

Trauma Sensitive Yoga

(evening group)

With TCTSY- Facilitator Kirsty Lillis
Clinical Psychologist Emily Thomas



An ACC Sensitive Claims funded in-person group for women who are seeking a gentle, body-based approach to reconnect with themselves and assist healing from the impacts of trauma.

It offers a supportive, choice-driven space to explore movement, breath, and grounding at your own pace. Suitable for all fitness levels, no yoga experience needed.

Talk to your Lead Service Provider (therapist) to seek approval from ACC to join.



DATES

8 week course on Wednesday evenings
5:15pm to 6:15pm
14th October to 9th December
(no session on 18th Nov)

LOCATION

Waiuku Community Hall
10 King St, Waiuku
(same building as Waiuku Library)

WHAT TO BRING/WEAR

Wear clothing you feel comfortable in
No special yoga gear is needed
Mats supplied or bring your own

If you have any queries, please contact
Emily: emilythomaspsyc@outlook.com or Kirsty: thequietbodynz@gmail.com

Facilitators



Kirsty is the founder of The Quiet Body, a trauma-informed yoga and somatic movement offering grounded in evidence-informed, trauma-sensitive principles. She is a certified yoga teacher and Trauma Centre Trauma-Sensitive Yoga (TCTSY) facilitator with extensive experience delivering structured, choice-led movement practices that support nervous system regulation and psychological safety. Kirsty has taught yoga professionally for many years and was the founder and head teacher of Yoga Lane Studios in Waiuku, which she owned and operated for five years.



Emily is an ACC registered clinical psychologist with 19 years of experience, dedicated to providing holistic and trauma-sensitive care. Her integrative therapeutic approach weaves together mindfulness, somatic awareness and cognitive-behavioural modalities to support healing from trauma. She has maintained a regular yoga practice since 2010, valuing it as a grounding resource for wellbeing. Emily has also completed the Foundations in Trauma Center Trauma Sensitive Yoga (TCTSY) training, which equips her to offer supportive guidance within Trauma Sensitive Yoga groups.

If you would like to join...

Speak to your ACC therapist to enquire about joining, who will seek approval from ACC. Then, with your permission, they will provide Emily with information to support your enrolment. Emily then will contact you (usually 2 or 3 weeks prior to the group starting) to talk more about what the group will be like and to answer any questions you may have.

You do need to be attending individual therapy with your ACC therapist during this group. This group doesn't affect your available hours with your therapist, as there is a separate allocation of hours for group therapy.

If the timing of this group doesn't suit, we have more Trauma Sensitive Yoga courses running during each school term. There is also a group on Thursday mornings in Pukekohe.

Trauma Sensitive Yoga FAQs

What should I bring and what should I wear?

Yoga mats will be provided, but feel free to bring along your own if you would like to. We also have blankets. You're welcome to bring other items to help you feel more comfortable e.g. a cushion or sensory item. You might like to bring along a bottle of water and wear something that is comfortable for you to sit and move in.

When should I arrive?

If you'd like, you can arrive up to 10 minutes before class starts so you have time to settle into the space. Or a couple of minutes before class starts is fine.

Do I need experience doing yoga?

No prior yoga experience is necessary. The type of yoga in these classes is very accessible and lots of options are offered. The focus of the yoga shapes is on how something feels in our body rather than "perfecting" a certain shape so there is no right or wrong way to practice. The practice is invitational - you will be prompted to notice your experiences and to modify the practice based on that (so taking a more intense version if you have the energy for it and would like to, or a more restorative version if you feel a need or desire to recharge).

What about my physical injuries/restrictions?

Modifications can be made to all of the body shapes to accommodate any physical restrictions or needs. Kirsty, the yoga teacher, will offer various options for how each shape might be done, and you are always welcome to do what works best for your body, for example, resting or making a different shape.

Will I have to do breathing exercises?

No. There are no specific breathing exercises taught in this class. You are sometimes invited to notice your breath if you would like to and perhaps link your breath with your movement if you wish. You are welcome to keep your attention on things other than your breath if you prefer.

Are there any physical assists or touching in these classes?

No, we don't offer any physical assists with the yoga shapes or touch your body at all. Kirsty, the yoga teacher, will stay on her mat for the entirety of the class. Emily, the support person, may need to leave her mat to offer support to someone or to adjust a light or blind for instance, and in that case, she will let everyone know what is happening, so it doesn't catch anyone by surprise. Everyone's practice space is respected, even in the way the mats are set up so there is enough space for people to move without touching anyone else.

Trauma Sensitive Yoga FAQs

Will I have to share anything with the class?

No, we do not discuss any stories or experiences of trauma in this class. This is very important so that the class remains a safe space for everyone attending.

Is it a private space?

Yes, we do the yoga in a room that no-one else can see into, and we will close the door during the class.

We also ask that you don't let anyone else know who else is in the group, as it is important to keep this information private. The only thing shared with other people in the class is your first name.

What if I feel triggered in class?

You might have some strategies that often work well for you, or ones that you have tried in therapy. You always have the option to stop the movement or come out of yoga shape you are in and take some time to focus on something different if that might be helpful. You might try to direct your attention back to the present moment using the prompts we have in our yoga practice (for example, bodily sensations from yoga shapes, the feeling of the ground under us, the sounds around us or the movement of your belly as you breathe). You can ask to speak with Emily at any time for assistance.

Can I leave the room if I have to?

Yes. If you feel like you need a break from what we are doing, or if you need to leave the room at any point, you are welcome to do what you need. There is a room just outside the yoga space to sit and take a few moments if you need. Emily would check in with you to see what might be helpful for you.

Can I see what it's like before I come along?

You are welcome to check out a recording of a sample TSY practice by our yoga facilitator Kirsty, at this link:

<https://www.thequietbody.co.nz/trauma-sensitive-yoga>
(the video is right at the bottom of the page)



TSY Evening Group, Franklin (in-person): Information for Lead Providers

This programme is designed to provide survivors of sexual violence with a safe, structured, and trauma-sensitive environment in which to explore body-based healing. The objectives are to:

- **Enhance safety and choice:** Establish a consistent, supportive environment where participants retain agency over their participation and movement.
- **Develop interoceptive awareness:** Support survivors in reconnecting with internal body sensations, fostering a sense of presence and grounding.
- **Strengthen self-regulation skills** by increasing noticing of bodily sensations signalling emotions.
- **Promote affect and sensory modulation:** Encourage gentle exploration of emotional and sensory experiences in a non-threatening way.
- **Foster empowerment and autonomy:** Reinforce participants' capacity to make choices, set boundaries, and experience control in their bodies.
- **Complement psychotherapy:** Offer a body-based adjunct to talk therapy, reducing risk of re-traumatisation and supporting holistic recovery.
- **Build community and relational safety:** Create a group setting that reduces isolation and supports survivors through shared, non-verbal healing practices.

Who is the group suitable for?

Women clients, aged 17 years and up who have an accepted Sensitive Claim with ACC. To ensure safety of all group members, this group is not suitable for clients who have significant safety concerns, such as suicidality, aggression towards others, or active psychosis. Participants must not be under the influence of substances during the sessions.

This group runs on a Wednesday evening in Waiuku.



Purchase Order Request

To arrange approval for the group, please email the client's recovery partner/team as soon as possible. You will need to request approval for:

Group name: Trauma Sensitive Yoga Evening Group, Franklin (in-person)

Timeframe: 25th July to 20th April 2027

Lead Provider: Emily Thomas, provider ID 21BÜFB.

Supplier ID: G0E391 (Art Therapy Works Ltd)

Hours: 1 hour SCSGTT (triage) and 12 hours SCSGT (includes 8 x 1 hour group sessions, 0.5 hours per session for Q&A + set-up/pack down).

You will need to provide a rationale for group attendance to ACC. Referring to the objectives of this group program listed above may be helpful for this.

Purchase orders must be received by 1st October at the latest for Term 4 group. Please copy sharonyoung@arttherapyworksLtd.com into your PO request email to help us to prepare for the group.

Safety & Effectiveness

To best support client care and safety during the group, we will communicate with lead service providers about any arising safety concerns. We will also liaise with you and the client beforehand to seek information which will assist us to assess readiness and provide a safe experience, and we will provide you with some brief feedback once the group concludes.

Clients will also be offered the opportunity to provide feedback at the end of the group, as well as 3 months afterwards.

Any queries?

Contact lead provider Emily Thomas via email emilythomaspsyc@outlook.com or phone **0221917514** or yoga teacher Kirsty Lillis on thequietbodynz@gmail.com