

🌟 Yoga Wheel Fundamentals: A 2-Hour Workshop for Backbends, Core, Hamstring Elongation & Relaxation

Led by: Santina Giardina-Chard

Inspired by the Santi Yoga Wheel Fundamental Series

Level: Open to all levels

✨ Workshop Intention

This workshop invites you to explore the yoga wheel as a somatic support tool to enhance spinal mobility, awaken the core, release the hamstrings, and experience deep relaxation. The practice is slow, breath-centered, and rooted in curiosity—designed to bring you back to your center.

◆ Workshop Flow

Arrival & Grounding

We begin by landing in the space with breath awareness and a somatic body scan. You'll be introduced to the yoga wheel and how we'll be using it to support exploration, release, and strength.

Awaken the Spine & Hamstrings

Starting with gentle movement, we'll mobilize the upper spine and awaken the back body. The wheel helps access the thoracic spine with rocking motions and supported heart openers. From there, we'll begin to elongate the hamstrings through wheel-supported forward folds and dynamic lengthening drills. This opens up space in the posterior chain while maintaining softness.

Backbend Exploration

Through passive and active poses, we'll explore healthy backbending with the wheel's support. Emphasis will be on thoracic mobility and heart-opening without overcompressing the lower back. Poses will be deeply supported and breath-led, inviting expansion rather than force.

Core Activation & Upper Body Strength

We'll transition into slow, targeted core engagement with wheel-supported drills. These movements build strength and isolation in the abdominal muscles and arms—building foundational stability for arm balances and inversions. The wheel helps refine control and highlight often dormant areas of the core.

Relaxation, Balance & Breath Expansion

We shift into calming movements and breath-led stillness. Gentle twists, hip openers, and supported folds allow the nervous system to settle. With the help of the wheel, we'll create more space for breath and deeper body awareness—balancing both the inner and outer self.

Integration & Stillness

Closing in supported savasana, you'll rest with the wheel cradling key parts of the body. A short guided meditation helps you integrate the physical, emotional, and energetic shifts of the practice—leaving you centered and grounded.

What to Bring

- Yoga wheel (a few extras available)
- Mat
- Blanket or cushion
- Water bottle
- Journal (optional)

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Led by: [Instructor Name]

Inspired by the Santi Yoga Wheel Fundamental Series

Duration: 2 Hours

Level: Open to all levels

✨ Workshop Intention

This workshop invites participants to explore the yoga wheel as a somatic support tool to enhance spinal flexibility, awaken core awareness, lengthen the hamstrings, and deeply relax the nervous system. All movement is approached with slowness, breath, and curiosity.

◆ Structure Breakdown

🕒 Arrival & Grounding

- Set the tone with a short intro: purpose of the wheel, safety, and approach (gentle, intuitive, inquisitive).
- Seated centering practice: awareness of the breath + intention setting.
- Somatic awareness scan (seated or supine with the wheel under knees or feet).


🕒 Awaken the Spine & Hamstrings

- Supine supported heart opener: lying on the wheel, arms wide, breath-focused.
- Gentle rocking with the wheel under the thoracic spine to hydrate the fascia.
- Hamstring elongation with the wheel under the arch of one foot — slow, mindful leg extensions while supine.
- Seated forward folds using the wheel for leverage and support to lengthen the posterior chain.
- Thread-the-needle and dynamic cat-cow variations to wake up the back body and improve mobility.

🕒 Backbend Exploration (Passive & Active)


- Sphinx with the wheel under the sternum (passive)

- Supported puppy pose: hands on wheel, hips over knees, sink through shoulders.
- Low lunge with hamstring stretch transitions: wheel under front heel or back thigh.
- Wheel-assisted cobra & bow pose preps (engaging back body with breath)

 **Focus:** Thoracic lift, heart-opening, and creating space along the front body while supporting length in the hamstrings and hip flexors.


Core Activation & Upper Body Strength

- Plank variations with shins or feet on the wheel.
- Pike tucks (slow & intentional): from downward dog into core compression.
- Seated boat pose with feet on wheel (rolling in/out for dynamic control).
- Arm strength drills: chaturanga preps with wheel rolling under hands.

 **Focus:** Centerline awareness, core strength, and isolating the muscles that support lifts and arm balances.

Relaxation & Breath-Centered Movement

- Supine twists with the wheel under knees or mid-back.
- Gentle hip openers and passive hamstring releases with the wheel as support.
- Reclined breathing practice with the wheel placed under the spine to enhance breath expansion.

 **Focus:** Nervous system down-regulation, spaciousness through breath, and full-body softening.

1:45–2:00 | Integration & Stillness

- Supported savasana: wheel under knees or behind heart.
- Guided meditation: “Coming Back to Center” – awareness of body, breath, and balance.
- Closing circle (optional sharing, journaling prompt, or card draw)



What to Bring

- Yoga wheel (a few extras available)
- Yoga mat

- Blanket or cushion for comfort
- Water bottle
- Journal (optional)