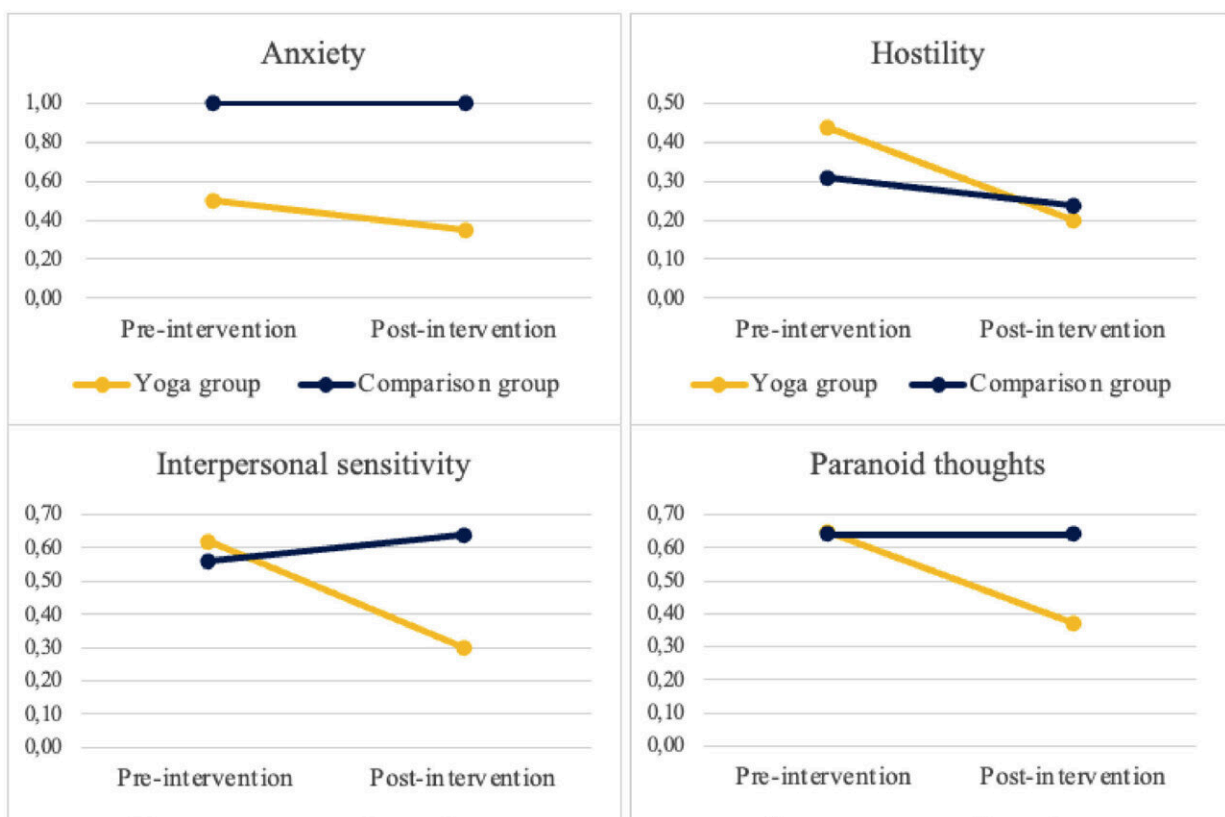


# Trauma-adapted yoga in forensic psychiatric care is feasible and yields positive effects, finds study

April 19 2024



Scores for the Brief Symptom Inventory domains of anxiety, hostility, interpersonal sensitivity, paranoid thoughts, and phobic anxiety, and Global Severity Index scores for the yoga and comparison groups before (pre-intervention) and after (post-intervention) 10 weeks of the TAY intervention

Previous studies in correctional facilities have shown positive effects of yoga on inmates. They experience increased impulse control and improved mental health. Are the same positive results seen in detained individuals with severe psychiatric disorders? Now, the first results from a large national and globally unique research study in forensic psychiatry from the University West are presented.

It is the first [study](#) of its kind to describe the effect and feasibility of trauma-adapted yoga in forensic psychiatry. The results of the study are published in *Psychiatry Research*.

"It is a breakthrough that we can now demonstrate the possibility of using yoga as a complementary care intervention in psychiatry and the positive effects it brings," says Nóra Kerekes, Professor in Medical Sciences (Psychiatry) at the University West, and research leader of the study.

"We wanted to explore whether previous positive results with the use of yoga in [correctional facilities](#) could be transferred to detained individuals suffering from severe psychiatric disorders. Therefore, we evaluated trauma-adapted yoga as a support within forensic psychiatry," says Kerekes.

Forensic psychiatry deals with the complex challenges that arise at the intersection of psychiatric illness, legal issues, and security concerns.

"There are few high-quality [clinical studies](#) on individuals who have committed crimes and who have a serious mental disorder. What exists are either studies on inmates separately or studies of individuals suffering from various psychiatric disorders. For both of these groups, yoga has shown positive effects," says Kerekes.

Self-choice was a central component in the study design, where 56

patients at various forensic psychiatric clinics chose to participate. Over 10 weeks, they either participated in specially developed yoga classes or chose to engage in other forms of physical activity. Throughout the study, changes in their mental health, emotional states, antisocial and aggressive behaviors, [pain perception](#), substance cravings, and ability to control their behavior and emotional reactions were observed.

In the current study, the yoga group showed remarkable reductions in negative emotional states, anxiety, paranoid ideation, hostility, and overall psychological distress. These reductions were not observed in the group performing other forms of physical activities. Additionally, the yoga group exhibited a significant reduction in pain frequency, and showed strengthened self-control and accountability.

"We can conclude that trauma-adapted yoga implemented in a forensic psychiatric setting demonstrates feasibility and results in several positive changes in patients' [mental health](#), emotional states, pain, and [self-control](#)," says Kerekes.

"A structured program of trauma-adapted [yoga](#) for patients and training for health care personnel has been developed and has now been confirmed to be feasible and beneficial within [forensic psychiatry](#)."

**More information:** Nora Kerekes, Exploring the impact of trauma-adapted yoga in forensic psychiatry, *Psychiatry Research* (2024). [DOI: 10.1016/j.psychres.2024.115879](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2024.115879)

Provided by University West

Citation: Trauma-adapted yoga in forensic psychiatric care is feasible and yields positive effects, finds study (2024, April 19) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-04-trauma-yoga-forensic-psychiatric-feasible.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.