

Matrika Prenatal Yoga Teacher Training and Certification INFORMATION PACKAGE



Lead Trainer:

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Matrika Prenatal Training Focus and Philosophy

This teacher training program reflects on Sharon's dedication to the academic study of cultural anthropology and exploring the experience of reproductive health, pregnancy, birth, and motherhood through the lens of culture and the study of science. Sharon also brings a significant academic background in East Asian religion and philosophy and anthropological theory. The program offers an emphasis on meditation and the spiritual aspects of practice including the introduction of Tibetan Buddhist subtle body anatomy and techniques for working with the subtle bodies of woman, embryo, and fetus. Matrika Prenatal Yoga Teacher Training program graduates will be able to design, practice, and teach a spectrum of various levels of yoga and meditation classes including asana, pranayama, meditation, chanting, and mindful movement. We draw upon Chinese and Tibetan energetic body anatomy, elements and light of the subtle body, classical Buddhist philosophical and instructional texts, and apply these to the physical postures (asana) and breathing practices (pranayama) of yoga.



This is a self-guided online training program based on my 20-years of experience teaching prenatal yoga, training yoga teachers, and being a birth and postpartum doula. The training requires significant dedication to completing assigned readings, participating in online discussions, practice, and submission of written work. You can start at any time and take up to six-months to finish. There are 25 CEU credits available to Yoga Alliance registered teachers.

Not only is being a prenatal yoga specialist a rewarding career, but considering the fact that over 80% of American yoga practitioners are women, it is imperative that all yoga instructors explore ways to support optimal reproductive health for all their students. The skills you learn in this training program will inform all your teaching and the program itself is rigorous and demands personal and professional transformation.

What Makes Matrika Prenatal Yoga Special?

- Emphasis on Tantric subtle body anatomy
- Focus on how culture and reproductive politics impact fertility and pregnancy
- Learn how to support optimum fertility with yoga
- Use of Buddhist philosophy applied to teaching prenatal yoga
- Learn how to teach visualization and meditation specific to pregnancy
- Includes the use of yoga and meditation to prepare for labor and birth
- Postpartum care and Mom and Baby Yoga

How Long is the Program?

Work at your own pace! This amazing online training offers complete flexibility and personalized instruction through three private mentoring sessions (included in your tuition). Distance learning is ideal for busy professionals trying to juggle career and family while also moving in the direction of your dreams. Perfect for expats or English speakers all over the world who do not have access to a training school, but wish to work towards their certification while traveling or living abroad. The training is designed to take around 100-hours to complete and students generally finish within 4-5 months, but you have 6-months of enrollment in the course with your tuition payment. All students are eligible for a single, one-year extension, for an additional payment of \$100.

Required Textbooks

These are the books that are required to fully participate. The cost of obtaining these books is not included in your tuition. The book “Easy Exercises for Pregnancy” by Janet Balaskas keeps going in and out of print and can be more difficult to find than the other books on this list. If you have trouble getting any of the required textbooks, please let me know and I can suggest alternatives, or we can figure something out. In general, these books seem to cost approximately \$80 USD to buy new on Amazon.com, but you can borrow these books from the library or other yoga teachers or buy used for much less.

Faith: Trusting Your Own Deepest Experience. By Sharon Salzberg (2002, Riverhead Books)

Yoga for Pregnancy, Birth and Beyond. By Françoise Barbira Freedman (2004, DK)

Bountiful, Beautiful, Blissful. By Gurmukh. (2003, St. Martin’s Press)

Ina May’s Guide to Childbirth. By Ina May Gaskin. (2003, Bantam Books)

Easy Exercises for Pregnancy. By Janet Balaskas. (1997, Frances Lincoln)



Course Curriculum

This intellectual approach to yoga as a science requires self-study and an investigation of the cultural, social and economic values that we hold around fertility, women's health and specifically reproduction so that we can teach from our hearts. Informed by contemporary social theory and medical anthropology, Matrika Prenatal Yoga nourishes and empowers students physically, emotionally and spiritually. This method, philosophy and approach has been refined over almost 20-years by Sharon Fennimore , MA and DONA Trained Birth Doula and enjoyed by thousands of women.

In this distance learning course, you will explore:

- Culture and Reproduction (INCLUDING Yoga for Fertility)
- Yoga During Pregnancy
- Common Pregnancy Complaints
- Teaching Matrika Prenatal Yoga (INCLUDING Tibetan Subtle Body)
- Practice and Professionalization
- Postpartum Continuity and Care (INCLUDING Mom & Baby Yoga)

The online course includes: instructional videos, readings, discussion boards, audio and articles and readings, and three private mentoring sessions with Sharon Fennimore. Interaction and participation in online discussion boards is required and we all learn from one another. Due to the nature of the course, your fellow students are located all around the world! In this way, we all share diverse practices, experiences and ideas. All trainees can download the Matrika Prenatal Yoga eBook and audio guide at no additional cost. Most of the practicum assignments require significant practice, planning classes and engaging in your community as you create a supportive professional network that is meaningful to you wherever you are in the world. Therefore, this isn't

just about sitting in front of your computer watching training videos! This is a dynamic, interactive, and experiential program.

Your tuition also includes webinars and events scheduled during your enrollment. Online "events" such as webinars and teleseminars are scheduled regularly. These events can be attended live by joining online or by phone and are recorded and available for you to download and experience at your convenience if you can't make it as scheduled. These events are all included in your course tuition.

TESTIMONIALS

"Sharon of Matrika Yoga offered an insightful, thought provoking training program that far exceeded my expectations. I was challenged to examine my ideas and beliefs about pregnancy and culture, and I now have a much better understanding of pregnancy and the obstacles a pregnant woman faces. I feel that I am now much better equipped to lead prenatal yoga, and I would absolutely recommend this program to anyone looking to learn more about pregnancy or prenatal yoga." ~Nicole

"I maintain nothing but absolute gratitude to you and Matrika Prenatal Yoga. At the outset of training, I yearned for a missing link, in between 42 years of obstetrical nursing experience and 51 of yoga practice! How I found your program and that "link" was nothing short of miraculous! Your insight into the wonder and miracle of birthing is in itself a spiritual gift. Your compassion and love for the pregnant client is apparent as well as intuitive empathy for the pregnant psyche. The reading list was comprehensive and the webinars fun and informative. I respect your genius fully." ~Ambika

"Sharon was an excellent instructor and an amazing sounding board. I loved that she so clearly articulated her personal opinions and beliefs without forcing them on us, her students. This is a unique skill and, from my experience, one many instructors struggle with. Sharon did a great job at sharing information, offering feedback and discussing alternative/contrary thoughts/experiences/beliefs without ever seeming critical or offended. She offered a ton of excellent information and I left the program prepared to lead others through a prenatal sequence." ~Megan

"The training was very in depth and challenging. I feel that after completing the program, I am well prepared for teaching prenatal yoga." ~Kate

"I really enjoyed the option of online learning as well as personal time. Sharon's approach is a flexible alternative for trainees looking to expand their learning while continuing with their responsibilities. The pranayama and meditations were my favorite part." ~Natalie

"Yoga Matrika provides more than just a great educational journey on the basics of Hatha Yoga, Yoga Matrika expands on the typical 200 Hour course offerings by ensuring that the course material is delivered and received in a way that is most beneficial and valuable to the student and the path they are on for their life, teachings, and personal yoga journey. Yoga Matrika shares their unique insights and personal mentorship on every topic and does so for every student so that no one is felt left out or passed over. Yoga Matrika truly helps each student tap into their true potential and identify with what they want to offer the world as a person, a continuing yoga student, and a yoga teacher." ~Brandi

How Does a Distance Training Work?

STEP ONE: Pay Tuition and Enroll

[As soon as you pay tuition](#), you will have immediate access to the online course. The first section of the course is an ORIENTATION and you will be introduced to the main topics in the course, the graduation requirements, the assigned textbooks and start your studies.

Tuition Includes:

- a. 6-months of online course access
- b. 6-months of unlimited email communication and support from the lead trainer
- c. Access to all online events (webinars & teleseminars) scheduled during your enrollment
- d. Three, 30-minute, private mentoring sessions by SKYPE, FaceTime, or WhatsApp
- e. Review of graduation materials or work completed and a CEU certificate, graduation certificate, and certification letter

Tuition does NOT include:

- a. Cost of textbooks
- b. Cost of classes that you observe or take to meet practicum requirements or the cost to rent space for practice teaching.
- c. Additional mentoring sessions with lead trainer
- d. Up to one-year extension (can be purchased for \$100)

STEP TWO: Participation

It is important that all students engage with the course materials and assigned readings through online discussions. There are prompts given for most online discussions, but students are encouraged to ask questions and be active participants and leaders in the conversations. Watch all the videos, use the practice suggestions in your home practice and try out the techniques in your yoga classes.

STEP THREE: Connect with the Trainer

Regularly email your questions or problems in your training to Sharon and stay connected. Your trainer has over twenty-years of experience teaching prenatal yoga and you are encouraged to communicate with Sharon

regularly through the course. Unlimited email communications are included in your tuition. Your tuition also includes THREE, 30-minute mentoring sessions with Sharon that you can schedule at your convenience. We meet using SKYPE, FaceTime, or WhatsApp so we can connect no matter where you are in the world.

STEP FOUR: Make the Program Your Own

You can get "lost in the crowd" at an in-person training and online, but this program inspires you to consider yourself a professional and act like it too. You are given assignments that ask you to be curious about pregnancy and birth, to explore what options are available in your area and to start to create professional support and referral networks. The more time and energy you invest in the practical and professionalization assignments, the more confident you will feel.

If you want more personal guidance or mentoring, Sharon includes three private mentoring sessions that can be scheduled at your convenience. These sessions are not required for graduation, but many students have found that these have helped them complete the training and feel more confident in their ability to teach the highest quality prenatal yoga class possible---even with little experience.

Your lead trainer is Sharon Fennimore, MA, ERYT, RPYT, YACEP.

She designed this course and has almost 20-years of experience teaching prenatal yoga and meditation. Sharon personally responds to all email, conducts all private sessions and facilitates all online discussions. Sharon is a DONA trained birth doula and holds two Masters Degrees in East Asian Studies and Cultural Anthropology. She has worked with thousands of expectant women and their families over the past 15-years and has been offering prenatal yoga teacher training courses for over seven-years.

Graduation

You have six-months from the day of enrollment to complete all the graduation requirements. Once you send in all your required assignments to Sharon for review, she generally takes two-weeks to process your graduation. If you have met all the requirements, Sharon will send to you:

1. A 25 CEU Certificate for Yoga Alliance
2. A graduation certificate from Matrika Prenatal Yoga Teacher Training Program
3. A letter indicating that you are now a certified Matrika Prenatal Yoga Teacher (CMPYT) and can teach Matrika Prenatal Yoga and Matrika Mom and Baby Yoga classes, although you are not required to use these names for your classes. Your certification is permanent and does not require any additional fees, registrations, or work.

Ending the Program Without Graduating

Participants who either choose to stop participating in the course or fail to meet all the requirements for graduation should, within six-months of enrollment, send an email request to Sharon to be considered for full or partial CEU credits based on work completed and time invested in the course. Depending on your circumstances and work completed, Sharon may consider providing a certificate of training. Without meeting all the graduation requirements, you will not have the certification and can't use the Matrika trademark, logo, or name when you teach classes. Certification is ONLY given to participants who meet ALL the graduation requirements. If you choose to not meet these requirements or fail to meet the requirements or need to drop-out of the course for any reason, please contact Sharon to make sure that you do get credits for the work you have completed. REFUNDS ARE NOT PROVIDED FOR ANY REASON. Your failure to participate or graduate or earn certification, for any reason, does not justify a refund. Sharon encourages you to contact her as soon as possible if you have concerns, are unhappy with the course, or are having personal challenges that are preventing you from taking and/or completing the course. Every effort will be made to satisfy your concerns and create a unique plan for you to meet your training goals.

Commonly Asked Questions

When Can I Start the Training?

You can start at ANY time. Enrollment is on a rolling basis. As soon as you pay tuition, you have immediate course access.

Can I finish the program faster than 6-Months?

Sure! Due to the nature of the practicum assignments that are required for graduation, it is impossible to complete the course in less than three-months. But, you work through the course and the requirements at your own pace and can schedule your final exam whenever you wish. Most participants complete the course in five-months.

I'm not an RYT (Registered Yoga Teacher). Can I Still Take This Training?

There are no pre-requisites for this training program. Anyone can enroll. If you aren't a 200-hour (minimum) RYT with Yoga Alliance, the CEU credits won't be of any value to you.

What if I don't like the course? Can I get a refund?

There are no refunds. It is recommended that you sign up for the FREE course [Yoga During Pregnancy](#) just to get a feel for the online course platform. Send an email to Sharon with any questions BEFORE you pay tuition: sharon@yogamatrika.com. Once you are enrolled, if you are unhappy for any reason, Sharon will do everything possible to fix the problems and make an individual plan for you that works for what you need.

Despite being motivated and my best intentions, I need longer than 6-months to complete the course! Can I extend my program?

Yes! Every student has a single opportunity to extend their program by 12-months with a \$100 payment. You don't need to grovel, beg, ask for extension or get permission. There is a section in the online course with a link to make the extension payment, make it, and the program is automatically extended for six-months. Only one extension per student no matter what. No exceptions.

Does this online training allow me to register with Yoga Alliance as a RPYT?

No. Yoga Alliance standards do not permit distance learning for the Prenatal Yoga Specialist designation. Sharon does have a 200-hour Registered Yoga School (RYS) , but this prenatal yoga certification is not associated in any way with that RYS or Yoga Alliance. You will receive a 25 CEU credit certificate for Yoga Alliance continuing education credits upon graduation as Sharon is a YACEP (Yoga Alliance Continuing Education Provider). This is the maximum number of distance learning CEU credits that Yoga Alliance will permit to count towards the required 30 CEU credits to maintain your registration.

Technical Skills Required

In order for you to get the most out of this course, you need a minimum of technical skills including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Being able to sign-in to the online course and create a password
- Ability to follow links, download PDF files, audio files (mp3) and video files (mp4)
- Ability to open WORD files, type into the document and then "save as" a PDF
- Must have consistent internet access
- Must know how to use SKYPE or FaceTime and have the electronic devices and/or accounts set up so you can use this technology for private sessions

Do you wonder if you have these skills or not? Are you concerned about your ability to use your skills in an online course environment? [I suggest that you try out this free course.](#) This course is the EXACT same format (but obviously a very basic content that is different from the training content) as the teacher training and if you learn how to navigate this course, comment, and download the eBook, then you will know for certain that you can take the training course too. If you have a hard time with this free course, then send an email to Sharon and discuss your concerns. Because this course includes personal attention, we can usually find ways to work around any technical concerns, but since there are NO REFUNDS for any reason, let's try to make sure you feel confident about taking an online course BEFORE you enroll. Just send an email to Sharon: sharon@yogamatrika.com

Requirements for GRADUATION

This is a 100-hour distance learning program, that leads to certification in yoga for fertility, pregnancy, birth and the immediate postpartum period. Upon program completion, you will be certified to teach Matrika Prenatal Yoga and any other classes, workshops and retreats of your own design that you create based on this training. You will receive a graduation certificate and personalized letter from Sharon Fennimore explaining the curriculum and your special skills. You are NOT guaranteed certification based on enrollment or tuition payment alone! Choosing this track is a significant commitment to becoming a specialist in working with women and supporting optimal fertility, nourishing pregnant women, their infants and their families and support system. There is significant reading, writing and practicum requirements and certification requires your active participation in the online course discussion boards. The reading level of many of the articles is graduate level academic work.

MATRIKA PRENATAL PROGRAM Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate from the Matrika Prenatal Yoga teacher training program and obtain certification to teach Matrika Prenatal Yoga, within 6-months of enrollment* you need to have:

#1: Actively participated in ALL of the discussion boards of this online course with these minimum guidelines:

- Provide meaningful initiation of a minimum of two discussions for each section of the course.
- Provide meaningful responses to the discussions started by other participants in the course that show you are doing the readings, watching the webinars and engaging deeply with the material for a minimum of three discussions in each section of the course.

Please do not comment just to fulfill this requirement. I'd rather you not participate in a particular discussion if it is not an area of interest to you or you don't genuinely have a question. I will be monitoring all discussion boards and generally just want to see active participation and ongoing dialogue.

#2: Work through the entire course including watching ALL videos: As the course facilitator, I can "see" all of your activity in the online course including what activities you open, the videos you watch and how long you take for each item. We are all professionals and adults and you have made a significant investment in this training. If I have concerns about your participation in the online course, I will send you a private email. It's up to you to take the time and really do the work of the online course.

#3: Send written practicum assignments for review to Sharon: Sharon personally reviews all submitted work and will produce a graduation and CEU certificate within 2-4 weeks from the date of submission. All work must be submitted typed and as PDF files. All assignments are due within 6-months* of date of enrollment in the course.

*Oops! Taking longer than six-months? No problem! You can extend your program another six-months for \$100. Every student is entitled to one extension. You don't have to request it, just make the extension payment in the STUDENT RESOURCES section of the course prior to your 6th month of enrollment and you will automatically be given six-additional months to finish the program.

Is This the Right Program for YOU?

Online learning is not right for everyone. This program works best for 200+ hour trained yoga teachers (or equivalent training and experience) with a minimum of one year of teaching experience who either live outside of the United States and have little to no access to in-person training programs OR teachers who have full time jobs and/or young children that make attending a training program in-person impossible. You must be highly motivated, organized and committed in order to complete this significant online course. There is a lot of college-level reading of articles written for academic audiences, participation and personal and professional practicum work and assignments that must be completed in order for you to graduate. Only students who complete all of the graduation requirements will be given a graduation certificate. Your enrollment does NOT in any way guarantee your graduation or that you will receive a certificate. There are NO REFUNDS for any reason, including if you decide that this course is too much work, fail to do the work or meet the graduation guidelines.

Many people make the mistake of thinking that an online course is "easier" to manage because of the flexibility when, actually, the opposite is generally true. Before you enroll, take a look at your calendar and see if you can block off a minimum of 4-hours a week for the next five-months. If there is a week when, say, your sister is getting married and you know you won't be able to get any work done, or you have weeks when you single-parent because your partner is traveling for work, then you have to find another week when you could put 8-hours into the course. What tends to happen is that many students lose their momentum and then start to procrastinate when they feel that they have been gone from the course for so long that they can't possibly "catch up". If this happens, it's best to send an email to Sharon and make a specific plan for moving forward.

Fine Print

1. No refunds for tuition for online programs, mentoring packages or training retreats for ANY reason. If you are unhappy with the program, at any time, for any reason, please remain calm and contact Sharon as soon as possible (LONG before you get so frustrated you think you are just going to quit!): sharon@yogamatrika.com. Although there aren't any refunds, we can usually work out an alternative plan so you get the training you need at no additional cost. This is a program with a lot of personal attention and all problems are solvable.
2. There is absolutely no guarantee of graduation or certification. Your work and training portfolio will be evaluated and your ability to complete the program and obtain certification documents will be based on the merits of your participation and quality of the portfolio that you submit.
3. Online programs are not for everyone. With flexibility comes extraordinary personal responsibility. You must also have the technical skills to register for the online program, upload documents and submit work as PDF files. Consistent access to a computer and the internet are imperative.
4. You should be able to set aside 15-20 hours for each month of your program for working online, reading, practice, and writing assignments. It is important that you put these hours in your calendar and stick to a schedule. Otherwise, it is unlikely that you will complete your program in time. If something "comes up" then you must re-schedule your time.
5. The cost of required textbooks is not included in any of the above fees. Also, not included are any costs that you might have to take classes for observation or complete any of the practicum assignments.
6. The cost of any additional mentoring hours with Sharon Fennimore beyond the three, 30-minute mentoring sessions included in tuition, are NOT included in any of the above fees. These sessions are entirely optional and not required for graduation, certification, or CEU credits. More private sessions and mentoring time can be arranged for additional fees.
7. These programs provide an esoteric and intellectual approach to the science and practice of yoga. This may challenge your current practice or ideas about yoga and meditation. Personal mentoring sessions are designed to help you incorporate this information into your own practice and unique teaching voice. Be prepared to be challenged and inspired!

