, but as one can see as well, the sE group is bigger, and has a more even spread in the list. With “Learning” high up, and “Safety” as a part of the top ten list, the NsE group could be said to place a greater emphasis on the “means” of process-oriented motivation and with “Freedom” and “Growth” as a part of the top ten list, the sE group could be said to have greater emphasis on the “experience” of process-oriented motivation, but the foundation to make proper claims about the motivational correspondence based on these findings are too weak (See also Figure 4: **Motivational measure and body pedagogics**) (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014). The lean towards process-oriented motivation though, seems to reflect the answers in Q16, where 121 of 201 answered that they prefer to focus on the process of what they are doing (See Figure 7: **Reasons for doing yoga**).

As discussed in 7.1.2, the Norwegian word “Letthet” poses some translation difficulties, since this might be translated and interpreted as both “Lightness” and “Easiness”, meaning that they could either expect the quality of lightness in the body, or that the practice should be easy to do. The latter interpretation would fit in with the many that emphasizes mastery as a motivational feeling related to yoga practice, in other words, that they possibly have an expectation that doing yoga should feel easy to do in order to gain the feeling of mastery in and after the practice. It might also be, that due to the large diversity of styles of yoga practice, and its highly adaptive nature with the modern emphasis on healing and therapeutics, that yoga actually is very oriented towards individual mastery, and that this goes very well with the modern expectation of instant gratification, thus this is what most practitioners “get”,

and also what they then want again. This is an indication of the loop between outcome, experiences and means, yet not an integration of the practice's body pedagogics, as Mellor & Shilling suggests. When asking the respondents if what they expect before, and what they feel and experience during and after practice is coherent (Q25), most reply that yes, there is a coherence. What is interesting to see as well, is that some reply that it doesn't cohere with their expectations – it has exceeded them. One respondent says that, (16) *“I have been working out for many years and know my body well. I know how physical activity affects me. Yoga might actually have exceeded my expectations since I have been afraid that all the elusive descriptions was overrated. But it has proven to be true. You do actually become calmer, more finely tuned and in pace with yourself.”* Several note that whether or not their expectations are met depends on the style and the facilitating teacher. I'll elaborate more on this point later.

7.3 EMOTIONS SET APART AS SPECIAL

The withdrawal from everyday life that is created in a yoga practice provides space for awareness and reflection (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005). This was confirmed by most of the respondents in the survey for this thesis, as exemplified by one respondent: (136) *“Yes, I get deeper in touch with myself and my intentions. [It] gives me more time and space to listen and to feel what I need and what I want.”* Thus, the practitioners are both enabled to reflect upon feelings and experiences that they have had, along with present occurrences of emotions, bodily sensations and experiences. (Hasselle-)Newcombe's research shows how a clear majority of her sample group responded that “their practice facilitated an awareness of feelings”, and that “their asana practice provided a way of managing their feelings” (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005, p. 311). In Newcombe's research, two thirds of her respondents valued the effects yoga have on emotional and psychological levels, and the results from my survey show similar tendencies. Out of the 105 complete answers that replied “yes” to being spiritual, 95 (or 90%) of them replied that yes, it is easier to get in touch with their emotions through yoga and similar activities. Of the 62 complete posts that replied “no” to being spiritual, 40 (or 65%) of them replied that yes, it is easier to get in touch with their emotions through yoga and similar activities (Q18), while 22 (or 35%) replied no. Most of those who answered “no” to Q18 (both spiritual and not) say they already have good contact with their

emotions, or that they do not use yoga for the exploration of emotions. Many of those who answered “no” to Q18 also did not know what to reply, do not want to feel during yoga, or have not experienced emotional exploration with yoga – the latter highly corresponding with beginners (1-3 years). This could indicate a possible correlation between the emotional aspect of yoga practice and the placement of value through spirituality.

For those who answered “yes” to Q18, the prevalent reasons as to why it is easier to get in touch with their emotions through yoga were that yoga serves as a slower kind of activity that allows one to take the time to inquire, reflect and connect to their inner landscapes, that the practice brings them out of the “thought-streams” and everyday stress, and into the body and emotions. Many also talk about how being present, aware, relaxed and calm opens to observing and accepting the emotional aspects, while some say that the physical poses or breath work in itself evokes certain emotional states.

Some of the answers are unclear on whether the emotions they talk about are feelings of mastery and physical sensations, or if it actually is emotions. In Norwegian, “I feel” is often used as an evaluative judgement of a situation, and several of the answers reflect this, as seen for example with statements such as (149) *“Heavy in the beginning, gradually lighter, gradually forget time and space. Proud that I can feel and see that I have become stronger/more flexible. Other times I am more tired than I thought, and can’t do the things I wanted to. Compare myself with others.”*, or *“I feel like I’ve been working out”*. Though for this particular question (Q18), a majority of the respondents seem to mean emotions, either related to previous experiences (feelings that has been “repressed” “comes up” when one is present and connected with oneself), or emotional reactions to poses, exercises or themes for the practice.

For the last question in the survey (Q27), 152 of the 168 complete answers said, yes, the feelings they have linked to yoga motivates them to practice, while 10 don’t want to focus on those aspects in yoga, and a few said both yes and no. The problem with clarifying what kind of emotions these are, is that many talk about moods and general feelings of positivity such as calmness, satisfaction and mastery related to the physical activity, or simply that they “feel good” while doing yoga. In other words, these aspects would best be explored in closer contact with the subjects, to avoid misunderstandings, and to get a clearer idea of whether the feelings in question are related to “feeling and doing good” physically (mastery, workout, health), or if they are related to the notion of “something more”, or “something set apart as

special” in the light of spirituality and religion. Still, one can see some general tendencies from the two largest questions in this survey, Q21 and Q23 that ask about what the respondents feel before and after, each with the same 113 emotions available for crossing out. Even though I asked for emotions that they most often feel, some crossed out for 30+ emotions, which made the analysis of these questions time-consuming and complex on my side. The emotions are not rated by the respondents, only freely crossed out as they pleased. The ranking is not possible to get access to with the data I have, yet if a similar survey were to be performed, one could ask the respondents to rank the emotions from most – to least felt, yet that might be asking for much of the respondents’ time. The fact that some crossed out for many also make these data difficult to make statistically relevant, since these high numbers of emotions probably are informed go a great degree by both “shoulds” and “coulds” – what they think they should answer about what they feel, and all they could possibly feel, missing the point of “most often” in the questions. On the other hand, having them answer about emotions during and after yoga practice should seemingly have them place emphasis on the intrinsic feelings that they value the most, as these prove to be emotions that motivate them to continue their practice (Scherer, 2005). In this context, I am hoping that they have reflected on their emotions in such a way that they actually did cross out for the emotions that they not only experience most often, but the emotions that they notice they experience, meaning the emotions they value in their yoga practice.

7.3.1 PREVALENT EMOTIONS DURING YOGA

TABLE 3 EMOTIONS DURING YOGA

	General DURING: (out of 168 answers)		Spiritual DURING: (out of 105 answers)		Not spiritual DURING: (out of 62 answers)
1	Calm 52% (87)	1	Attentive 54% (57)	1	Calm 61% (38)
2	Attentive 51% (85)	2	Grateful 53% (56)	2	Attentive 48% (30)
3	Grateful 46% (78)	3	Peaceful/Serene 51% (54)	3	Relaxed 47% (29)
4	Satisfied 44% (74)	4	Calm 50% (50)	4	Satisfied 45% (28)
5	Peaceful/Serene 43% (73)	5	Open 46% (48)	5	Grateful 39% (24)
6	Open 42% (70)	6	Satisfied 45% (47)	6	Comfortable ▲ 39% (24)
7	Relaxed 41% (69)	7	Centered 43% (45)	7	Content 37% (23)
8	Centered 41% (69)	8	Joyful 41% (43)	8	Centered 37% (23)
9	Joyful 36% (61)	9	Relaxed 38% (40)	9	Warm 37% (23)
10	Content 36% (61)	10	Warm 35% (37)	10	Proud ▲ 35% (22)
11	Warm 35% (59)	11	Content 35% (37)	11	Open 35% (22)
12	Comfortable 32% (54)	12	Humble ▲ 33% (35)	12	Soft/Mellow ▲ 31% (19)
13	Soft/Mellow 31% (53)	13	Still 31% (33)	13	Peaceful/Serene 31% (19)
14	Still 29% (49)	14	Happy ▲ 29% (31)	14	Still 31% (19)
15	Humble 28% (47)	15	Blessed ▲ 28% (29)	15	Joyful 27% (17)

Table 3 show the 15 most crossed out emotions during yoga, with the general statistics to the left, and separated by whether or not the respondents see themselves as spiritual (sD) or not (NsD) to the middle and right. The orange triangles mark the emotions that cannot be found in the other (sD or NsD section). The problem with asking only one question about the “during” yoga practice is that many say that the emotions, feelings and moods change through the practice, and this should have been emphasized regarding seeing greater similarities to ritual practices. Several respondents elaborate on this process, one respondent says that, (147) *“Sometimes it feels like I can go through the whole emotional register through a yoga class. Some deep poses can make me irritated or sad, while others can be so delicious that I feel euphoria f.ex. I may have been angry because of something before a class, but have it put in perspective during the course of a class.”* I elaborate further on this point in 7.4.

Still, the spread for the top rated emotions during yoga are even, and thus it is a bit problematic to single out the ones at the top of these lists, as the respondents current state could tip the scale by just some clicks. “Calm” and “Attentive” are generally the top feelings during practice as reported by the respondents for this survey, both of these correspond well with the previous listed top expectations; “Physical well-being” and “Being present”. The data on emotions during yoga show some interesting distinctions between the majority of those who see themselves as spiritual, and those who do not. While “Calm” has the highest rating for the NsD group, the sD group has a more even spread at the top, with “Attentive” barely ranking above “Grateful”, closely followed by “Peaceful/serene”. Appendix 6 show how each emotion was sectioned into an overall category before the survey was published, a combination of Klaus Scherer and NVC’s categories, and these are visually represented with colors in Table 4 ²³.

²³ There are 17 superordinate categories over the 113 emotions included in this thesis. In both the “During” and “After” tables of the most prevalent emotions, only 6 categories from the “positive” section made it to the “top 15”.

TABLE 4 SUPERORDINATE CATEGORIES OF EMOTIONS (DURING)

	Spiritual DURING: (out of 105 answers)		Not spiritual DURING: (out of 62 answers)	CATEGORIES OF EMOTIONS
1	Attentive	1	Calm	
2	Grateful	2	Attentive	
3	Peaceful/Serene	3	Relaxed	
4	Calm	4	Satisfied	CALM
5	Open	5	Grateful	EMPOWERED
6	Satisfied	6	Comfortable	LIVELY
7	Centered	7	Content	AFFECTIONATE
8	Joyful	8	Centered	GRATEFUL
9	Relaxed	9	Warm	JOYFUL
10	Warm	10	Proud	
11	Content	11	Open	
12	Humble	12	Soft/Mellow	
13	Still	13	Peaceful/Serene	
14	Happy	14	Still	
15	Blessed	15	Joyful	

When looking at the two group’s lists, the majority of emotions go into the overall section of “CALM”, where the NsD list in Table 4 shows that 9 out of 15 belong to this category, the sD group has 7 words from the “CALM” section on the top 15 list. This corresponds well with how many talk about yoga as de-stressing and also giving space for introspection (De Michelis, 2005; Ylönen, 2012). “Grateful” stands out as an interesting emotion, or feeling, with regard to its significance within the alternative milieu, and thus the yoga milieu. One respondent even says that, *“The feeling of gratefulness is the ‘feeling’ of spirituality for me”*. Being grateful can be seen as an opposition towards “the materialism and ‘selfishness’ of ‘the world’” (Hasselle-Newcombe, 2005), in recognizing that what one has is good enough, but it can also be as a feeling of gratefulness towards a functioning body, and being able to move. Thus, even though “Grateful” might be a typical “spiritual” emotion, the relatively high ranking among those non-spiritual makes it clear that the interpretation is dependent on the framework in which the actor interprets their emotions, and what is valued as special within that framework.

What is more interesting to note then, is the seeming opposition between “Humble”, number 12 on the sD list, and “Proud”, number 10 on the NsD list. Both of these words were words that I had marked from the beginning as ambiguous, which can make it difficult to know what the respondents mean by them without any more elaborations. Proud, for example, I chose to place in the positive section, as a way of feeling empowered and taking pride in yourself and

your work. In a negative sense, being proud could be set as an opposite to humble – being stubborn and arrogant, but it could also be believing oneself arrogant. The first interpretation is probably most likely in this context, especially since the surrounding answers for several of those who crossed out for “Proud” emphasized the aspect of mastery of poses, and the fact that they were proud of themselves for working out, and finishing it through a class. Humble on the other hand, could be related to thinking less of oneself, and being someone who lays themselves under the authority of others. In the categorization of “Humble” for this thesis, I’ve interpreted it as being something positive, since this is also a feeling or a quality that is emphasized and cultivated within the yoga milieu. Being humble then, would mean to think of one’s self less often, and acknowledging oneself as a part of society where everyone plays a role. This would correspond to a degree with what many talk about in their spirituality as “being good and doing good”, and the idea of connectedness and introspection as a part of the practice.

Another interesting thing to note about the spiritual versus non-spiritual is the valence of joy in their practice. Where the sD group have “Joyful”, “Happy” and “Blessed” within the top 15 list, the NsD group only have “Joyful”, at the end of the list. This again could make hints at how those who see themselves as lifestyle yogis and more spiritually oriented emphasizes the experience itself to a greater degree than the outcome, meaning that they possibly are more intrinsically motivated and focus on enjoying the experience (Bjerrum & Pilgaard, 2014; Mellor & Shilling, 2010; Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014). “Blessed” in itself is a very interesting emotion to be ranking this high, especially since the Norwegian equivalent, “Velsignet”, is less common to use in the Norwegian language, while “Blessed” is a very popular “statement-word” and desired phenomenological state within the alternative and the yoga milieu abroad (Ylönen, 2012). Even though the word usually is interpreted as something along the lines of having good fortune, enjoying oneself and being content and happy in the moment, the religious dimension to the word that orients itself towards prayer, and being grateful to something bigger for one’s situation is very relevant in this context. In a way this word encapsulates several of the words on the list, such as “Content”, “Attentive” (being present), “Grateful”, “Peaceful/Serene” and “Humble”, which are easy to link to the yoga philosophy of the Yamas and Niyamas for example, as I’ve also attempted to do in Appendix

6.²⁴ It is difficult to say whether this is a “proof” of an embodiment of the body pedagogics and philosophies of yoga just by having these data through a survey, but this would be interesting to elaborate on in a different project with in-depth interviews.

7.3.2 PREVALENT EMOTIONS AFTER YOGA

TABLE 5 EMOTIONS AFTER YOGA

General AFTER: (out of 168 answers)			Spiritual AFTER: (out of 105 answers)			Not spiritual AFTER: (out of 62 answers)		
1	Relaxed	49% (82)	1	Calm	51% (54)	1	Content	52% (32)
2	Calm	45% (75)	2	Relaxed	50% (53)	2	Relaxed	48% (30)
3	Grateful	43% (73)	3	Grateful	50% (53)	3	Satisfied	48% (30)
4	Content	43% (72)	4	Peaceful/Serene	48% (50)	4	Calm	47% (29)
5	Peaceful/Serene	40% (67)	5	Joyful	45% (47)	5	Invigorated	45% (28)
6	Joyful	39% (66)	6	Content	42% (44)	6	Comfortable	44% (27)
7	Satisfied	39% (66)	7	Open	▲ 42% (44)	7	Joyful	42% (26)
8	Comfortable	36% (60)	8	Satisfied	39% (41)	8	Peaceful/Serene	40% (25)
9	Invigorated	36% (60)	9	Comfortable	36% (38)	9	Grateful	39% (24)
10	Open	32% (53)	10	Rejuvenated	35% (37)	10	Warm	32% (20)
11	Rejuvenated	30% (50)	11	Invigorated	33% (35)	11	Happy	▲ 27% (17)
12	Happy	29% (48)	12	Centered	▲ 32% (34)	12	Friendly	▲ 27% (17)
13	Warm	27% (46)	13	Openhearted	▲ 31% (33)	13	Rested	▲ 24% (15)
14	Centered	27% (45)	14	Soft/Mellow	31% (33)	14	Soft/Mellow	24% (15)
15	Soft/Mellow	25% (42)	15	Warm	28% (29)	15	Rejuvenated	24% (15)

Table 5 show the 15 most crossed out emotions after yoga with the general statistics to the left, and separated by whether or not the respondents see themselves as spiritual (sA) or not (NsA) to the middle and right. The orange triangles mark the emotions that cannot be found in the other (sA or NsA section). The overall emotions during and after yoga are similar, with emphasis on emotions in the “CALM” section (See Appendix 6 and Table 6 **Superordinate categories of emotions (AFTER)**).

²⁴ The Yamas and Niyamas from Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras are popular ethical guidelines for yoga practitioners: *Yama* (external ethics): *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (self-restraint and moderation), *Aparigraha* (non-greed, generosity) and *Niyama* (internal ethics): *Saucha* (clarity, purity), *Santosha* (contentment), *Tapas* (discipline), *Svadhyaya* (self-studies), *Ishvara pranidhana* (surrender to something bigger/God)

TABLE 6 SUPERORDINATE CATEGORIES OF EMOTIONS (AFTER)

	Spiritual AFTER: (out of 105 answers)		Not spiritual AFTER: (out of 62 answers)	
1	Calm	1	Content	
2	Relaxed	2	Relaxed	
3	Grateful	3	Satisfied	
4	Peaceful/Serene	4	Calm	
5	Joyful	5	Invigorated	CALM
6	Content	6	Comfortable	EMPOWERED
7	Open	7	Joyful	LIVELY
8	Satisfied	8	Peaceful/Serene	AFFECTIONATE
9	Comfortable	9	Grateful	GRATEFUL
10	Rejuvenated	10	Warm	JOYFUL
11	Invigorated	11	Happy	
12	Centered	12	Friendly	
13	Openhearted	13	Rested	
14	Soft/Mellow	14	Soft/Mellow	
15	Warm	15	Rejuvenated	

Along with feelings of calmness, both the sA and NsA groups have crossed out for feeling “Rejuvenated” and “Invigorated”, feelings that seemingly contrast with the notion of being calm, yet together they indicate a surplus of energy, which is very common after doing physical activity. That being said, the traditional 5-20 minutes of relaxation after hatha yoga will probably also be a great influence on the physical feeling of being well-rested, something that is easier to notice after the body have been in motion for a period of time. What can be noted, is that the NsA group have “Rested” among the top 15, and the top 1 and 2/3 are “Content” and “Satisfied”, which may indicate a greater emphasis and valence on the accomplishment of something (workout, mastery). The sA group have similar tendencies, yet they seem to have chosen to emphasize the feeling of gratefulness over satisfaction – two similar emotions, yet oriented towards different aspects of the subjective experience. Where “Satisfied” is more ego-centric in the way it orients itself towards fulfillment of needs, expectations and desires, “Grateful” indicate that one has put oneself in a greater context and that one is appreciative of what one has received. Again, this can be linked with the possible integration of the religio-philosophical framework of both both the alternative and the yoga milieu that emphasize gratitude and humility towards one’s own experience. It is difficult to say whether these results are the product of actual integration, or if it is more related to what the respondents *think* they should answer in this context.

The issue of integration versus social presentation also comes up with the emotions or feelings “Open” and “Open-hearted”, two similar states, yet “Open” is here categorized as an empowered feeling of availability, receptiveness and trust, and “Open-hearted” indicates more of a vulnerability, generosity and kindness. Both of these emotions or feelings are present in the top 15 emotions crossed out by the spiritual group, and similar to “Gratitude” and “humility”, these are qualities that are cultivated within the yoga milieu. Whether this is because it is the bodily “effect” of the practice, or if it is the imposed ideas through the milieu as desired phenomenological states, and thus a) valued as special, or b) thought of as something one “should” say, is difficult to say in this context. What is interesting, is that where the sA group have chosen “Open-hearted”, the NsD group have “Friendly” instead, which addresses similar “AFFECTIONATE” emotions (see Appendix 6) related to some sort of relation, whether it is towards oneself or towards others. Friendly though, have less of an intensity to it, and indicate more of a general mild, forthcoming niceness, which may indicate that the non-spiritual places less of an emphasis on their emotions during Ypractice, and that the philosophy of the milieu influences them less.

Looking at how many crossed out for the various emotions for during and after yoga, the “after”-emotions seem to be spread out more even on several other emotions, and thus leave the top 15 list less statistically significant. This may be due to several factors; (1) people are tired of reading through all the 113 emotions again and (a) cross out for those they recognize from last round, (b) don’t bother crossing out as many emotions as the first round, or (2) the emotions that happen during the practice stand out as stronger due to the physicality of the practice, and the ritual-like context. Though the latter would be most interesting, it is, again, difficult to know for sure based on this survey. Although most say yes, their emotions and what they feel change during a yoga class, and they notice a difference from before and after Ypractice, what they have crossed out in Q21 and Q23 does not indicate radical changes. Instead, there seems to be a bigger change happening within the “during” part of the practice, as is also indicated by De Michelis and more. The changes that *can* be traced in the answers in the survey follow a certain “obvious” course of action. Some emotions are linked to the expectations, and are relatively constant, whereas some emotions “during” convey the attention and absorption one has while engaging in an activity. The “after” emotions convey a sense of “finished-ness”, either by relaxation, satisfaction, mastery, accomplishment or a mix of those.

7.4 A DEPENDENT EXPERIENCE

Several mention that they notice a difference in their experience regarding yoga practice, and whether or not their expectations are met, depending on the style of yoga they practice, or participate in. (In 3.3.3 the reasoning behind this is explored). As already discussed, modern yoga does not emphasize tradition in the classical sense, and the pedagogics conveyed in yoga might range from purely physical motivation, to different kinds of philosophical and spiritual interpretations. This is to say, many note that their experience depends on what is conveyed, by who, and how, which is not surprising. Many of the respondents for the survey also says that their experience also changes regarding what type of class (level and focus) they participate in, and whether or not they practice in a group or at home. Tracing this to ritual theories, the framework and context for the practice is important for the individual experience.

As seen with Barsalou et al.'s explanations on everyday-rituals and once-in-a-lifetime-rituals, the more "special" and set apart the practice is conveyed as, will leave stronger impacts on the participants. Creating a frame and setting the practice aside from everyday activity, with creating a special space with candles, images, statues and lighting, having some external, visual "validation" that this is "something different" than everyday life, seems important to many of the respondents as well. As one respondent writes, *"For me, it is important to do yoga with others, but it is equally important that there is calm in the yoga studio. If there is too much talk it doesn't work. The frame with lit candles and respectful calm in the studio is essential for me to get something out of it. I don't want yoga only as a physical activity."*

When asked if the feelings she has in yoga is something that motivates her to practice, one respondent writes, *"Yes. And it seems/works (norsk: virker) stronger when I go to classes than when I do self practice."* This is a reoccurring theme with many of the participants in this survey, and when seeing this in light of theories on ritual, emotions and motivation that show an intensification in emotions and experiences in groups, this is not surprising. Having a special frame around an activity, doing it with other likeminded people, having one or more "head figures" (teachers) leading the way and the mood, allows the participants to have a clearer focus, allowing them to get in touch with particular "parts" of themselves, and having encouragement to do so. When this group setting such as seen with yoga, support, even

encourage particular emotions and sensations, or simply has a general emphasis on bodily sensations and emotional outlet, the results will of course be stronger for most.

7.4.1 CURRENT STATE OR SHAPE

It is important to make clear that not all of the emotions and feelings and bodily sensations people relate to yoga are positive. Some mention the very human challenges and the negative emotions experienced during yoga, such as jealousy, envy or embarrassment (often because someone can do the poses and they can't, or they feel like they don't master or perform the poses well enough), physical pain and discomfort, and being irritated²⁵. As one respondent (28) writes, *"In a physical class [at a yoga studio], the elements of physical discomfort and following stress might be greater, especially if the poses are unfamiliar."* This takes in account the degree of physicality and physical challenges in practice as important to the whole image as well - being motivated to "push more" is easier in group-settings with a teacher, yet pain and discomfort tends to take up a lot of attention in the moment. This could indicate that the more physically challenging the practice is, the less time and attention one is able to put into "other" aspects of being in the body. This seems to be more evident with the beginners who replied to the survey, where several of them answer that they have not experienced, or focused on spiritual or emotional aspects in yoga, several saying that the physical poses are "enough" to focus on.

Most of the respondents note that what they experience and how they feel during yoga is greatly linked to their daily, current state or shape (norsk: dagsform), so even though many see yoga as something set apart and special in their daily lives, they still see it as an experience dependent on whatever else is going on in their lives on a day-to-day basis. One respondent says that the practice makes her feel "very human", and several indicate that they appreciate and accept all the emotions and sensations that surface during yoga practice, whether negative or positive. One respondent (98) muses, *"Feelings that you have elsewhere in life get expressed through the yoga practice. But then you get a more distanced relationship to the emotions, and can ask oneself the question: why does this feel f.ex.:*

²⁵ What is interesting though, is that many of the emotions and feelings that people crossed out that are listed in the "negative" section have a duality to them, meaning that they can be interpreted as both positive and negative, or neither. In the section of emotions named SELF-CONSCIOUS, "Sensitive", "Vulnerable" and "Fragile" stands out as especially interesting - these are some of the most crossed out words in the "negative" emotions during yoga, yet seen in correspondence with both my empirical knowledge about the milieu, and the other answers that were given, these emotions are interpreted as something more related to "being open" and present.

heavy/light/painful/good/exhausting?” This is reflected in many of the answers on question 18, where many say that yes, it is easier to get in contact with your emotions during yoga, by slowing down, pausing and taking the time to inquire, reflect, accept and connect.

7.4.2 A CLEAR THEME (INTENTION)

Lea and De Michelis both note how the instructions offered by the teacher, and the framing set by a clear theme enhances the attentiveness and thus the experience the practitioner is able to have during their Ypractice (De Michelis, 2005; Lea, 2009). As explored above, several cognitive and phenomenological researchers also note how setting an intention is important for setting aside the space for the action, and also to be motivated to do it (Solomonova, 2015; Varela et al., 1991) This seems to be true for many of the respondents for this survey as well, and one respondent say that, *“I usually get a kind of magical feeling if the class have a clear theme. General vinyasa classes or beginners’ classes can get a bit boring, and I am not able to stay as focused.”* The integration of philosophy or religious aspects into the practice is obviously important for many of the respondents in this survey, some even pointed out that there could have been more focus on the difference of experience when engaging in “gym-yoga” versus yoga taught by an experienced teacher that *“use their practice to get in touch with herself – and that again shares this with the yoginis [students].”* This is also an aspect that shines through for many of the respondents in the survey. Even though the “yoga as something more” is not necessarily interpreted in a spiritual or religious light by many, most who answered this survey said that that they wanted more out of yoga practice than only a physical focus.

The intention each practitioner has are complex; as seen above, most want physical benefits from doing physical yoga, but obviously, the “something more” each practitioner wants also directs the type of class and what teacher one goes to, which means that the motivational choices one makes before engaging in the practice lays way for the intention to be fulfilled. When many different kinds of styles, classes and teachers are available for the modern practitioners, the overall framework when it comes to the religio-philosophy of yoga will naturally be less clear, and thus more difficult to trace in a clear direction of body pedagogics. The body pedagogics was actually more clear with many of the Christians who answered this survey, who seem to already have a stronger framework for articulating their experiences,

including emotions. One respondent says that, *“Yoga has helped me get back to God. Being able to do active prayer feels like an incredible gift, and I experience an increased closeness to God and Jesus through increased body awareness and gratefulness over my own functional ability.”* The MPY and yoga milieus emphasis on subjective experience thus enables less of a clarity when it comes to religio-philosophy, but there seems to be an overall idea of yoga as a tool for getting in touch with both one’s body and mind, whether interpreted in light of embodiment or not.

7.4.3 YOGA AS A MIND-BODY TOOL

Several of the respondents in the survey refer to yoga and its practices as a kind of tool or even a toolbox for accessing, and working with, the mind, the body and some also mention the soul. One respondent says that, (144) *“Yoga is not a competition. But a deep dive into one self where most answers lie. With patience, curiosity and openness one is able to experience the amazing tools you have in your own body. Tools that go far beyond the physical layer. I do yoga for a mental strength and balance between body, soul and mind.”* Another respondent says that, (133) *“Poses and meditations can initiate emotions in the body, and also regulate them when one has learnt the toolbox.”*

As seen above, Smith suggests that yoga, with its emphasis on attentiveness and spaciousness through stillness, lays way for a kind of deeper encounter with oneself, as is also noted by several of the respondents. The prevalent idea seems to be that yoga serves as a tool and a reminder to “get in touch” and “tune in”, whether it is with oneself, with God, or with the world around them, depending on their framework. One respondents says that, for her, *“It [spirituality] is always present. In everything. Not just in yoga. Yoga is a reminder. A way of opening the body for it, so I can listen for the greatness. So I can HEAR the greatness. It is always there. I just forget, human as I am.”* Several also say or indicate that yoga, as a tool, works not only with “getting in touch” with oneself and one’s own “stuff”, but also to release “stuff” that somehow “blocks” the way for a true self-encounter and connection to the world. As respondent 29 says, *“[Yoga] Creates an inner space where the thoughts just float by. Then there is space for what lies in the subconscious to come forth.”* For many then, yoga works as a tool that allows spaciousness in their experience that enables reflexivity and acceptance in themselves, a tendency reflected in other research on Ypractice as well.

7.4.4 YOGA PRACTICE AS A CLEANSING AND RELEASING JOURNEY

Even though those who noted themselves as spiritual in the survey also talk about physical advantages with yoga practice, there are more that talk about the emotional build-up and – release through yoga practice than the non-spiritual. Since the emotions in Q21 and Q23 were not ranked by the respondents, it is difficult to say when they have each emotion, or how the “during-process” unfold, but looking at an example by respondent 136 somewhat clarifies this. In Q21, respondent 136 crossed out 55 emotions: “*Content, Rested, Calm, Relaxed, Peaceful/Serene, Soft/Mellow, Clear-headed, Satisfied, Empowered, Safe, Secure, Confident, Proud, Open, Enthusiastic, Excited, Attentive, Invigorated, Passionate, Lusty, Optimistic, Hopeful, Trusting, Open-hearted, Sympathetic, Touched, Grateful, Fascination, Admiration, Interested, Absorbed, Amused, Delighted, Happy, Joyful, Ecstatic, Annoyed, Angry, Dislike, Ambivalence, Bored, Dissatisfaction, Envious, Longing, Afraid, Melancholy, Nostalgic, Vulnerable, Fragile, Unsecure, Sensitive, Tense, restless, Stressed, Worn-out.*” Although these are many “emotions”, several of these tell a similar story, one she explains in Q22: “*It is as if I start the practice with a sense of heaviness, during I feel irritation, anger, frustration, joy, happiness/bliss, mastery, and at the end of the class it feels like I have “gotten out” what I carried into class.*” This kind of emotional journey is mentioned by several, and respondent 103 answer similarly at Q22, saying that “[It feels] *Painful, especially if the emotions are uncomfortable and the body has tightened up. Painful to release both physical and psychical but it helps so I do it anyway. [I] Can often whizz through great parts of the emotional spectrum during a yoga class. [It is] Exciting when one has learnt to observe it and not be afraid of it. When it feels good it is as though the air flows lighter, and [I] get a sort of butterflies in the belly-feeling. Bliss.*”

The “working through” of emotions, and the almost painful process of it that many note in the survey seems to be greatly valued, as this often induces a sense of “hard work”, but also openness, cleansing and completeness through a kind of release at the end. When asked about how the emotions feels physically in the body after practice, the answers are a bit vague when it comes to explaining the physical sensations, but many tell a similar story when it comes to the process and end result of their yoga practice: (52) “*Everything feels lighter and as if one has cleansed and opened the body*”, (133) “[I] *Feel as though the day gets better, and that I have made myself ready, or that I can take reconcile with things that have been, like a kind of*

cleanse. It still feels just amazing.”, (138) “Much happier, lighter at heart [lettere til sinns] afterwards. A few times vulnerable and “naked”, but that’s how it is to be a human! Daring to feel all emotions, not just the good ones, is important! Feelings that one might have put a lid on, can come to the surface in a yoga class. And that is good! Being vulnerable is being strong, and vice versa.”, (19) “I feel as if I can put down a lot of stress and bad emotions on the mat, take a break from my life, feel lighter after.” Indeed, it is as if the self-encounter, including working through emotions, experiencing a physical and mental release on the mat seems to be something that is valued as something special with yoga practice – something that is set aside from everyday life. Meeting oneself means there is no escape from what is going on, as you are the main focus of the event.

8 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Both the chosen approaches of the theories discussed and the survey in this thesis have a focus on Western yoga practitioners, where yoga could be seen as a surplus activity well adapted for a leisure class with extra time and money to spare. The majority of the respondents in the survey for this thesis were Norwegian women in their thirties with higher education, and many have a sort of seekership and a wanting for self-development in focus. For most Westerners, engaging in yoga practices do not seem to automatically invoke some inherent Indian, Hindu, bodily attitudes and motivations (whatever those are). As Smith points out in his focus on Western practitioners of Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga, most of the respondents does not simply quote or mimic “practices drawn from ‘another culture’” (Smith, 2007:40). Rather, the practitioners seem to adapt and integrate “their own” backgrounds related to beliefs, body and bodily expression into their own complex formations, and the practice of yoga itself seems to be adaptable enough to make this meeting between cultures possible (De Michelis, 2005; Taves, 2009). When approaching how the body pedagogics of yoga influences the practitioners, the image is thus rather complicated, and cannot be fully deducted without in-depth inquiries on personal levels. Even then, it might not be possible to approach the extent of influence yoga has on a person, since this asks for a high level of self-reflexivity of the practitioners regarding their place in the socio-religio-cultural context. Gallagher has suggested a kind of phenomenological education of the respondents in order to “get at” these structures, yet that might require a massive project, and have some uncertain and possible methodological and ethic pitfalls (Gallagher in Taves, 2009, p. 73). In this thesis, I have attempted to trace some of the body pedagogics of yoga through the respondents’ self-reports, especially with emphasis on the experience of embodiment that many modern yoga researchers’ highlights, yet this mostly works as a pilot-project since several methodological approaches should have been applied to get a fuller picture.

It is obvious that some of the styles of yoga and their related philosophies and pedagogics are more influenced by either dualism (linked to the notion of mind vs body) or non-dualism (linked to the notion of embodiment). It is very possible that these two interpretations (and the many variations within) of yoga should be addressed in separate projects regarding their body pedagogics, as general statements prove difficult. Modern yoga researchers have given a lot of

focus on the largest styles of yoga (Iyengar, Ashtanga), that have a dualistic framework to them. This makes for an interesting mismatch between the research-conclusion that yoga is an embodied ritual, and how both the yogic dualistic philosophy and modern society create a context that often takes root in dis-embodiment. Thus, when only having access to the respondents experiences through written post-hoc, self-reports in short snippets through a survey, it is difficult to say anything clear about whether or not they have integrated some specific kinds of body pedagogics through yoga, or if the wordiness is related to the Western typical metaphorical dualistic language (separating body and mind, perhaps even soul), and maybe random and not thought through, or if it is an actual reflection of their (learnt) beliefs about the body. Yet, research indicates that the kind of embodied somatic experience that physical (hatha) yoga provide, is a biological “default”. Through training, repetition and mindful focus on identifying all the “parts” of the “whole”, and putting it together in a set of movements, embodiment is most likely to happen (Mehling et al., 2011). Thus, whether or not the practitioners interpret their experiences as embodiment depends on the framework they have for explaining their experiences, and if this is emphasized as a desired phenomenological state within the specific milieu or style of yoga (Mellor & Shilling, 2010; Ylönen, 2012). It might be that the experience of embodiment is set aside as special for many Ypractitioners in today’s modern world because of the dis-embodied shape that our societal structure has taken on. The common separation of mind and body, both language-wise and in regards to institutions possibly lays a basis of the experience of embodiment through such a tool as yoga as “something special”, simply because it is not a common experience in a mind-less every day.

In a society that has a lot of bodily pressure regarding health, fitness, performance and appearance, the practice of yoga can both enhance a negative kind of bodily fixation, and it can work the other way, as a therapeutic tool for bodily acceptance. Movement, relaxation techniques and breathing exercises all relate to biological processes that releases endorphins, create positive neural relations and promote positive emotions of well-being in a person. It is obvious for the segment of the relevant population that have answered the survey for this thesis that engaging in yoga practices is important for their well-being, whether it is related to stress-release, physical activity or self- or other-worldly encounters. The close encounter of one’s own self, and the panoramic and spacious perspective that awareness-practice through yoga offers has been proven to have positive affect of how one views one’s body, both

regarding body image and body schema (Smith, 2007; Varela et al., 1991, Gallagher). The ritual-like framework of a yoga class provides both space for emotions, social support, inspiration and motivation, where one can both be allowed to feel and act in ways that feel expressive of one's own processes, and one can be inspired, even influenced to feel and act in certain ways due to instruction or social pressure. This social, ritual-like aspect in yoga might be very relevant regarding bio-psychological processes, such as stress-release, and Röttger-Rössler for example, names rituals as an anthropological necessity in this context (Röttger-Rössler, 2012).

All may not have the meta-awareness and reflexivity about why they engage in such practices, but many seem to be aware that they shape their own experience by their motivations and intentions, and that what they value are shaped by what they choose to emphasize (Bender & Taves, 2012, p. 17). This individual shaping and valuing of subjective experience is reflected in the modern need for gaining a feeling of self-control, as seen in this survey, many value the process of immersing themselves into their emotions and internal experience while practicing, whether it is in the physical practice, or in the "spaces between" (Lea, 2009). An interesting thread to follow here then, would thus be, as discussed above, if it is actually in the "pauses" in between the heaviest physical effort one is able to reflect upon experience, and not while having the experience itself. Could embodiment then, actually be similar to the described state of enlightenment and flow - that you do not know when you are in it, but you know when you have been there? This however, would only be speculations and also in the borderland of essentialism if not followed up correctly. Either way, because of the emphasis that many of the spiritual respondents have on the process, this should have been approached differently and expanded upon rather than addressing the "during" Ypractice in one and the same question in a survey. Elaborating on the emotional journey during the yoga practice would be a very interesting area to emphasize in future research.

I cannot say anything about the universality of emotions, but can trace tendencies within the sample I have reached among practitioners in Norway, showing that there is a tendency for attitudes and moods such as attentiveness, gratefulness, humility and general feelings of calmness in Ypractice for those. Future research could see if these match, and whether or not those are attraction points for yoga practitioners everywhere, and whether or not these emotions serve as motivational factors especially in modern societies where there is a notable lack of rituals and specialness in public practices. Since my findings regarding motivation

were weak, a follow-up study could look further into the correspondence between spirituality, or religion, and process-oriented internal motivation, to map out possible layers of influence from the framework, and to see if this makes a big difference as to how and why people act like they do within religious frameworks. It would also be interesting to further look into whether the differences in the sub-culture stem from the parent national culture, or if there are other influences that underlie the possible various interpretations and frameworks of yoga practice.

That yoga practitioners are moving and feeling something, there is no doubt about, since these two aspects are intermingled in a biological sense. What can be said on the basis of the theory and the results from the survey, is that yoga practices are not so much the cause of emotions, rather, they create a space that enables the practitioners to reflect on their experience, and also work as a tool for dealing with the emotions and experiences that come up. The ritual-like process of the practice drives the practitioners through a various set of postures that facilitate and perhaps trigger individually or socially associated emotions and attitudes, and the intention or focus, and framework of the set context will direct how the emotional experiences are interpreted and valued. Because of how modern yoga emphasizes embodiment through motion, a feeling of connectedness, calmness and centeredness seems to be the outcome for many of the practitioners, whether spiritual or not, but the spiritual practitioners seem to value this sense of connection as “something more” than non-spiritual practitioners. Because of the complexity of this subject, it has been difficult to get a sense of clarity and solidity as an end result for this thesis, yet my hopes are that this will provide an inspirational base for possible future research, not only within the field of yoga, but similar movement-oriented practices with a religio-philosophical dimension.

"Action is movement with intelligence. The world is filled with movement.

What the world needs is more conscious movement, more action."

- B.K.S. Iyengar

APPENDIX 1

The introduction to the project before the survey (page 1), both online and on paper. (The survey was only distributed in norwegian. Translation of the text below into english are for textual purposes only.)

NORSK:

Intro til prosjektet: Verdisetting og Yoga

BAKGRUNN OG FORMÅL

Formålet med denne studien er å få en økt forståelse av hvordan praktiserende av yoga i Norge tillegger den fysiske praksisen sin verdi, og hvordan samspillet mellom fysisk og spirituell praksis utarter seg i dagens moderne samfunn.

Dette er et masterstudie ved institutt for Filosofi og Religionsvitenskap på NTNU.

Spørsmålene som følger vil omhandle yoga, spiritualitet og din oppfatning av- og erfaring med disse temaene.

FRIVILLIG DELTAKELSE

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, du kan når som helst avbryte besvarelsen. For å få samlet inn nok data håper jeg du besvarer så mange av spørsmålene som mulig. **Du svarer anonymt.**

TIDSBRUK

Besvaring av denne spørreundersøkelsen vil ta deg **15-25 minutter**, og kan være en fin mulighet for reflektering over/rundt egen praksis.

Takk for at du tar deg tid! Sigrid S. H.

ENGLISH:

Intro to the project: Valuation and Yoga

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to gain an increased understanding of how practitioners of yoga in Norway ascribe value to their physical practice, and how the interaction between physical and spiritual practice plays out in today's modern society.

This is a masterstudy at the Institute for Philosophy and Science of Religions at NTNU.

The questions that follows will deal with yoga, spirituality and your perception of – and experience with these themes.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

It is voluntary to participate in this study, and you can cancel your response whenever. In order to gather enough data, I hope that you answer as many of the questions as possible. **Your answer is anonymous.**

TIMEUSE

Answering this survey will take you about **15-25 minutes**, and can be a good opportunity to reflect on your own practice.

Thank you for taking the time! Sigrid S. H.

APPENDIX 2

The full survey (some of the fields for writing has been shorted down for the purposes of this representation)

Personalia

1 Kjønn

- Mann
- Kvinne
- Annet: _____

2 Alder

- <18
- 18 - 29
- 30 - 44
- 45 - 59
- 60+

3 Høyeste nivå av fullført utdanning? (Sett ett kryss)

- 9/10-årig skole eller kortere
- Grunnkurs/ett-årig utdanning utover 9/10-årig skole
- Videregående skole/gymnas/yrkesskole (3 årig)
- Høyskole- eller universitetsutdanning på 4 år eller mindre
- Høyskole- eller universitetsutdanning på mer enn 4 år

- Annet: _____

Yogapraksis

4 Hvor lenge har du praktisert yoga? (Antall år, evt også noter om du har hatt lengre opphold)

5 Er du yogalærer / under utdanning for å bli yogalærer?

- Ja
- Nei

6 På en typisk uke, hvor mange dager i uka gjør du yoga? (Sett ett kryss)

- En gang i uka
- 2 til 4 dager i uka
- 5 til 7 dager i uka

7 Hvor viktig er fysisk aktivitet for deg generelt? (Sett ett kryss)

- Ekstremt viktig
- Veldig viktig
- Moderat viktig
- Litt viktig
- Ikke viktig

8 Praktiserer du yoga...

- kun på gruppetimer
- hovedsaklig hjemme (på klasser/kurs innimellom)
- veksler mellom gruppetimer og praksis hjemme
(regelmessige gruppetimer/kurs + hjemme)

9 Hva får du ut av gruppetimer (med instruktør) som du ikke får i egen praksis? (Som for eksempel: sosialt, inspirasjon, innspill på egen praksis...) Vennligst spesifiser under.

10 Hva får du ut av egen praksis (hjemme/uten instruktør) som du ikke får ut av gruppetimer? (Som for eksempel: selvstendighet, egen kontroll på tid, spontanitet ...) Vennligst spesifiser under.

Yoga og spiritualitet

11 Identifiserer du deg med noen av disse religionene / livssynene? (Velg de(n) som gjelder)

- Kristendommen
- Jødedommen
- Islam

- Buddhismen
- Hinduismen
- Sjamanisme/Panteisme
- Paganisme
- Spirituell, ikke religiøs
- Ateist
- Annet (vennligst spesifiser) _____

12 Mange kaller yoga en spirituell praksis i tillegg til en fysisk aktivitet. Anser du deg selv som spirituell?

- Ja
- Nei

13 Hva legger du i det å være spirituell?

(f.eks: det finnes 'noe mer' enn den materielle verden / fokus på personlig vekst / henter inspirasjon fra ulike kulturer og religioner)

14 (Hvis ja tidligere) Hvordan uttrykker du din spiritualitet gjennom yogapraksis?

15 Hvor viktig er det for deg at yoga er "noe mer" enn fysisk aktivitet?

- Ekstremt viktig
- Veldig viktig
- Moderat viktig
- Litt viktig
- Ikke viktig

Motivasjon

16 Jeg gjør yoga fordi..... (Kryss av for de utsagnene du best identifiserer deg med.)

- ... jeg liker miljøet og folkene jeg møter
- ... jeg føler meg inkludert

- ... kroppen min ser bra ut pga det
 - ... jeg får gjort noe sammen med venner/familie-medlemmer
 - ... jeg «får noe mer» utav det enn bare fysisk aktivitet
 - ... jeg ønsker å delta når andre også gjør det
 - ... jeg ser opp til noen som driver med yoga, og har lyst til å bli mer som de
 - ... jeg ser fram til tiden før og etter yogaklassen når jeg kan slå av en prat
 - ... det er populært og lett tilgjengelig
 - ... jeg liker å oppleve at jeg lærer og forstår nye ting
 - ... jeg foretrekker å fokusere på prosessen i det jeg gjør
 - ... jeg foretrekker å fokusere på utfallet av det jeg gjør
 - ... jeg liker å dytte mine fysiske grenser
 - ... jeg får vært med likesinnede
 - ... jeg holder kroppen i form
 - ... jeg ønsker å forebygge/unngå ett/flere problem (mentalt eller fysisk)
 - Annet (vennligst spesifiser)
-

17 Hva motiverer deg til å ha en regelmessig yogapraksis?

Yoga og følelser

18 Opplever du at det er lettere å komme i kontakt med følelsene dine gjennom yoga og lignende fysiske aktiviteter?

- Ja (Hvorfor?) _____

- Nei (Hvorfor ikke?) _____

19 Kan du beskrive noen spesielt verdifulle opplevelser du har hatt gjennom

yogapraksis? Hvordan følte det? Hvordan følte det i kroppen din? *Kan du sammenligne opplevelsen med noe annet? Hva er i såfall likhetene og ulikhetene? (Valgfritt)*

20 (Kryss av de som gjelder) Når jeg gjør yoga forventer jeg (å føle)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fysisk velbehag | <input type="checkbox"/> Trygghet | <input type="checkbox"/> Frihet | <input type="checkbox"/> Uavhengighet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harmoni | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspirasjon | <input type="checkbox"/> Lekenhet | <input type="checkbox"/> Håp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tilhørighet | <input type="checkbox"/> Tilstedeværelse | <input type="checkbox"/> Glede | <input type="checkbox"/> Læring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kjærlighet | <input type="checkbox"/> Integritet | <input type="checkbox"/> Humor | <input type="checkbox"/> Å bli sett |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nærhet | <input type="checkbox"/> Forbindelse | <input type="checkbox"/> Autentisitet | <input type="checkbox"/> Selvstendighet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kontakt | <input type="checkbox"/> Støtte | <input type="checkbox"/> Fellesskap | <input type="checkbox"/> Letthet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oppdagelse | <input type="checkbox"/> Vekst | <input type="checkbox"/> Formål | <input type="checkbox"/> Forståelse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annet: | | <input type="checkbox"/> Tilfredshet | <input type="checkbox"/> Selvutfoldelse |
-

21 (Kryss av de som gjelder) Underveis når jeg gjør yoga føler jeg (meg) oftest....

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritert | <input type="checkbox"/> Forbløffet | <input type="checkbox"/> Nostalgisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Ukomfortabel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sorgfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortryllet | <input type="checkbox"/> Motløs | <input type="checkbox"/> Stresset |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Klartenkt | <input type="checkbox"/> Åpen | <input type="checkbox"/> Misfornøyd | <input type="checkbox"/> Fascinert |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambivalent | <input type="checkbox"/> Melankolsk | <input type="checkbox"/> Overveldet | <input type="checkbox"/> Desperat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forstyrret | <input type="checkbox"/> Lystig | <input type="checkbox"/> Underfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Forventningsfull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Optimistisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Stolt | <input type="checkbox"/> Mistroende | <input type="checkbox"/> Håpløs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stille | <input type="checkbox"/> Kjærlig | <input type="checkbox"/> Fredfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Bekymret |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ydmyk | <input type="checkbox"/> Skuffet | <input type="checkbox"/> Forfrisket | <input type="checkbox"/> Frakoblet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utslitt | <input type="checkbox"/> Avsky | <input type="checkbox"/> Utarmet | <input type="checkbox"/> Salig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rolig | <input type="checkbox"/> Interessert | <input type="checkbox"/> Håpefull | <input type="checkbox"/> Takknemlig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Misunnelig | <input type="checkbox"/> Uroet | <input type="checkbox"/> Rastløs | <input type="checkbox"/> Panisk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lengtende | <input type="checkbox"/> Komfortabel | <input type="checkbox"/> Moret | <input type="checkbox"/> Fremmedgjort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oppslukt | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikker | <input type="checkbox"/> Trygg | <input type="checkbox"/> Lidenskapelig |

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Begeistret | <input type="checkbox"/> Virrete | <input type="checkbox"/> Uthvilt | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensuell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forakt | <input type="checkbox"/> Engstelig | <input type="checkbox"/> Fjern | <input type="checkbox"/> Likegyldig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medfølelse | <input type="checkbox"/> Vennlig | <input type="checkbox"/> Sårbar | <input type="checkbox"/> Skamfull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lettet | <input type="checkbox"/> Oppmerksom | <input type="checkbox"/> Øm | <input type="checkbox"/> Egenkraftsmobilisert |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ivrig | <input type="checkbox"/> Fornøyd | <input type="checkbox"/> Selvsikker | <input type="checkbox"/> Tilfreds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ensom | <input type="checkbox"/> Rørt | <input type="checkbox"/> Oppfrisket | <input type="checkbox"/> Sentret |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sjalu | <input type="checkbox"/> Beundrende | <input type="checkbox"/> Avslappet | <input type="checkbox"/> Entusiastisk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forvirret | <input type="checkbox"/> Myk | <input type="checkbox"/> Skyldtung | <input type="checkbox"/> Ulykkelig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skjør | <input type="checkbox"/> Målløs | <input type="checkbox"/> Kjeder meg | <input type="checkbox"/> Anspent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urolig | <input type="checkbox"/> Åpenhjerta | <input type="checkbox"/> Redd | <input type="checkbox"/> Usikker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitiv | <input type="checkbox"/> Sympatisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Trist | <input type="checkbox"/> Hat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opprømt | <input type="checkbox"/> Nervøs | <input type="checkbox"/> Varm | <input type="checkbox"/> Velsignet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flau | <input type="checkbox"/> Henført | <input type="checkbox"/> Lykkelig | <input type="checkbox"/> Apatisk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tillitsfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Rasende | <input type="checkbox"/> Forferdet | <input type="checkbox"/> Motvilje |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overrasket | <input type="checkbox"/> Sint | <input type="checkbox"/> Ekstatisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Råd vill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annet: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Glad |

22 (Henger sammen med spørsmålet over) **Hvordan kjennes disse følelsene fysisk i kroppen din underveis i praksisen?** (For eksempel: tungt, romslig, lett, anstrengt..)

23 (Kryss av de som gjelder) **Etter jeg har gjort yoga føler jeg meg som regel....**

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritert | <input type="checkbox"/> Forbløffet | <input type="checkbox"/> Nostalgisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Ukomfortabel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sorgfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Fortryllet | <input type="checkbox"/> Motløs | <input type="checkbox"/> Stresset |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Klartenkt | <input type="checkbox"/> Åpen | <input type="checkbox"/> Misfornøyd | <input type="checkbox"/> Fascinert |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambivalent | <input type="checkbox"/> Melankolsk | <input type="checkbox"/> Overveldet | <input type="checkbox"/> Desperat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forstyrret | <input type="checkbox"/> Lystig | <input type="checkbox"/> Underfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Forventningsfull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Optimistisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Stolt | <input type="checkbox"/> Mistroende | <input type="checkbox"/> Håpløs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stille | <input type="checkbox"/> Kjærlig | <input type="checkbox"/> Fredfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Bekymret |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ydmyk | <input type="checkbox"/> Skuffet | <input type="checkbox"/> Forfrisket | <input type="checkbox"/> Frakoblet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utslitt | <input type="checkbox"/> Avsky | <input type="checkbox"/> Utarmet | <input type="checkbox"/> Salig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rolig | <input type="checkbox"/> Interessert | <input type="checkbox"/> Håpefull | <input type="checkbox"/> Takknemlig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Misunnelig | <input type="checkbox"/> Uroet | <input type="checkbox"/> Rastløs | <input type="checkbox"/> Panisk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lengtende | <input type="checkbox"/> Komfortabel | <input type="checkbox"/> Moret | <input type="checkbox"/> Fremmedgjort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oppslukt | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikker | <input type="checkbox"/> Trygg | <input type="checkbox"/> Lidenskapelig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Begeistret | <input type="checkbox"/> Virrete | <input type="checkbox"/> Uthvilt | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensuell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forakt | <input type="checkbox"/> Engstelig | <input type="checkbox"/> Fjern | <input type="checkbox"/> Likegyldig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medfølende | <input type="checkbox"/> Vennlig | <input type="checkbox"/> Sårbar | <input type="checkbox"/> Skamfull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lettet | <input type="checkbox"/> Oppmerksom | <input type="checkbox"/> Øm | <input type="checkbox"/> Egenkraftsmobilisert |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ivrig | <input type="checkbox"/> Fornøyd | <input type="checkbox"/> Selvsikker | <input type="checkbox"/> Tilfreds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ensom | <input type="checkbox"/> Rørt | <input type="checkbox"/> Oppfrisket | <input type="checkbox"/> Sentret |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sjalu | <input type="checkbox"/> Beundrende | <input type="checkbox"/> Avslappet | <input type="checkbox"/> Entusiastisk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forvirret | <input type="checkbox"/> Myk | <input type="checkbox"/> Skyldtunget | <input type="checkbox"/> Ulykkelig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skjør | <input type="checkbox"/> Målløs | <input type="checkbox"/> Kjeder meg | <input type="checkbox"/> Anspent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urolig | <input type="checkbox"/> Åpenhjerta | <input type="checkbox"/> Redd | <input type="checkbox"/> Usikker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitiv | <input type="checkbox"/> Sympatisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Trist | <input type="checkbox"/> Hat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opprømt | <input type="checkbox"/> Nervøs | <input type="checkbox"/> Varm | <input type="checkbox"/> Velsignet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flau | <input type="checkbox"/> Henført | <input type="checkbox"/> Lykkelig | <input type="checkbox"/> Apatisk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tillitsfull | <input type="checkbox"/> Rasende | <input type="checkbox"/> Forferdet | <input type="checkbox"/> Motvilje |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overrasket | <input type="checkbox"/> Sint | <input type="checkbox"/> Ekstatisk | <input type="checkbox"/> Råd vill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annet: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Glad |

24 (*Henger sammen med spørsmålet over*) **Hvordan kjennes disse følelsene fysisk i kroppen din?** (For eksempel: tungt, romslig, lett, anstrengt..)

25 **Oplever du at det er sammenheng mellom det du forventer* at du skal oppleve og føle, og det du faktisk opplever og føler i en yogaklasse, og etter en yogaklasse?**

(*Gjennom egne ønsker, kursbeskrivelser, framsnakk, konsensusen i yogamiljøet, etc.)

Ja (Hvorfor?) _____

Nei (Hvorfor ikke?) _____

26 **Endres det du føler i løpet av en yogaklasse? Kan du merke forskjell på følelsene før og etter en yogaklasse?**

Ja (Hvorfor?) _____

○ Nei (Hvorfor ikke?) _____

27 Er følelsene du har knyttet til yoga noe som motiverer deg til praksis?

○ Ja (Hvorfor?) _____

○ Nei (Hvorfor ikke?) _____

28 Er det noe du vil tilføye denne spørreundersøkelsen?

TAKK FOR AT DU TOK DEG TID!

Hvis du har spørsmål, eller ønsker å bidra gjennom å la deg selv bli intervjuet videre (chat/mail/skype/i person) kan du sende mail til **sigrh@stud.ntnu.no**

APPENDIX 3

QUESTION COMPARISONS FOR THE SURVEY

PERSONALIA: Q 1 + 2 + 3

YOGAPRACTICE: Q 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 + 10

YOGA & SPIRITUALITY: Q 11 + 12 + 13 + 14 + 15

MOTIVATION: Q 16 + 17

YOGA & EMOTIONS: Q 18 + 19 + 20 + 21 + 22 + 23 + 24 + 25 + 26 + 27

(SOMETHING TO ADD?: Q 28)

QUESTIONS	CORRESPONDS WITH	BECAUSE /TO SEE IF	WHAT IS OBVIOUS IN THIS SURVEY
1 GENDER + 2 AGE + 3 EDUCATION	16 MOTIVATION PHRASES	To confirm the core group of practitioners + identifying the factors in the CPH research	Highly educated women age 30 –ca 45 are the ones singled out as most active in this milieu, and they are the ones who have answered this survey as well. Men are also possibly less inclined to spend time answering questions about their emotions?
4 NUMBER OF YEARS	5 YOGATEACHER?	Yogateachers are more likely to have practiced for a longer period of time	A high percentage of yogateachers have replied thus far (need to get more non-teachers to reply)
4 NUMBER OF YEARS + 5 YOGATEACHER?	16 MOTIVATION PHRASES	Yogateachers might be more reflected about and interested in various aspects of their practice	No big difference
5 YOGATEACHER?	6 TIMES PER WEEK	Yogateachers are more likely to have more days of practice per week	
6 TIMES PER WEEK	16 MOTIVATION PHRASES + 17 WHAT MOTIVATES YOGA?	The type of motivation + why one is motivated to practice might be visible in the number of days per week one practices	Inconclusive- Q too vague
7 IMPORTANT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY? 15 IMPORTANT "SOMETHING MORE"?	16 MOTIVATION PHRASES	The type of motivation will likely be visible in what value one places in physical activity vs "something more"	YES – somewhat --- again bit to vague Q
8 WHERE PRACTICE + 9 GROUP PRO'S? + 10 HOME PRO'S?	7 IMPORTANT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY? 15 IMPORTANT "SOMETHING MORE"?	Where the respondents practice will possibly indicate what they value more	Q15 is too vague, stress-release, calm, and all goes in there for many
9 GROUP PRO'S? 10 HOME PRO'S?	8 WHERE PRACTICE	What the respondents reply to what they get out of group sessions/home practice is linked to where they prefer to practice	YES. But not so relevant

11 RELIGION/LIFE	12 SPIRITUAL?	A kind of obvious correlation, yet clarifies how and if they acknowledge the correspondence between yoga and spirituality, and if spirituality is something linked to their possible way of life/religion	-- Ylonens research Christian yoga practitioners – more than I thought answered “Christian” Xxx several do not see yoga as related to their spiritual life, even though they see themselves as spiritual or religious
12 SPIRITUAL?	13 WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?	Understanding what people mean/think about spirituality	The answers are a bit vague, indicating the same about their understanding?
12 SPIRITUAL?	15 IMPORTANT “SOMETHING MORE”?	Seeing the degree of value placed on spirituality in practice	Some do not see spirituality = “Something more”
13 WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?	14 EXPRESS SPIRITUALITY?	Understanding what people mean/think + express THEIR spirituality through yoga	This might not give clear enough answers, Q 14 is easily misunderstood /not clear enough to get any real insight to the practice Mors do not mention ASANA as a way of expressing it – rather they go to calm practices such as meditation, pranayama and chanting
11 RELIGION/LIFE +12 SPIRITUAL?	13 WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY? +14 EXPRESS SPIRITUALITY?	Seeing what kind of idea people have about their spiritualities. Is it mind over body, or is it embodied? (See Varga – Vertical approach? A) top to bottom B) from the bottom up) --- This is relevant for the way I interpret the answers regarding the “embodied ritual”-hypothesis	Might not give strong indicators due to the elusiveness related to respondents answers Only a few clearly express embodiedness
13 WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY? +14 EXPRESS SPIRITUALITY?	26 EMOTIONS CHANGE?	Is there a correlation between how they describe spirituality and the “experience” they describe in how the yoga class changes emotions?	They say they change, but emotions seem to be “moods” more than emotions for most? Many talk about calmness as a result
15 IMPORTANT “SOMETHING MORE”?	18 EASIER EMOTION-CONTACT?	Something more – in touch with the emotions?	
16 MOTIVATION PHRASES	17 WHAT MOTIVATES YOGA?	Motivational ‘types’ – linked to the CPH yogi ‘types’	People are a mix, will need to see how to divide them into the “groups” and/ if it is necessary
19 VALUABLE EXPER.	12 SPIRITUAL? +13 WHAT IS SPIR? +14 EXPRESS SPIR?	What people names as valuable. Is it linked to their spirituality or not? Is the body central? (Again, Varga) Many link it to mastery + stress-down	An optional q, many don’t take their time to reply. This is one of the questions that say something about value, yet there will not be enough + clear enough answers to make something out of it ---- THIS IS SOMETHING I SHOULD HAVE ASKED PEOPLE ABOUT
20 EXPECT BEFORE	16 MOTIVATION PHRASES	Motivation vs expectation	Unsure how this will look like / be clarified.

			<i>Many expect: Presence, physical well-being, joy Several replies that they do not "want to" expect anything</i>
21 FEEL DURING	22 DURING PHYSICAL	Are people able to identify the physical sensation of emotions? (Embodied emotions) (---- few are— <i>Might be too complicated formulated Q.</i> ■ <i>maybe it should have been done – in- practice, many seems to have difficulties explaining their physical sensations after)</i>	<i>Looks like this was confusing for many, some even said "The same as above" in the "physical" section. Many feel during: calm, attentive, grateful, centered, satisfied Physical tendency during: I gave examples, and these might have been to leading, since many replied "light" – a word I used. Many also replied "warm" and "soft"– not examples from me. Many simply says "good".</i>
23 FEEL AFTER	24 AFTER PHYSICAL	Are people able to identify the physical sensation of emotions? (Embodied emotions)	<i>Looks like this was confusing for many, some even said "The same as above" in the "physical" section. Many feel after: Relaxed, calm, grateful, content, satisfied, peaceful Physical tendency after: again, "light"</i>
25 COHERENCE?	20 EXPECT BEFORE +21 (22) FEEL DURING +23 (24) FEEL AFTER	Is there a coherence between before, during and after?	<i>I think this question was interpreted in many directions. The question might be clumsy written down. Many replies that it depends on the quality of the class + instructor – and this is an argument that both the "yes" and the "no" group uses. This question might not work</i>
26 FEELINGS CHANGE	25 COHERENCE?		
27 FEELINGS MOTIVATE?	16 MOTIVATION PHRASES	These should be in correspondence -	<i>See what people place in "emotions" and "feeling" about something....</i>
27 FEELINGS MOTIVATE?	14 EXPRESS SPIR?	Interesting to see how these come together – will anyone mention emotions/feelings in the expression?	<i>Nr 27 might be too leading?</i>
20 EXPECT BEFORE +21 (22) FEEL DURING +23 (24) FEEL AFTER	11 RELIGION/LIFE + 12 SPIRITUAL? +13 WHAT IS SPIR? +14 EXPRESS SPIR?	Interesting to see how these come together – "emotions/feelings" vs "something more" vs "spirituality"	

APPENDIX 4

The survey coded – each answer has been given a number to make the data easier to compare and work with. The numbers might not be completely accurate, as they are worked over several times – Appendix 8 have the final numbers.

Q NR	QUESTIONS <i>(xx indicates comparative despite incomplete)</i>	CODES <i>Numbers behind are completed answers (how many chose this alt.), both online and paper (incomplete a, o&p in paranthesis)</i>
1	GENDER xx	1. Male 13 (3) 2. Female 151 (46)
2	AGE xx	1. <18 (1) 2. 18 – 29 41 (12) 3. 30 – 44 80 (21) 4. 45 – 59 38 (15) 5. 60+ 4
3	HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION xx	1. 9/10-yrs school)or less 1 (1) 2. One year after 9/10 yrs 0 3. Highschool/vocational (3 yrs) 21 (8) 4. college/university 4 yrs or less 44 (18) 5. college/university more than 4 yrs 97 (4)
4	YEARS PRACTICED YOGA xx Half years are rounded down -in the excel sheet- under 1 year = <1 / over 20 years written by their years.	1. 1 19 (3) 2. 2 18 (4) 3. 3 8 (6) 4. 4 21 (2) 5. 5 13 (3) 6. 6 8 (1) 7. 7 7 (4) 8. 8 11 (2) 9. 9 5 (0) 10. 10 14 (9) 11. 11 3 (3) 12. 12 3 (2) 13. 13 1 (1) 14. 14 3 (0) 15. 15 7 (2) 16. 16 2 (0) 17. 17 1 (1) 18. 18 2 (0) 19. 19 2 (0) 20. 20 3 (1) 21. more than 20 years 2 (4) 22. less than a year 9 (1)
5	YOGATEACHER OR UNDER EDUCATION TO BECOME Y.TEACHER xx	1. yes 62 (22) 84 2. no 102 (27) 129
6	NUMBER OF TIMES PER WEEK YOGAPRACTICE (SUBJECT) xx	1. once per week 38 (9) 2. 2 to 4 days a week 85 (28) 3. 5 to 7 days a week 40 (12)
7	HOW IMPORTANT IS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR THEM	1. extremely important 24 (8) 2. very important 83 (23) 3. moderately important 47 (14) 4. somewhat important 9 (4)

		5. not important 1
8	WHERE THEY PRACTICE YOGA xx	1. only group 31 (11) 2. mainly at home 38 (11) 3. both group and home 94 (27)
9	ADVANTAGES WITH GROUPLESSONS xx	1. inspiration and new input (poses and philosophy) 98 (24) 2. adjustment, correction, alignment 51 (20) 3. knowledge 23 (4) 4. being guided, program planned 42 (15) 5. time and space set aside 21 (3) 6. calmness, relaxation 17 (3) 7. motivation, pushed, getting support 49 (11) 8. community, social (group energy) 52 (17) 9. flow 4 (1) 10. discipline, focus 20 (13)
10	ADVANTAGES WITH HOME PRACTICE xx	1. Flow 7 2. Focus, concentration, dedication, discipline 12 (3) 3. Pace and intensity(longer time in poses) 20 (3) 4. Quiet, calm, silence 30 (7) 5. introspection, self-reflection 27 (3) 6. Spontaneity, creativity, variation and exploration 30 (12) 7. Routine and repetition, practicing poses 15 (6) 8. Time (when and how long) 62 (23) 9. Space /place 23 (3) 10. Independence, self-worth and a sense of achievement/mastery 19 (4) 11. Adapted practice (needs) 41 (10) 12. Maintaining a continuity of practice 15 (5) 13. 'nothing' / I don't/ don't like it 17 (4)
11	RELIGION/LIFESTYLE	1. Christianity 38 (16) 2. Buddhism 29 (14) 3. Hinduism 6 (5) 4. Sjamanism/Pantheism 3 (1) 5. Paganism 2 (1) 6. Spiritual, not religious 67 (22) 7. Atheism 41 (11) 8. Agnosticism 11 (1) 9. Scepticism 2 10. Don't know 3 11. None 10 (1)
12	DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF SPIRITUAL?	1. Yes 99 (29) 2. No 64 (20)
13	WHAT DO THEY UNDERSTAND BY THE WORD 'SPIRITUAL'? xx	1. Open to 'something more' than the material world/science 53 (15) 2. focus on personal growth and inner reflect+ conscious/awareness 46 (14) 3. philosophy of life and creating meaning in life 17 (5) 4. inspiration from various religi and cultures 10 (1) 5. love and kindness, compassion 7 (4) 6. Believe in fate and higher power (God) 17 (5) 7. Connectedness 34 (6) 8. Believe in a soul, spirit, subtle body, energies, reincarnation 21(2) 9. Believe in parallel worlds (ghosts etc) astrology, alternative milieu, superstitious, elusive and lofty 18 (4) 10. A part of a religion / it is religion 10 (2)

		<p>11. It is naïve/strange/ “dressed up” and unlikely explanatory models 8</p> <p>12. It has negative connotations 8 (1)</p>
14	(if yes on 12) HOW EXPRESS SPIRITUALITY	<p>1. I don’t / don’t know / those are separate 6 (1)</p> <p>2. being present and open/ calm / practicing mindfulness 38 (9)</p> <p>3. experience flow 4</p> <p>4. breathing 11 (5)</p> <p>5. self-reflection, introspection 21 (8)</p> <p>6. connectedness (outside or inside /body+mind)14 (5)</p> <p>7. exploring energies/chakras 8 (2)</p> <p>8. compassion, love, emotion, heart, gratitude, humility 12 (2)</p> <p>9. dedication /sankalpa /prayer in motion 5 (2)</p> <p>10. meditation 22 (8)</p> <p>11. visualization 2 (1)</p> <p>12. song (chanting, mantra) / music 11 (3)</p> <p>13. Other</p>
15	HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR THEM THAT YOGA IS ‘SOMETHING MORE’ THAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?	<p>1. Extremely important 30 (7)</p> <p>2. Very important 67 (18)</p> <p>3. Moderately important 35 (16)</p> <p>4. Somewhat important 20 (3)</p> <p>5. Not important 11 (5)</p>
16	I do yoga because..... (cross out as many as applies – coded in on the online: at least 3 needed to be crossed out) xx	<p>1. ... i like the milieu and the people i meet 61 (19) S</p> <p>2. ... i feel included 29 (7) S</p> <p>3. ... my body looks good because of it 21 (11) A/W</p> <p>4. ... i get to do something with friends/ family members 11 (8) S</p> <p>5. ... I get «something more» out of it than merely physical activity 128 (38) L/W</p> <p>6. ... I want to participate when others do it too 6 (1) S /A</p> <p>7. ... I look up to someone who does yoga, and want to be more like them 0 (6) A</p> <p>8. ...I look forward to the time before and after yogaclass when I can chat with people 9 (1) S</p> <p>9. ... it is popular and easily accessible 6 S / A</p> <p>10. ... I like to experience that I’m learning and understand new things 106 (32) L</p> <p>11. ... I prefer to focus on the process of what I do 99 (28) L</p> <p>12. ... I prefer to focus on the outcome of what I do 11 (4) A</p> <p>13. ... I like pushing my physical boundaries 70 (24) A</p> <p>14. ... I get to be with likeminded people 27 (7) S</p> <p>15. ... I keep the body in shape 127 (37) W</p> <p>16. ... I want to prevent/avoid one or more problems (mentally of physically) 117 (39) W</p> <p>17. ... I achieve well-being and peace/calm/ stress-release 36 W/ L</p> <p>18. Spiritual connectedness 2</p>

17	WHAT MOTIVATES THEM TO A REGULAR PRACTICE xx	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. physical advantages (health – strength, flexibility, balance, energy), bodily control and to be physically challenged 54 (14) 2. practice to become ‘good at it’ /regularity gives better results/progress 17 (8) 3. mental confidence, calmness, focus, clarity, presence 30 (10) 4. general (physical and mental) well-being / I like it / it makes me feel good 64 (24) 5. painregulation/ prevention or therapy of injuries 10 (6) 6. stressregulation, relaxation (shavasana, meditation) and inner peace 40 (3) 7. it’s a break from everyday chores/alone time 11 (2) 8. self-development/ self exploration (incl emotions: JOY, GRATITUDE, LOVE) 35 (6) 9. spiritual experiences, connectedness 13 (2) 10. to teach 3 (2) 11. Other
18 A	IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, IS IT EASIER TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR EMOTIONS THROUGH YOGA AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES?	A YES: 132 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It’s just that way 8 2. Not sure 1 3. Through being present and aware 29 4. Slowing down, taking the time and space to inquire, reflect, accept and connect 66 5. By relaxing/being calm 26 6. I feel more open 9 7. Teachers guide 5 8. The asanas or breath work the body this way 12 9. Stupid question 1 10. Other
18 B	IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, IS IT EASIER TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR EMOTIONS THROUGH YOGA AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES?	B NO: 37 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not sure/don’t know/don’t understand 8 2. I don’t want to feel / I use yoga to feel less 5 3. I haven’t experienced that 4 4. I have good contact with my feelings 12 5. I don’t use yoga for that 8 6. Stupid question 1
19 A	Kan du beskrive noen spesielt verdifulle opplevelser du har hatt gjennom yogapraksis? (optional) A: describe one or more experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. being one with everything/the universe/god 4 2. flow (forgetting time and space) 5 3. being totally present 7 4. unconditional love & compassion 4 5. deep gratitude 1 6. deep joy 2 7. mastery (of poses) 20 (mange nevner hodestående) 8. deep calm 7 9. poses related to trauma-> letting go of trauma (crying) 12 (mange nevner spontan gråt) 10. self-accept/being friendly with one self 8 11. physical pain/tension release 4 12. visions 4 13. connected to self 8 14. experience of beauty (song/poses..) 2 15. energy rising/feeling the chakras 3 16. out of the body experience 2
19 B	B: how did it feel in your body?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. calm, peaceful 14 2. accept 3

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. confidence, safe, strenght, stable 8 4. liberating, free, release, open 27 5. being loved/feeling love 5 6. titilating/vibrating 4 7. gratitude 1 8. joy, light, bliss 12 9. spaced out/floating 5 10. warm 3 11. energy
19 C	C: Can you compare the experience with something else? Similarities and differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. being in nature (hiking, skiing, climbing etc) 5 (both: demanding and solitude) 2. awe in nature 3 3. connection to God 2 4. like taking medicine/drugs (with no side-effects) 3 5. like being on vacation (having several weeks of relaxation) 2 6. other achievements (mastery) 7 7. loving another person/being loved/unconditional love 5 8. play 1 9. singing/music 2 10. sex / orgasm /lust 2 11. being under water 1 12. other religious experiences 1 13. a good massage 1 14. flow in other tasks/sports 2 15. talking to someone about problems and catalyzing a process of healing 1 16. can't be compared 9
20	Expect to feel when doing yoga (table below)	<p>*other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31. no expectations 7 32. pain/discomfort 3 <p>Yellow: over 40, Pink: over 60 X satisfaction(29) was not listed in the online version</p>

1. physical well-being 115	2. safety 58	3. freedom 71	4. independence 36
5. Harmony 89	6. Inspiration 86	7. playfulness 66	8. Hope 36
9. belonging 47	10. presence 134	11. joy 88	12. learning 89
13. love 47	14. Integrity 37	15. Humor 37	16. being seen 11
17. being close 26	18. connection 29	19. Authenticity 34	20. independence 49
21. contact 31	22. support 13	23. community 30	24. Lightness 55
25. Discovery 56	26. growth 63	27. purpose 18	28. understanding 42
		29. xsatisfaction 10	30. Self-expression 68

21 While doing yoga, I usually feel....

Yellow: over 40 (+/-), Pink: over 60 (+/-), GREEN: notable in neg section

pos/neg	NR	CATEGORIES	Emotions + moods	people
POSITIVE	1	CALM	1. Content fornøyd 2. Comfortable 3. Rested 4. Calm 5. Relaxed 6. Serene/peaceful 7. Mellow / Soft 8. Centered 9. Clear headed 10. Still 11. Relieved 12. Satisfied	61 54 28 87 69 73 53 69 40 49 21 74
	2	EMPOWERED	13. Empowered 14. Safe 15. Secure 16. Confident 17. Proud 18. Open	32 44 20 30 44 70
	3	LIVELY	19. Enthusiastic 20. Excited 21. Attentive 22. Eager 23. Invigorated 24. Passionate 25. Rejuvenated 26. Lusty 27. Sensual	31 18 85 21 39 21 39 21 15
	4	HOPEFUL	28. Optimistic 29. Hopeful 30. Expectant 31. Trusting	26 27 20 30
	5	AFFECTIONATE	32. Compassionate 33. Friendly 34. Open hearted 35. Sympathetic 36. Warm 37. Touched 38. Tender 39. Loving	30 39 38 13 59 18 10 25
	6	GRATITUDE	40. Grateful 41. Humble	78 47
	7	INSPIRED	42. Amazed 43. Awed 44. Fascination 45. Admiration 46. Enchanted 47. Interested 48. Absorbed	3 8 23 13 8 45 32
	8	JOYFUL	49. Amused 50. Delighted 51. Happy	12 10 42

			52. Blessed 53. Joyful glad 54. Blissful 55. Elated 56. Extatic	35 61 34 12 11
NEGATIVE	9	ANGER	57. Irritated 58. Furious 59. Angry	8 0 3
	10	AVERSION	60. Contempt 61. Appalled 62. Dislike xx norsk betyd 63. Hate 64. Disgust	0 0 4 0 0
	11	CONFUSION	65. Confused 66. Surprised 67. Dumbfound xx norsk be 68. Ambivalent 69. Puzzled	1 10 2 10 2
	12	DISCONNECTION	70. Bored 71. Disconnected xx norsk 72. Indifferent 73. Alienated 74. Distant 75. Apathetic 76. Lonely 77. Scatterbrained	3 16 1 1 2 1 4 2
	13	RESTLESS	78. Restless 79. Disappointment 80. Dissatisfaction 81. Disturbed 82. Uncomfortable 83. Troubled 84. Envious 85. Jealous 86. Longing	4 3 2 2 9 1 3 2 6
	14	FEAR	87. Fearful 88. Afraid 89. Hopeless 90. Desperation 91. Mistrustful 92. Panicked 93. Worried	2 2 4 0 1 0 3
	15	SADNESS	94. Sad 95. Unhappy 96. Melancholy 97. Disheartened 98. Grief 99. Nostalgic	2 0 5 0 5 9
	16	SELF-CONSCIOUS	100. Vulnerable 101. Fragile 102. Insecure 103. Sensitive 104. Ashamed 105. Embarrassed	16 10 4 30 1 4

			106. Guilty	0
17	TENSITY		107. Tense	7
			108. Anxious	7
			109. Nervous	1
			110. Stressed	5
			111. Overwhelmed	10
			112. Worn out	17
			113. Depleted	0

Q NR	QUESTIONS	CODES
		<i>Completed answers, both online and paper</i>
22	<p>How do you feel these emotions physically in your body during practice?</p> <p>Examples given: heavy, spacious, light, tense</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. don't understand / don't know 15 2. it varies 19 3. X Light/flowy 64 4. Good/positive 30 5. X tense, tight 13 6. restless 1 7. X heavy 14 8. open 9 9. calm, relaxed 23 10. soft, mellow 8 11. liberating/releasing/cleansing 6 12. quivering (excitement) / titillating 8 13. X spacious 11 14. comfortable 4 15. refreshed 1 16. warm 14 17. graceful/elegant 2 18. alive / human 2 19. wholeness/centering, focused 10 20. rooted/steady/strengthening 15 21. tired 4

Q 23 AFTER I'VE DONE YOGA I USUALLY FEEL...

Yellow: over 40 (+/-), Pink: over 60 (+/-), GREEN: notable in neg section

pos/neg	NR	CATEGORIES	Emotions + moods	people
	1	CALM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Content 72 2. Comfortable 60 3. Rested 38 4. Calm 75 5. Relaxed 82 6. Serene 67 7. Mello, soft 42 8. Centered 45 9. Clear headed 35 10. Still 29 11. Relieved 25 12. Satisfied 66 	
	2	EMPOWERED	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Empowered 23 14. Safe 34 	

POSITIVE			15. Secure 16. Confident 17. Proud 18. Open	21 28 34 53
	3	LIVELY	19. Enthusiastic 20. Excited 21. Attentive 22. Eager 23. Invigorated 24. Passionate 25. Rejuvenated 26. Lusty 27. Sensual	19 17 33 8 60 17 50 11 11
	4	HOPEFUL	28. Optimistic 29. Hopeful 30. Expectant 31. Trusting	27 15 5 23
	5	AFFECTIONATE	32. Compassionate 33. Friendly 34. Open hearted 35. Sympathetic 36. Warm 37. Touched 38. Tender 39. Loving	13 40 34 12 46 4 11 27
	6	GRATITUDE	40. Grateful 41. Humble	73 32
	7	INSPIRED	42. Amazed 43. Awed 44. Fascination 45. Admiration 46. Enchanted 47. Interested 48. Absorbed	1 2 9 8 5 9 3
	8	JOYFUL	49. Amused 50. Delighted 51. Happy 52. Blessed 53. Joyful 54. Blissful 55. Elated 56. Extatic	7 8 48 31 66 39 8 7
	9	ANGER	57. Irritated 58. Furious 59. Angry	0 1 0
	10	AVERSION	60. Contempt 61. Appalled 62. Dislike 63. Hate 64. Disgust	0 0 0 1 0
	11	CONFUSION	65. Confused 66. Surprised 67. Dumbfound 68. Ambivalent	0 2 1 0

NEGATIVE	12	DISCONNECTION	69. Puzzled 70. Bored 71. Disconnected (norsk!) 72. Indifferent 73. Alienated 74. Distant (norsk bet!) 75. Apathetic 76. Lonely 77. Scatterbrained	0 0 7 1 0 6 0 0 0
	13	RESTLESS	78. Restless 79. Disappointment 80. Dissatisfaction 81. Disturbed 82. Uncomfortable 83. Troubled 84. Envious 85. Jealous 86. Longing	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 3
	14	FEAR	87. Fearful 88. Afraid 89. Hopeless 90. Desperation 91. Mistrustful XX 92. Panicked 93. Worried	0 0 0 0 1 0 0
	15	SADNESS	94. Sad 95. Unhappy 96. Melancholy 97. Disheartened 98. Grief 99. Nostalgic	1 0 1 0 0 2
	16	SELF-CONSCIOUS	100. Vulnerable 101. Fragile 102. Insecure 103. Sensitive 104. Ashamed 105. Embarrassed 106. Guilty XX	7 3 0 13 0 0 1
	17	TENSITY	107. Tense 108. Anxious 109. Nervous 110. Stressed 111. Overwhelmed 112. Worn out 113. Depleted	0 0 0 0 4 10 0

Q NR	QUESTIONS	CODES
		<i>Completed answers, both online and paper</i>
24	<p>How do you feel these emotions physically in your body after practice?</p> <p>Examples given: heavy, spacious, light, tense</p>	<p>1. don't understand / don't know 7</p> <p>2. same as above 4</p> <p>3. it varies 2</p> <p>4. X Light/flowy 76</p> <p>5. Good/positive 29</p> <p>6. X heavy 4</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. open 7 8. calm, relaxed 34 9. soft, mellow, still 11 10. liberating/releasing 4 11. X spacious 3 12. warm 10 13. tired 8 14. clarity 6 15. refreshing/vitality/enthusiasm 8 16. wholeness/centering/balanced 11 17. rooted/steady/safe/grounded 9 18. fornøyd, tilfreds 2 19. restlessness 1
25 A	Do you experience a coherence between what you expect to feel, and what you actually feel during and after a yoga class?	<p>A YES 130 xx 119</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. don't know why /don't understand 3 2. don't expect/try not to expect 9 3. it varies/often /sometimes 21 4. it depends on the mood in the room and others 5 5. it depends on the teacher/program/style 19 6. it is why I continue/experience/I get what I want 61 7. I get more than expected 6
25 B	Do you experience a connection between what you expect to feel, and what you actually feel during and after a yoga class?	<p>B NO 47 xx 36</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. don't know why /don't understand 5 2. don't expect 9 3. it varies/rarely /sometimes 7 4. it depends on the mood in the room and others 2 5. it depends on the teacher/program/style 10 6. it depends on the group/level 3 7. I don't get what I expect/I expect more 12 xx – some are positive here – that what they get exceeds their expectations
26	Does what you feel change during a yoga class? Can you notice the difference in your emotions before and after yoga?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YES 145 2. NO/don't know 18
27	Are the feelings that you have in connection to yoga something that motivates to practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YES 152 2. NO 14

Q28: 51 commented something in the end

APPENDIX 5

The work behind combining the categories and emotions from the Geneva Affect Label coder and the categories for Non-Violent communication.

- Green positive, red negative, brown ambivalent

GALC categories	GALC categories sub	NVC categories matched	NVC categories sub	New cat
English + Norsk	English + [Norsk]	English	English	
1E Admiration/Awe 1N Beundring	1a <i>Awe</i> /wonder [Under(full)] 1b <i>Fascinated</i> [Fascinert]	Q INSPIRED K ENGAGED	Amazed, awed ,wonder Absorbed, alert, curious, engrossed, enchanted, entranced, fascinated, interested, intrigued, involved, spellbound , stimulated	INSPIRED
2E Amusement 2N Underholdt	2a Lattermild	R JOYFUL	amused delighted, glad, happy, jubilant, pleased, tickled	JOYFUL
3E Anger 3N Sinne		C ANGRY	Enraged furious incensed indignant irate livid outraged resentful	ANGER
4E Anxiety 4N Angst	4a <i>Nervous</i> [Nervøs]	X TENSE	Anxious cranky distressed distraught edgy fidgety frazzled irritable jittery nervous overwhelmed Restless, stressed out	TENSITY
5E Being touched 5N Rørt	5a <i>Affective</i> [Følsom]	A AFFECTIONATE	Compassionate friendly loving, open hearted, sympathetic tender warm fragile guarded helpless insecure leery reserved, sensitive shaky	FRIENDLY
6E Boredom 6N Kjedsomhet	6a <i>Indifferent</i> [Likegyldig] 6b <i>Indifferent</i> (un- engaged) [Uengasjert]	H DISCONNECTED	Alienated aloof apathetic bored cold detached, Distant distracted indifferent numb removed uninterested withdrawn	DISCONNECTED
7E Compassion 7N Medfølelse		A AFFECTIONATE	Compassionate, friendly loving, open hearted, sympathetic, tender, warm	
8E Contempt 8N Forakt		E AVERSION	Animosity, appalled, contempt, disgusted, dislike, hate, horrified Hostile, repulsed	AVERSION
9E Contentment 9N Fornøyd	9a <i>Comfortable</i> [Komfortabel]	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	
10E Desperation 10N Desperat	10a <i>Hopeless</i> [Håpløs]	V SAD	Depressed, dejected, despair, despondent, disappointed, discouraged, disheartened Forlorn, gloomy, heavy hearted Hopeless, melancholy, unhappy wretched	SADNESS fear
11E Disappointment 11N Skuffet		V SAD	Depressed, dejected, despair Despondent, disappointed Discouraged, disheartened Forlorn, gloomy, heavy hearted Hopeless, melancholy Unhappy, wretched	

12E Disgust 12N Avsky		E AVERSION	Animosity, appalled, contempt Disgusted, dislike, hate, horrified, hostile, repulsed	
13E Dissatisfaction 13N Misfornøyd		I DISQUIET	Agitated, alarmed, discomfited Disconcerted, disturbed, perturbed Rattled, restless, shocked, startled Surprised, troubled, turbulent Turmoil uncomfortable uneasy Unnerved, unsettled, upset	RESTLESSNESS
14E Envy 14N Misunnelse		Z YEARNING	Envious, jealous, longing Nostalgic, pining, wistful	
15E Fear 15N Redd		B AFRAID	Apprehensive, dread Foreboding, frightened Mistrustful, panicked, petrified Scared, suspicious, terrified Wary, worried	
16E Feeling love 16N Kjærlig	<i>16a Tender(ness) [Øm(het)]</i>	A AFFECTIONATE	Compassionate, friendly loving open hearted sympathetic] tender, warm	LOVING
17E Gratitude 17N Takknemlig		O GRATEFUL	appreciative, moved, thankful touched	GRATITUDE
18E Guilt 18N Skyld		S PAIN	Agony, anguished, bereaved Devastated, grief, heartbroken Hurt, lonely, miserable Regretful, remorseful	
19E Happiness 19N Glede	<i>19a Blessed Velsignet 19b Joyful Frydefull 19c Delighted Henrykt</i>	M EXHILARATED	blissful ecstatic, elated, enthralled, exuberant, radiant rapturous thrilled	
20E Hatred 20N Hat		E AVERSION	Animosity, appalled, contempt Disgusted, dislike, hate Horrified, hostile Repulsed	
21E Hope 21N Håp	<i>21a Optimistic Optimistisk 21b Confident (Safe) Trygg 21c Confident (Secure) Sikker</i>	P HOPEFUL F CONFIDENT	expectant encouraged optimistic empowered open, proud safe, secure	HOPEFUL EMPOWERED
22E Humility 22N Ydmykhet		xxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxxxx	
23E Interest/Enthusiasm 23N Entusiasme	<i>23a Attentive Oppmerksom 23b Eager Ivrig 23c Interested Interessert</i>	L EXCITED	amazed animated ardent aroused astonished dazzled eager energetic enthusiastic giddy invigorated lively passionate surprised vibrant	ENTHUSIASM
24E Irritation 24N Irritasjon		D ANNOYED	Aggravated dismayed Disgruntled displeased Exasperated frustrated impatient Irritated irked	IRRITATION
25E Jealousy 25N Sjalusi		Z YEARNING	Envious jealous longing nostalgic Pining wistful	
26E Joy 26N Lykke	<i>26a Extatic Ekstatisk</i>	R JOYFUL	amused delighted glad, happy jubilant pleased tickled	
27E Longing 27N Lengsel	<i>27a (Day)dreamy Drømmende</i>	Z YEARNING	Envious jealous longing Nostalgic pining wistful	
28E Lust(y) 28N Lyst(ig)	<i>28a Sensual Sensuell</i>	xxxxx	Xxxxxx	
29E Pleasure/Enjoyment		U REFRESHED	enlivened rejuvenated renewed rested,	

29N Velbehag			restored revived	
31E Pride		xxxxxx	xxxxxxx	
30N Stolthet				
31E Relaxation/Serenity	<i>31a Calm</i> Rolig	T PEACEFUL	calm clear headed comfortable centered content equanimous fulfilled mellow quiet relaxed relieved satisfied serene still tranquil trusting	CALM
31N Avslapning	<i>31b Carefree</i> Bekymringsfri <i>31c Peaceful</i> /serene Fredfull			
		U REFRESHED	enlivened rejuvenated renewed rested restored revived	
32E Relief		T PEACEFUL	calm clear headed comfortable centered content equanimous fulfilled mellow quiet relaxed relieved satisfied serene still tranquil trusting	CALM
32N Lettelse				
33E Sadness	<i>33a</i> <i>Melancholic</i> Melankolsk	V SAD	Depressed, dejected, despair Despondent, disappointed Discouraged, disheartened Forlorn, gloomy, heavy hearted Hopeless, melancholy Unhappy, wretched	
33N Tristhet				
34E Shame		J EMBARRASSED	Ashamed chagrined flustered Guilty mortified self-conscious	SELF-CONSCIOUS
34N Skam				
		I DISQUIET	Agitated, alarmed, discombobulated Disconcerted, disturbed, perturbed Rattled, restless, shocked, startled Surprised, troubled, turbulent Turmoil uncomfortable uneasy Unnerved, unsettled, upset	
35E Surprise	<i>35a</i> <i>Dumbfound</i> Målløs	G CONFUSED	Ambivalent, baffled Bewildered dazed Hesitant lost mystified Perplexed puzzled torn	CONFUSION
35N Ovrasket	<i>35b Amazed</i> Forbløffet			
36E Tension/Stress	<i>36a</i> <i>Discomfort</i> Ubehag	N FATIGUE	Beat burnt out depleted Exhausted lethargic listless Sleepy tired weary worn out	STRESSED
36N Stresset	<i>36b Tense</i> Anstrengt			
		X TENSE	Anxious cranky distressed distraught edgy fidgety frazzled Irritable jittery nervous overwhelmed restless stressed out	

APPENDIX 6

The emotions for the survey, based on the GALC + NVC.

Some emotions teamed up with the yamas and niyamas of yoga philosophy.

pos/neg	NR	CATEGORIES	Emotions + moods	(Norsk)	Yamas-niyamas connection
POSITIVE	1	CALM	Content Comfortable Rested Calm Relaxed Serene/peaceful Mellow Centered Clear headed Still Relieved Satisfied	Fornøyd Komfortabel Uthvilt Rolig Avslappet Fredfull Myk Sentrert Klartenkt Stille Lettet Tilfreds	ASTEYA APARIG. SANTO. BRAHMACHARYA ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A AHIMSA SANTOSHA ISHVARA BRAHMACHARYA SVADH. SVADHYAYA ASTEYA APARIG. SANTO.
	2	EMPOWERED	Empowered Safe Secure Confident Proud Open	Egenkrafts- mobilisert Trygg Sikker Selvsikker Stolt Åpen	APARIGRAHA SVADHY. ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A SVADHYAYA SAYTA SAYTA SVADHYAYA
	3	LIVELY	Enthusiastic Excited Attentive Eager Invigorated Passionate Rejuvenated Lusty Sensual	Entusiastisk Begeistret Oppmerksom Ivrig Oppfrisket Lidenskapelig Forfrisket Lystig Sensuell	TAPAS TAPAS ASTEYA SAUCHA TAPAS SAUCHA TAPAS BRAHMACHARYA TAPAS BRAHMACHARYA
	4	HOPEFUL	Optimistic Hopeful Expectant Trusting	Optimistisk Håpefull Forventningsfull Tillitsfull	TAPAS TAPAS SAYTA ASTEYA SANTO.
	5	AFFECTIONATE	Compassionate Friendly Open hearted Sympathetic Warm Touched Tender	Medfølende Vennlig Åpenhjerta Sympatisk Varm Rørt Øm	AHIMSA AHIMSA SAYTA AHIMSA ISHVARA SAYTA

			Loving	Kjærlig	ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A AHIMSA
	6	GRATITUDE	Grateful <i>Humble</i>	Takknemlig <i>Ydmyk</i>	ASTEYA SAYTA
	7	INSPIRED	Amazed Awed Fascination Admiration Enchanted Interested Absorbed	Forbløffet Underfull Fascinert Beundrende Fortryllet Interessert Oppslukt	ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A TAPAS TAPAS SVADHYAYA TAPAS SVADHYAYA
	8	JOYFUL	Amused Delighted Happy Blessed Joyful Blissful Elated Extatic	Moret Henført Lykkelig Velsignet Glad Salig Opprømt Ekstatisk	ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A ASTEYA ISHVARA ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A ISHVARAPRANIDHAN A
NEGATIVE	9	ANGER	Irritated Furious Angry	Irritert Rasende Sint	
	10	AVERSION	Contempt Appalled Dislike Hate Disgust	Forakt Forferdet Motvilje Hat Avsky	
	11	CONFUSION	Confused Surprised Dumbfound Ambivalent Puzzled	Forvirret OVERRASKET Målløs Ambivalent Råd vill	
	12	DISCONNECTI ON	Bored Disconnected Indifferent Alienated Distant Apathetic Lonely Scatterbrained	Kjeder meg Frakoblet Likegyldig Fremmedgjort Fjern Apatisk Ensom Virrete	
	13	<i>RESTLESS</i>	Restless Disappointment Dissatisfaction	Rastløs Skuffet Misfornøyd	

		Disturbed Uncomfortable Troubled Envious Jealous <i>Longing</i>	Forstyrret Ukomfortabel Uroet Misunnelig Sjalu <i>Lengtende</i>
14	FEAR	Fearful Afraid <i>Hopeless</i> Desperation Mistrustful Panicked Worried	Engstelig Redd <i>Håpløs</i> Desperat Mistroende Panisk Bekymret
15	SADNESS	Sad Unhappy Melancholy Disheartened Grief <i>Nostalgic</i>	Trist Ulykkelig Melankolsk Motløs Sorgfull <i>Nostalgisk</i>
16	SELF- CONSCIOUS	<i>Vulnerable</i> <i>Fragile</i> Insecure <i>Sensitive</i> Ashamed Embarrassed Guilty	Sårbar Skjør Usikker Sensitiv Skamfull Flau Skyldtunget
17	TENSITY	Tense Anxious Nervous Stressed Overwhelmed Worn out Depleted	Anspent Urolig Nervøs Stresset Overveldet Utlitt Utarmet

APPENDIX 7

Overview of each “types” of yoga practitioners, linked up to theories on motivation and various “statements” in the survey. *NB: Some of the statements for the “lifestyle yogi” were lost in the process and unfortunately not included in the final survey.

MAIN YOGA «TYPES»	REASONS FOR PRACTICING YOGA	MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS	NEEDS	“Statements” related to each section	UTSAGN TIL SPØRREUNDERSØKELSE N (Jeg praktiserer yoga fordi..)
THE ACHIEVEMENT YOGI					
covers yoga practitioners that focuses on progression and optimization of bodily mastery and bodily challenges, in regards to both asanas, health and bodily appearance and beauty.	Achievement	ACHIEVEMENT/ PRESTATION REWARDS / CONSEQUENCE S	Achievement	("Jeg ønsker å oppnå [triumf, belønning, milepæl, offentlig anerkjennelse] , så jeg skal gjøre/gjør [handling]")	... jeg foretrekker å fokusere på utfallet av det jeg gjør Jeg liker å dytte mine fysiske grenser ... jeg holder kroppen i form ... kroppen min ser bra ut pga det
	Health and well-being				
	Exercise				
THE LIFESTYLE YOGI					
is known by the fact that yoga plays an important role in their lives, and they see yoga and the philosophy as an integrated part of their identity. most likely to place some 'spiritual' value to the practice	Spiritual	GROWTH REWARDS / CONSEQUENCE S	Growth Learning	("Jeg ønsker å oppleve at jeg kontinuerlig går framover, utvikler og forbedrer meg, så jeg skal gjøre/gjør [handling]")	...jeg liker å oppleve at jeg lærer og forstår nye ting ... jeg foretrekker å fokusere på prosessen i det jeg gjør ... jeg «får noe mer» utav det enn bare fysisk aktivitet ...jeg roer ned og får tid til refleksjon ... jeg føler meg i kontakt med meg selv
	Therapeutics - psychological + emotional				
	Health and well-being				
				("Jeg ønsker å få [spesifikk belønning], så jeg skal gjøre/gjør [handling]")	... jeg får mental og emosjonell klarhet ...jeg føler meg tilstede når jeg gjør det

("Jeg ønsker å unngå [dårlig ting], så jeg skal gjøre/gjør [handling]")

THE SOCIAL YOGI

see yoga as a part of their social life, meaning that the interaction with the group before, during and after practice is a motivational factor for these yogis.

Social
Health and well-being
Exercise

SOCIAL FACTORS
REWARDS / CONSEQUENCES

Affiliation

("Jeg ønsker å føle tilhørighet, som om jeg er en del av en gruppe eller et samfunn eller et sted, så jeg skal gjøre/gjør [handling]")

... jeg liker miljøet og folkene jeg møter
 ... jeg får vært med likesinnede
 ... jeg føler meg inkludert
 ... jeg ser opp til noen som driver med yoga, og har lyst til å bli mer som de
 ... jeg ser fram til tiden før og etter yogaklassen når jeg kan slå av en prat
 ... jeg får gjort noe sammen med venner/familie-medlemmer
 ... fordi det er populært og lett tilgjengelig

("Jeg ønsker å få [spesifikk belønning], så jeg skal gjøre/gjør [handling]")

("Jeg ønsker å unngå [dårlig ting], så jeg skal gjøre/gjør [handling]")

115	2	4	5	5	1	3	2	3	1	8	11	2	0	2	2	1+4+7+8+16+8+16	1+7+6	4+5	0	0	0	0
116	2	2	5	2	2	2	3	2+2+4	6+9+8	7	2	1	0	3	3	16+4+10+5+13+15+17	10	0	0	0	0	
117	2	4	4	3	2	1	3	3	1	6	11	2	8	0	4	2+16+3+15+3	4+1	0	0	2	0	
118	2	3	4	1	2	2	2	3	4	6	11	1	1	12	1	1+14+16+10+11+5+15+13	1+4	4	0	4x	x	
119	2	4	4	3	1	2	2	3	1	11	6	1	8+7	0	2	1+16+10+11+5+15+13	4	3	0	0	13+4+8+1	
120	2	4	4	3	1	2	2	3+7+1	10+11	6	1	1	2	10+12	3	1+16+10+11+5+15+13	4	4	0	0	0	
121	2	3	5	15	1	3	2	3	2	11	2+6	1	1+8	5+10	2	16+11+5+13+15	4	3	0	0	9	
122	1	3	5	<1	2	2	1	3	2	6	2	1	2	0	4	16+11+5+13+15	x	4	4	0	0	
123	2	3	5	6	1	3	2	2+1+6e4+8	8+4+6	6x	1	8	2	2	16+11+5+13+15	6+11+1	6	0	0	0	0	
124	2	3	5	12x	1	3	3	2+7+10	10+9+4	1+2+3	1	7	12	2	1+16+10+11+5+13+15	4+3	6	4	10	3	6x	
125	2	3	3	15	1	3	1	2+8+1	3+2	2	1	1	1	13	3	16+11+5	11	1	0	0	0	
126	2	4	5	4	1	2	2	2+2+8	8+12	1+6	1	3+2	10+5	2	1+10+17	4	4	0	0	0	0	
127	2	3	5	4	2	1	2	1+4+7	8	7	2	9	0	5	5+13+17	4	4	0	0	0	0	
128	2	3	4	7	1	3	2	3+1+8+7	5+10	1+2+6	1	6	8	2	1+16+10+11+5+13+15	8+6	1	0	0	0	0	
129	2	2	5	2x	2	2	2	1+2+7+6	8+11	10	1	1+2	2	3	16+10+11+5+13+15	1	0	0	0	0	0	
130	2	3	5	6	2	2	2	2+2+7+8	8+11	10	1	1+2	2	3	16+10+11+5+13+15	4	4	0	0	0	0	
131	2	3	5	16x	2	1	2	3+9+1+5	8+11	6	1	7	2+3+10	2	2	14+16+11+15+17	4+8+4	0	2+4	1+6	4	
132	1	3	3	<1	2	3	1	3	1	10	6	2	2	0	3	7+16+10+12+13+15+17	2	5	0	7	8	
133	2	2	5	1	1	3	1	2+8+1+4+3+7	6+8+2+10	1	1	1	5	1	16+4+11+6+15	4	8	0	0	0	0	
134	2	4	5	6x	1	3	3	2+1+2+4	9+8+11	7+6	1	6+7	10	2	11+5+13	6+5+4	0	0	0	0	0	
135	2	3	5	1	2	2	2	1	3	4	10	1x	x	2	16+10+13+15+17	1	2	1x	0	0	0	
136	2	2	5	3	2	2	2	3+3+1+2+6	5+11+4	6	1	7+5	8	2	1+14+2+8+16+10+5+15+17	4	4	0	0	0	0	
137	2	2	4	5x	1	2	2	2+2+1+3	6+8	6	1	2+7+6	2+7	1	14+16+10+11+5+13+15	1x	0	0	0	0	0	
138	2	3	4	2	1	3	3	2x	x	1	7	6+1+12	4+2	1	10+11+6+3	4	4	0	0	0	0	
139	2	4	4	10	2	2	2	1+1+4+7	13	11	2	11	0	3	16+5+13+15+17	4	4	0	0	0	0	
140	2	3	5	5	2	1	3	3+7+4+2	8+10	1+2	2	9	0	4	16+5+13+15	6+3+1	5	0	0	0	0	
141	2	4	5	8	1	3	1	3+1+2+3+7	11	2+6	1	7+8+1	8+5	2	1+16+10+11+5+13+15	4+11	4+5	0	0	0	0	
142	1	3	4	1	2	2	2	1	2	4	6+5	1	2+8	0	2	5+15+3	9	0	0	0	0	
143	1	3	5	3	2	2	2	1+2+4+5	9	7	2	8+1	0	4	1+16+11+13+17	1	7	5	0	0	0	
144	2	3	4	4	1	3	3	1+2+2+4	1x	2+3+6+7	1	1+8	7+12	1	16+10+11+5+13+15+17	4	4	0	0	0	0	
145	2	3	5	15	1	2	2	3+7+8+4+10+9	7+11+8	11	or 8	2	12	and 1	1	2	14+2+16+9+11+12	4	4	0	0	0
146	2	3	5	2	2	1	3	3+1+5+6	8	7x	2	2	11	0	3	7+16+10+11+13+17	4+6	5	0	0	0	
147	2	2	4	5	2	1	3	3+4+5+3+1+6+7	6+11+7+3	8	1	3+2	2+5	2	16+5+15	4+6+8	4	0	0	0	0	
148	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	3+7+1+2	7	or 12	6	1	5	10+6	2	16+10+5+15+17	5+6	6	0	0	0	
149	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	1+1+2+3	1+3+4	1	1	1	1	2	2	1+7+16+10+11+5+15+17	1+2	3+4	0	0	0	
150	1	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	3+4+1	5	6	1	1	5	2	1+5+13+14+15+16	1+3	3	0	0	0	
151	1	4	4	1	2	2	2	3+1+4+6	8+7	11	2	11	0	5	10+11+12+13+15+16+17	6+1	0	0	0	0	0	
152	2	4	5	1	2	3	1	3+1+2	3	3+2	6	1	2	2	2	11+13+15	4	or 11	5	0	0	0
153	2	3	5	3	2	1	5	1+4+7+5	13+4	11	2	8	0	2	5+15+16	1+6	7+8	0	0	0	0	
154	2	2	4	<1	2	1	2	1+1+7+5	13	6+7	1	1	10	2	1+5+6+7+8+10+11+13+15+16	1	4	0	0	0	0	
155	2	2	5	5x	2	1	1	1+1+4+5	4	2	1	2+5+7	8	5	2	1+5+6+7+8+10+11+16	4	5	0	0	0	0
156	2	4	5	5	1	2	1	1+8+3	6+4	2+7	x	1	8	5	2	1+2+5+11+13+16+17	2+3+1	3	0	0	0	
157	2	2	5	6	2	2	1	3+4+6+3+2+8	6+8	8	1	2+3	5+8	0	1	1+2+5+10+11+13+16	1+4	4	0	0	0	0
158	2	2	5	8x	2	1	3	1+1+7	4	7	2	1+11	0	5	11+16+17	11+6	0	3x	x	x	x	
159	2	4	5	8x	2	1	2	3+1+2+7+6+8	12+8	7	3	2	2	2	2	15+16+17	1+4	x	x	x	x	
160	2	2	4	10x	2	2	2	3+7+3+2+10	2+8+12+3	5+9	2	12	or 11	0	2	2+5+7+10+11+15+16+17	1	4	0	0	0	0
161	2	4	4	18	1	2	2	3+1+7	2	2	2	1	7	2	2	1+2+15	2	3	0	0	0	0
162	2	5	5	19	2	2	2	3+8+1+3	6+8	1+6	1	1+4+3	2+5	3	1+5+10+11+15+16	4	4	0	0	0	0	
163	2	3	5	10x	1	2	2	2+1+8+4	3+11	2+3+6	1	1+2+8	0	2	1+5+10+13+15	4+1+3	5	0	0	0	0	
164	2	4	3	2	2	1	3	3+5+10+7	8+9	6	1	2+3	5	2	5+12+16	4	0	0	0	0	0	
165	2	1	1	3x	2	1	4	1+1+2	0	6+7	1x	0	0	2	1+5+10+15+16	4	x	0	0	0	0	
166	2	2	5	4	2	2	2	3+1+2+8	6+9+12	6	1	1+2+3+7	8	1	1+5+7+10+14+15+16	4+3+7	0	0	0	0	0	
167	2	2	4	2	2	1	4	1+4+5	0	6	0	2	2	2	2+3+4+5+10+11+13+15+16	2	4	0	0	0	0	
168	2	2	5	7x	1	2	2	2	1	8+11	8	1	1+2	x	2							
169	2	4	5	20	2	2	3	3+1+4+7	8+11	11	2	x	0	5								
170	2	3	5	10	2	1	3	2+4+1+7	4+11	11	2	x	0	5								
171	2	3	5	<1	2	2	3	3+1+3+4+10+2	8	1	1	1	3	12+7	1	16+10+11+5+17	7+3	4	0	0	0	0
172	2	2	4	8x	2	2	3	3	3	3	6	1	x	2	3							
173	2	3	5	10	1	2	2	2+4+1+10	4+6	4	6	1	x	2	3							
174	2	3	4	7x	1	2	5	2+2+4+8	8+11	6x	1	6	or 1	10	3							
175	1	4	4	8x	2	1	1	1+4+7	x	1	2	9	0	5								
176	2	4	5	20x	2	2	1	1+4+2+5+8	13+9	10	1+6	2	2	1								
177	2	3	5	6	2	2	3	3+1+2	3	3+2	2	3	2	1								
178	2	3	4	2	1	3	2	3+1+3+8	1+2+4+6	or 11	5+3	1	1+7	10+2+7+6	1							
179	2	3	5	20	2	3	2	2+8+1	5+3	6	1	1+7	10+2+7+6	1								
180	2	2	3	11x	2	2	2	2+1+3+2	1+3	1+4+11												
181	2	3	5	12	2	2	2	3	1+4+11													
182	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	1+1+10+5	13	6	1	1	1									
183	2	3	4	7	1	2	1	2+1+2+8	11+10+4	2+6	1	1+8	1									
184	2	4	8	3x	1	2	4	3+7+6	11	2	2	3	3									
185	2	2	4	10x	1	3	1	3+7+8	3+5	4+6	1	1	1									
186	2	4	3	10	1	3	2	2+8+1+2	2	1+3	1	6+2+3	8									
187	2	4	3	10	1	3	3	2+1+6+10	8	7	2	9										
188	2	3	4	10	1	2	2	3+10+6	or 4	1	6	1	2	or 3								
189	2	3	5	1	2	2	2	3	1	6	6	1	2	or 3								
190	2	3	5	1	2	2	2	3+1+2	6+7+12+4+5	1	1+1+6											
191	2	4	3	11	1	2	2	3	1	1	1+1+6											
192	2	2	4	3	2	2	3	3+1+2	12+8+11	2+6	1	1+7	2+10	3	16+10+11+5+15	4+8						
193	2	3	5	13	1	2	3	2+1+2	7x	1+6	1	3	6	3								

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SAMMENDRAG

Denne oppgaven tar for seg det dynamiske forholdet mellom bevegelse, følelser og motivasjon hos praktiserende av yoga i Norge i dag. Teoriene til grunne for oppgaven er alle basert i grunntanken om «embodiment», eller kroppsliggjøring, det vil si at kropp og sinn ikke kan skilles i to ulike deler, og at man er avhengig av kroppen og dens funksjoner for å oppleve og tolke verden man samhandler med. Hovedlitteraturen og forskningen benyttet i dette prosjektet spenner bredt, mellom kognitiv kroppsliggjort forskning, kognitiv fenomenologi, forskning på emosjoner, ritualer, alternativ religiøsitet og yoga, og flere av disse går over i hverandre. Få har derimot satt alle disse feltene sammen, med basis i kognitiv kroppsliggjøring. Jeg vektlegger en teori framsatt av Mellor og Shilling, kalt «body pedagogics», eller kropps-pedagogikk, som foreslår et rammeverk for hvordan man kan tolke religiøst liv eller praksis gjennom kroppsliggjort religiøs kunnskap ved å se nærmere på hvordan de praktiserende tolker opplevelsene sine i lys av konteksten, og også de kroppsliggjorte utfallene av de ontologiske egenskapene i den spesifikke praksisen – i dette tilfellet; yoga.

I denne oppgaven tar jeg utgangspunkt i at yoga fungerer som et kroppsliggjort ritual, og at det yoga-pedagogiske fokuset på oppmerksomt nærvær i kroppen gjennom yogapraksisen fasiliteter og forsterker opplevelsene og følelsene hos de praktiserende. Fordi den moderne yogaens kropps-pedagogikk synes å vektlegge og verdsette emosjoner og det å jobbe seg gjennom disse, som en del av yogapraksis og selvutvikling, er det også interessant å spore om denne verdien viser seg hos de praktiserende. Fokuset ligger på de praktiserende som verdsetter opplevelsene og følelsene de har eller får gjennom praksisen som noe «satt til side som spesielt» fra hverdagslige aktiviteter, og at de tillegger denne «spesiellheten» en religiøs eller spirituell dimensjon.

Med vektlegging av hva de praktiserende opplever, nærmere bestemt, føler, mens de gjør yoga har jeg utført en spørreundersøkelse som kartlegger både kvantitative og kvalitative aspekter hos over 200 yogapraktiserende i Norge i dag. Utfallet av en kropps-pedagogikk vil vise seg i både det individuelle kropps-skjemaet og væremåtene til de praktiserende, noe som er vanskelig å komme til i en spørreundersøkelse, dermed er hovedfokuset på opplevelsene og følelsene de praktiserende selv rapporterer. Selv-rapportering i etterkant av opplevelsen avdekker også i større grad hva de verdsetter, og også hva som motiverer dem til å fortsette å praktisere yoga.

Det brede spekteret av ulike yogastiler og tradisjoner, samt en rekke kontekstuelle, sekulære påvirkningsfaktorer gjør det vanskelig å definere en tydelig kropps-pedagogikk for yogapraktiserende i Norge, og dermed er også analysen av datamaterialet utfordrende. Mange som har svart på spørreundersøkelsen vektlegger også dette aspektet selv – opplevelsen deres «kommer an på» både egen dagsform, evne til fokus, men også yogastil, lærer og sted. I tillegg viser resultatene av metoden en rekke interessante faktorer, som blant annet hvordan moderne praktiserende av yoga tolker spiritualitet, basisen for motivasjon til praksis, hvilke behov de praktiserende ønsker å dekke med praksis, og hvilke emosjoner og stemninger som er mest utbredt i yogapraksisen. Mange av de som har svart på spørreundersøkelsen omtaler yoga som et verktøy, eller en verktøykasse som gjør en i bedre stand til å komme i kontakt med seg selv eller verden, eller til og med «noe større», og også for å bearbeide følelser og opplevelser. Om dette stammer fra yogaens kropps-pedagogikk, forventninger i miljøet eller et ønske om et «frirom» i hverdagen basert i samfunnets fokus på å stresse ned, er vanskelig å si kun med grunnlag i denne spørreundersøkelsen.