

*Who should teach Yoga in Cuba?  
Only foreign teachers?  
Only one or two Cuban teachers?  
How should Yoga be learned in Cuba?  
From courses downloaded from the internet?  
Yoga from books alone?*

June, 2023

*A school that molds instructors to teach Yoga and contribute to peace and happiness is vitally important for our island! A school that multiplies teachings! Let Yoga be for all!*

- Tamara Venéreo, Yoga Va - La Habana, 2021

# Yoga Va Newsletter

Yoga Va - La Habana has opened its Teacher Training Program under the direction of Jorge Ávila!



## A NAME CHANGE AND NEW EMAIL



Due to concerns over the word “Latino” emphasizing a colonialist view of the descendents of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, we have decided to leave behind this word and now we are simply Yoga Va!!! We continue on our mission of supporting vibrant yoga communities in Cuba and throughout the Americas! Please save our new email in your contacts: \_\_\_\_\_

## **BREAKING NEWS: YOGA VA - LA HABANA HAS OPENED IT'S FIRST EVER TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM IN LA HABANA, CUBA!!!**



Jorge Ávila, the Director of Yoga Va - La Habana, with the help of Mary Paffard and Isabel Estrada-Jamison of Yoga Va - US has been working for years to open a Yoga Va - La Habana teacher training program. This dream has survived the Trump administration, a beaurocratic labrynth of Yoga Alliance applications, the Pandemic and the Biden Administration, and has finally become a reality. We can barely believe it ourselves!

Kudos to Yoga Alliance and Mary Paffard. In recognition of the current economic and health crisis in Cuba, Paffard has persuaded Yoga Alliance to waive Yoga Va -Cuba's Membership fees as well the new school certification fee!

## **MEET YOGA VA - LA HABANA'S TEACHER TRAINING STAFF AND STUDENTS**



Jorge Ávila along with members of Yoga Va - La Habana have tried to build a Teacher Training program that is affordable enough for Cubans but also sustainable. However, with out-of-control inflation and plenty of economic instability they are struggling. Find out how you can help below. But first, let's meet the staff and students of Yoga Va - La Habana's first Teacher Training program ever!!!

## Yoga Va - La Habana STAFF

Jorge Ávila Viña  
E-RYT 500, YACEP  
Director



José Rubio Cruz  
E-RYT 500  
Guest Teacher



Tamara Venéreo Valcarcel  
RYT 500  
Treasurer, Teacher



Vladimir Ferreiro González.  
RYT 500  
Teacher



María de los Ángeles (Marila)  
Montes Valdés  
RYT 500  
Teacher



Mariela Mazón Domínguez  
RYT 500  
Admin Assistant, Teacher



Taquechel Font  
E-RYT 500  
Teacher



Mariela Góngora  
E-RYT 500  
Guest Teacher



Junior Amaya Lugo  
RYT 500  
Teacher



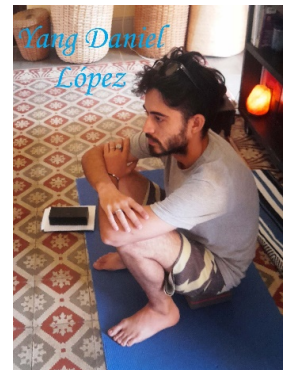
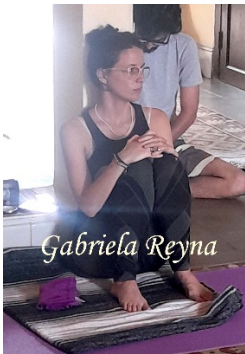
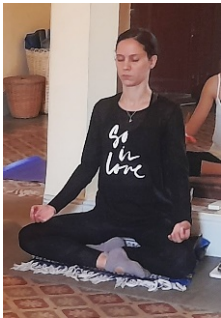
Karen Rodríguez López – Nussa  
RYT 500  
Teacher



Maritza Navarro Valdés  
RYT 500  
Teacher



# Yoga Va - La Habana Teachers in Training!



## YOU CAN HELP!



### **Teacher Training**

**Scholarships:** After 4 years of acute economic struggle due in part to the actions by the Trump administration compounded by the Pandemic, very few Cubans can afford to pay even the most minimal fees for a comprehensive training like the one Yoga Va - La Habana is offering. We will be offering scholarships to those applicants who need and request support. And we would like to help cover the basic program expenses: studio

rental; printing; administrative support; transportation to the hub of Habana for guest teachers from other parts of the island; and basic stipends for the teachers.

**Projected Budget: \$10,000**



**Communication Support:** For the past two years, we have helped our yogis by contributing to their mobile phone accounts, a key way they keep their classes going and survive. **You can help** by sending a donation to Yoga Va Latino or by becoming a Phone Ambassador like Patty, Dennise, and Kurt, who pay directly into an individual's mobile phone account on a monthly basis.

**Projected Budget: \$2,000**

**Administration Help:** We manage on a shoestring budget! Everything in this organization is done by volunteers, except for our very part-time administrator Isabel. She is key to maintaining communication with Yoga Va - Cuba and she reminds the rest of us volunteers to stay active in supporting our brothers and sisters in Cuba.

**Projected Budget: \$3,000**

**Material Support:** Some of us *may* manage to get to Cuba this year and bring what we usually do - rolls of yoga mats, copies of books and Spanish language materials,

clothes etc. We've started a fund for bike repairs to ensure our Cuban friends can maintain the most accessible mode of mobility. - You cannot find a bike or a tire without a quick trip to Miami these days! **Projected Budget: \$5,000**

**Projected Budget Goal for 2023: \$20,000**



**Please send checks payable to Yoga Va to the following address:**

Yoga Va  
2711 Clifton Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63139

If you want to **help individuals with their mobile phone/wifi connectivity** in Cuba, we've discovered an app that allows you to securely "top-up" their accounts online. Contact Isabel at [ay.isabel@gmail.com](mailto:ay.isabel@gmail.com) if you would like to contribute in this way.

Isabel Estrada-Jamison for Yoga Va

Jorge Teaching at a Children's Yoga Event on TV  
La Habana, 2023

