SOAS BWY Summit Explores Yoga in the Age of Overload

Wednesday 10 September, 2025

The British Wheel of Yoga (BWY) and SOAS Centre of Yoga Studies are co-hosting a summit exploring how yoga and ayurveda can address the pressures of modern life.

‘Yoga in the Age of Overload’ takes place on Saturday 1 November, both online and at the SOAS Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS University of London. The day-long summit brings together scholars and yoga practitioners to discuss the latest research and thinking on these ancient disciplines.

Professor Ulrich Pagel, Chair of SOAS Centre of Yoga Studies, said: "We're asking whether yoga and ayurveda can bring balance in a world drowning in data, where we are hyperconnected yet experiencing an epidemic of loneliness. This summit creates a space for meaningful dialogue between academic research and lived practice, exploring how ancient wisdom traditions can offer practical solutions to contemporary challenges."

Award-winning entrepreneur and author Julia Hobsbawm OBE will open the summit with a keynote on how ‘toxic’ work environments fuel stress in the body. She will explore the latest thinking on the link between workplace culture and physical wellbeing, marking the 10th anniversary of her landmark book: Fully Connected: Social Health in an Age of Overload.

Carefully curated panels feature leading experts, including Dr Theo Wildcroft from the Open University, Amarjeet S Bhamra, lecturer in Indian Traditional Sciences, and Emeritus Professor Dominik Wujastyk, expert in classical Indian society and polity. Dr Finnian Gerety concludes by sharing clinical research on his pioneering MANTRAMS project, demonstrating how mantra practice may support mental health and build emotional resilience.

Practice sessions will be led by experienced BWY tutors Rajesh David and Judy Hirsh Sampath, who will guide participants through sound yoga and therapeutic yoga practices specifically designed to counteract the effects of digital overwhelm and restore inner balance.

Diana O'Reilly, Chair of BWY, said: "We're thrilled to be collaborating with SOAS again. What's fascinating is seeing how modern research is validating what yoga practitioners have known for centuries. All the speakers are bringing evidence-based insights that show how these ancient practices can offer real, measurable benefits for people struggling with stress and overwhelm today."

Attendees can join online or in person, with tickets priced at £75 (in-person) and £45 (online).

For details and to secure your spot, please visit our website. New visitors will need to register for a Free User account here.

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About BWY

The British Wheel of Yoga (BWY) is committed to sharing yoga’s transformative power and rich heritage through events and education. Guided by yoga’s principles and traditions, BWY’s mission is to enrich lives through yoga, increasing accessibility and inclusivity. Established as a registered charity in 1965 and recognised as the National Governing Body for Yoga by Sport England and Sport Wales, BWY serves more than 5000 members and is supported by a volunteer network and a small central team.

About SOAS

SOAS University of London is the world’s university. At SOAS, we use our expertise in Africa, Asia and the Middle East as a lens through which to interrogate the planetary questions of our time. We challenge perspectives, broach debate, and empower our students to question the global status quo and find solutions to the issues facing the world today. Our programmes are taught by respected international academics with inter-disciplinary expertise who are engaged in fieldwork and research that influences governments, industries and communities across the world. The SOAS Centre of Yoga Studies (CYS) is globally recognised as the most important institutional hub for the fast-growing field of Yoga Studies and is home to the uniquely specialised MA in Yoga Studies.

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