

Tiffany : [00:00:03](#) Hi, welcome to the one love fits all online conference. I am Dr Tiffany Denny. I'm the executive director and a Faculty member of Embody Love Movement. And, uh, I am really grateful that I had the opportunity today to speak with Christina Sell. Christina is a wonderful internationally renowned yoga teacher. She has been practicing yoga since 1991 and teaching since 1998 and she has authored three books, all on body image over the years. Uh, and I have them here for you. So we've got Yoga From The Inside Out, My Body is a Temple ,and her most recent book released this year, A Deeper Yoga: Moving beyond body image to wholeness and freedom. Christina talks about in our interview her journey with body image, with an eating disorder and how she sees recovery as a lifelong journey and an invitation to spirituality, authenticity and depth. Christina and I, aside from her story, we really spend time talking about what yoga offers and what yoga maybe doesn't offer in terms of healing negative body image. We talk about yoga in the age of social media and we talk about her book and this idea of moving beyond body image, what that means and what it might offer us on our path. I hope you enjoy this conversation. I really, really am grateful that I was able to speak with Christina and can't wait to share with you.

Pura Fe Sings: [00:01:59](#) True freedom involves the understanding of our true human spirit within. It dispels the lie of inadequacy and helplessness who are we? Powerful beyond measure. Who are we? Power of the creator....

Tiffany : [00:02:24](#) Christina, welcome. Thank you so much for joining me.

Christina : [00:02:27](#) It's great to be here. Thanks for the invitation.

Tiffany : [00:02:31](#) Of course. I have to disclose that you are one of my most influential teachers, so I'm really excited that there was an opportunity for me to interview you.

Christina : [00:02:42](#) Oh, that's great. Awesome.

Tiffany : [00:02:46](#) Yeah. Um, so to start off, I, I want people to get a sense of where you come from. So, um, I'd love to just start by knowing how your

Tiffany : [00:03:00](#) relationship with your body has changed over time.

Christina : [00:03:04](#) Has changed over time? Well, I just had my 50th birthday. I know. So that's five decades of life upon which to reflect. And I think as I've gotten older, the biggest change is, and watching

other people around me, I have friends of all ages, but I have a lot of friends in the eighty, you know, in the 15 years old or 20 years of my parents have lived with us, my mom daddy a couple of years ago. And so my dad is 81 and he's living with us. So I have just been watching as students, you know, in their twenties. So I feel witnessed too. I'm not just my own process, but watching a whole spectrum of people throughout the course of their life and their relationship to their bodies, you know, evolve in some ways and maybe in other ways not. I think for me, I have had a very physical life.

Christina : [00:04:03](#) You know, I was a gymnast as a child. I've had a lot of, um, I kind of could tell the story from a lot of angles. There's a lot of wonderful things my body's done for me. There's a lot of ways I could look back in this story and think that there was a fair amount of prowess and confidence within my body in terms of its capacities. And that's certainly true. And I think more I can see that a little bit more clearly now than I could. And then I also think that I would look at my relationship with my body as one that's been reasonably, uh, well, troubled and difficult. So from even as a small child, for instance, doing gymnastics. I'm a short person, so I have physical body that for that endeavor was really good, you know, that type of sport rewarded my body type but I was also teased about things, being short and different things like that.

Christina : [00:05:01](#) And even so, I probably at every juncture of life I could find ways that there were pros and that there were cons. And I would say that I think the way that probably my thing I was more aware of throughout life was more of the difficulties with my body rather than feeling appreciative of it. It's more now at 50, I can go, oh my God, when I was nine look at the things I could do and when I was 12, look at the things I could do and now look at the things I can do. And so having a story and a lot of ways that's very informed by being able bodied, being athletic, by having those kinds of capacities still didn't save me from a feeling of being out of touch with my body, what it needed, how to take care of it, that it was good as it was rather than the sort of ongoing sets of comparisons and societal imperatives in my family of origin,

Christina : [00:06:02](#) the, you know, thinner was better. No one was particularly thin, in my family, mind you, but the fear of fat, you know, the fat phobia and the judgments around people of size dominated the my family systems so that I can even remember things my dad would say that was clearly someone who had a larger body, was somehow morally in this, you know, that there was some lack of self control or some lack of discipline, some that indicated some

kind of moral flaw. And that whole worldview in my family is very, very big. And my sister, I have an older sister and my parents put her on a diet when she was nine and I must've been six. So I was three years younger than her. And I was a little smaller build. And she's short also, but is rounder just by her constitution, just constitutionally. In the yoga system

Christina : [00:07:08](#) we look at the constitutional types of ayurveda and we'd say she's much more kapha, and I have more of the Pitta. In the western typing system, you'd see, she has more of that endomorphic quality, and I'm more of the classic Mesomorphic type. And so both of us are short but different, slightly different frames and tendencies. And when I look at pictures of her at nine, when she was first put on her first diet, she was fine, you know, I mean, like really fine, like as sort of round, but not even round. I mean soft, but not. Anyway, so that just made those kinds of impressions that thinner, smaller, all of that is better. And I remember saying something at some point to my mom when she was alive, say, yeah, but you guys put Anna on a diet at nine and she wasn't overweight.

Christina : [00:08:01](#) And she said, well, she would have been if we hadn't. And so that was just the, you know, that was just the air we were all breathing in the family. And by that time, so I was born in 1969. And so by the time I was hitting puberty and all of the hormonal changes that go into young women's bodies changing and all of the social pressures, I was deep in the era of the eighties and Madonna and um, that was even before I always joke that was way before stretch jeans, you know, if you could only get some lycra in your jeans, you know, and there weren't even different lengths of jeans. I mean, jeans seem like ridiculous thing to talk about, but I just remember clothes shopping, being short and having a muscular frame and, and how certain people got to wear certain kinds of clothes and fit in and look good and they have, um, we have more options.

Christina : [00:09:03](#) It's still not where it needs to be. It's incredibly size phobic in the fashion world, but there's some progress. And that's many, many, many years later. So we're not where I think we need to be culturally, but we're further than we were. And so I think all of those kinds of things, the order of the day even, in family but also in the school system and in the larger culture was really thinner is better, smaller is better. And yet somehow you're not supposed to be worried about it because that's not right either. And so, by the time I was 16 and dealing with coming of age and sexual experiences and the first kind of teenage breakup and weight gain from puberty and all of those things kind of

compounded to the beginning of bulimia by the time I was 16 or 17, that really was a fairly bad road for me for a period of time.

- Christina : [00:09:56](#) And coupled with the drugs, alcohol, boys and the whole nine yards. So I would say that whole phase of adolescence for me was so rocky and so at odds with my body and at odds with how that related to my emotions and my social life and the world of relationships and so I would say I could look back at 50 and well, I've had this incredible body that's been able to do all these incredible things. And 've had, you know, ups and downs with weights and ups and downs with all of that. But I can look back and see so many beautiful things about that now. But I would say my experience of being in my body for a lot of my life was more difficult than beautiful and more, I would even describe it in some of the books I've read more almost a sense of being at war or being in a violent relationship of wishing I was in a different body than I was. Or that the body that I was in was somehow flawed and wrong.
- Christina : [00:10:56](#) And so, a lot of violence and self-destruction and self-criticism that really got in the way of feeling anything good that my body was really allowing me to do. It was a robber of joy and so on. And everything else might be great, but my thighs are too big.
- Tiffany : [00:11:20](#) Right. Yeah, absolutely. Well, and it was really interesting, you know, to hear you say your family talking about how like there's that idea of moral failing, of lack of control, lack of self-discipline, lack of all these things. And then you end up with bulimia, which to my understanding is oftentimes a lot about control and self discipline and all those things.
- Christina : [00:11:42](#) Yeah. And I think there also is a feeling for me also that marked that eating disorder really different, I think, than how my friends in recovery have talked about. Those women who I've talked to or men even who have anorexic tendencies with a lot more of the restricting --
- Christina : [00:12:04](#) I think there is a sense of control of bulimia but there's also a sense of really being out of control, you know, but not at the level of what my dad would have been describing as some kind of moralistic thing. It was to me driven by a lot of childhood trauma and fears and a lack of capacity to really give voice to my feelings and to, in a sense, be able to be with uncomfortable feelings. And so to me food was very much in some ways I think the bingeing aspect was after being in control in so many other areas, there is for me this way, oh, I just be out of control and not have to hold everything in and not have to hold everything

so tightly bound. And I think it's slightly different, although it's marked.

- Christina : [00:12:58](#) And I remember that, um, discussion around bulimia in the eighties or nineties and eating disorders around the control thing. And I think it had both, both elements to me cause I always think, there's such an element for me with a eating disorder of compulsive eating, it really is not just a body image issue. For me it was really a relationship to food that was quite addictive. And using that kind of obsession and compulsion and bingeing behavior very similarly to how an alcoholic would use alcohol or a drug addict would be with drugs. There is a such an addictive component to it that to me was really about food, not just a body image scenario and that fed into it, but it has a lot of different layers, you know, and at each juncture of my own reflection on it, probably it has different layers of meaning to me because there's being in it and then there's being a little bit away from it, and then there's being quite a bit away from it.
- Christina : [00:14:08](#) and even own memories of it change and shift, you know. So it, you know, my perspective on it now, it's accurate for now, but it might not be always what it was then.
- Tiffany : [00:14:21](#) Yeah, absolutely. Everything shifts a little bit, right? With time and just a different location. And it's interesting because you ended up getting into yoga, it seems pretty early in life. And so I've been reading your new book.
- Christina : [00:14:46](#) Oh, very good. Yes. A Deeper Yoga by Christina Sell.
- Tiffany : [00:14:48](#) That's right. It's wonderful because of course I've also read the other two. It was funny because in the new book you were sort of chronicling some of the timeline of how you had the eating disorder and, and in that process of recovery got into yoga and then wrote this, your first book, it seemed almost like as part of that process of recovery.
- Christina : [00:15:27](#) Well, I think that for me, when I look at the, what I would say is the process of recovery from an eating disorder, there's definitely phases of that. So when I got into yoga, I always tell people I'm like the world's least interesting, "How'd you get into yoga?" story. Because so many people say, "I was going through a divorce" or "I had this big loss, I got into yoga and my life changed." And I was introduced to yoga way before it really took hold, you know, it wasn't like an overnight thing for me where "this was before yoga and now there's after yoga." I've always had an interest- I was raised in a Methodist church. My

family's pretty religious. I've always had philosophical, religious leanings and interests,

Christina : [00:16:17](#) And the inner life has always been interesting to me. I mean, okay, when I was a teenager you know I was interested in boys and if my socks match my shirt and things like that. But I also had other insight about, I always say, one of those people that's got a pebble in their shoe. You know, there's always been a little bit like, "is this all there is?" kind of thing. And, so I was always into philosophical and religious studies, even in high school I remember taking a course on that and in college. So for me, when I really got first into what I would call recovery was when I was 18. So after several tumultuous years of just a very fast downward spiral, in that way, I'm really very glad that I had such a destructive path because it went very big, very bad, very fast. And one of the things about, I always tell people, you know, that I compare sometimes having an eating disorder, like bulimia, to dealing with compulsive eating is sort of like being a heroin addict versus a pot smoker. People can smoke pot casually their whole day, maybe their whole life, you know, and still have a job and function.

Christina : [00:17:33](#) Maybe things are absolutely fine, you know? And, and I know a lot of people like that. In fact, you know, maybe their relationships aren't quite what they could be. I don't know who's to say. Right. And I'm not a purist, so I just think, but when, uh, for me, dinging all long and purging repeatedly is kinda like when every person I knew recovering from heroin addiction, once you have a needle in your arm, you know, yeah. You know, and what's your head's in the toilet repeatedly and you can't get it out. I mean, this sort of crude way to say it, but you know that there's a problem. I mean, I knew for sure, you know, and so, not that I wanted to talk about it, not that I was ready to get over it and not that I wanted anyone to know about it, mind you, but it wasn't for me, my relationship to food and getting a handle on societal imperatives, dismantling those for me so that they didn't cause me to self-destruct.

Christina : [00:18:29](#) That was so important, so young because it was so bad for me. And so that started for me. I went to treatment at 18, and I would say that began a process of recovery. And the thing that's really different for a lot of people dealing with eating disorders or what we might call process addictions, even gambling or sex or relationships, is you can't abstain from food, and I had a compulsive exercising thing, and you can't abstain from exercising. You can, plenty of people abstain from exercise. I mean you can, plenty of people abstain from exercise but it's still a part of a healthy life. And so, whereas if we're dealing

with alcohol, which is a very tricky recovery process also, so I'm not making light of anybody, whether regardless of its substance or process or some combination of the two, um, but really would never say to a crack addict, well you know, smoke it three times a day and keep it in its proper perspective, you know.

- Tiffany : [00:19:27](#) That's an interesting perspective cause I had not ever really thought of it that way.
- Christina : [00:19:32](#) Yeah, you have to eat and you know, bodies are meant to move and meant to rest. And so for me that process, it took me a long time to have some compassion for myself in the recovery process because I expected it to be an all or nothing thing. And when it didn't, It wasn't like, "and then I went to treatment and then I got over my eating disorder," It has been much more cyclical and much more, "oh my God, I'm back here again, I thought I thought I had fixed that or that that was over." And really just different situations, you know, relationships or a move or life triggers and any expert in the field of eating disorder recovery says that's really common, you know, to have a life stressor trigger the behavior or even the thinking.
- Christina : [00:20:20](#) And so for me, that relationship with the body and food and exercise and all of it, it has so many layers because I could be eating perfectly by the book, whatever that means, but be a total crazy person in my head or I might feel more relaxed and feeling some ease with it, but from the outside have gained weight and that seems to look bad to other people, you know, so there's lots of ways that it, it's a different recovery process I think is unique for everybody. And so when that first book was written and Yoga came along, I was first introduced to that inner process of having gotten through a relapse and going on this cross country, you know, trip to get away from a boy. It's like a recurring theme. But I was introduced to yoga and it just sort of got in there as a good experience, but it wasn't like, now I do yoga all the time or anything like that.
- Christina : [00:21:22](#) But I started an intermittent practice and, would come and go with that. But the first book, in the late nineties, and so I was in my late twenties, I suppose, early thirties, when I had a relapse. And throughout that I did a lot of, was a fitness teacher. And, um, and this was also very dicey sort of environment. You know, lots of mirrors, lots of body emphasis, lots of condoned compulsivity you can be on a really "clean eating" program and all that looks like you're really disciplined when it's just crazy town.

- Tiffany : [00:21:56](#) it's like diet culture to the max, right?
- Christina : [00:22:00](#) Yeah, yeah. And I've gone down the road with that and had a big relapse process. And in the process of pulling myself out of that, really went back to yoga more, more as an exercise practice that I was hoping wouldn't be as triggering.
- Christina : [00:22:15](#) So for me, asana has really functioned for many, many years as a primary exercise practice, and I don't think of it as only exercise. But I have meditation and other, other things that were also part of my, what I would say spiritual practices. So people get into, in our world, you know, they get into these big debates of is asana spiritual or if it's physical and well, you know, it's clearly physical. You get sore, you can get hurt, you know, so, fitness matters in your capacity to do things, but it's to me it has the capacity to be something beyond physical only. And so for me the difference in those days, also, Asana classes, it wasn't as prevalent and it wasn't as merged with the fitness model within the asana class, so it might even be in a gym,
- Christina : [00:23:19](#) but the Asana classes were a little bit more relaxing. There generally wasn't music. There wasn't so much emphasis even on functional movement. A lot of those things I think are great, but it wasn't as blended with the physical fitness world as it, as it is becoming. And, and so it wasn't as triggering for me. At the same time, I would say that it had its own shadow sides, Asana, because even in different Asana communities, different bodies are prized and different things are prized about the body. And there's as many ways to go... It's like a razor's edge, you know, when I was in India, the thinner white women that were in India studying were criticized because in India that body type wasn't prized. And so they're like, why you so fit? Why are you so muscular? Why are you so athletic?
- Christina : [00:24:14](#) You know, so, so it's really interesting to me that we have this whole narrative in yoga world about, Oh, shame on the yoga body but there is a yoga body, but it's not any one body. And so what's the same is that in any different community, one body might be prized and another body might not be. It's not about which body is prized, it's that one type is prized over and above another type. And so I have been in communities where the softer, rounder type is prized. And I've been in communities where the leaner, longer type is prized. And I've been to, all of this is in the world of Yoga. And so there are, um, there's just nowhere I think when we're dealing with bodies where all that seems to go away.

- Tiffany : [00:25:02](#) Yeah. And it seems like it gets really compounded now when we have so much media and so many images that are very monotonous in their appearance. Right. So that, that is really interesting. Like you can go different places and have that different
- Tiffany : [00:25:23](#) body type prized, And yet of course, you know, from, from like, at least from my social location looking at the media around me, I'm like, oh my gosh.
- Christina : [00:25:34](#) But you know it's never not been that way. And I think that what, what it is now is because of social media, we see more of it.
- Tiffany : [00:25:41](#) Yeah. Yeah. It's more on the surface, maybe and more at the forefront.
- Christina : [00:25:46](#) And, you know, I have students, you know, so for me we didn't even have websites, you know, and I remember when my students made me get a website and we didn't have, you know, barely used email, you know, and, we had to hang a flyer at a coffee shop to get someone to come to your yoga class and they'd make a phone call. And we didn't have pictures, even if there was pictures, occasionally someone at a workshop would have a camera and they would take a couple pictures, but then they had to send a film off to get developed. And occasionally, this is 2000 let's say.
- Christina : [00:26:23](#) And then occasionally you would get, you know, weeks later, a couple hard copy pictures that that person would've sent of some big moment in the workshop or of a group picture. I mean, it wasn't, it wasn't just, Oh, look at me doing this thing all of the time. And so I think that for me, Yoga gave me a lot of help in the sense that maybe there was a mirror, maybe there wasn't. But it was really something about a relationship for me with my body that was based more on what I would say is the sensory experience of being in my body as opposed to the pursuit of how it looked. And it was really between me and maybe me and myself and maybe the class and maybe the teacher. But I have students now who, you know, they're not new now it's 2020 and they've been practicing 15 years. But not ever did they have a yoga practice that wasn't photographed, posted online,
- Christina : [00:27:20](#) and part of this proliferation of images. So I look at them and they're not new, they're experienced, they're seasoned and they're smart and wonderful people. And they have never had a yoga that was theirs only that wasn't being made public. And I

think that because of that, that's just what it is. So I'm not, you know, maybe it sounds like I'm being critical of that and, I just noticed that that's what it is. And I don't know what it would be like for me to look for healing in that milieu, that we have now. If it would provide the same things that it did for me without that. And it's providing something else, and I don't know what that is, but I, I do think that when I wrote Yoga from the Inside Out and it really was coming along with that process of having been in a relapse, rediscovering something and refining myself through the asana practice in a new way, not through teachers saying "your body is beautiful" or anything like that,

Christina : [00:28:23](#) but through the practice itself, working with principles of alignment, working within my capacities, "if your arms go wide don't go further," all of those guidelines of the practice itself. There wasn't this fancy narrative saying, "your body is beautiful, you're a good person, just how you are, all sizes are welcome." There wasn't that, it was just the practice, and the practice reintroduced me to myself in terms of the interior experience of being in it as a place that felt good to be in rather than a place that was something I was fighting with. But you know, I think that for me, the practice has so much power in and of itself. I also think I've had good teachers, um, along the way that have pointed the road signs. So I feel like yes, there's the process that is, we engage the practice, it starts to unfold for us and we start to see that our wisdom arises from within.

Christina : [00:29:17](#) I also think that we can be trained to be on the lookout for signs and signals along the way and to be told what to look for so that when they arise we're able to say, "oh, that's that thing, this is that process." Be it problems that are likely to arise or wonderful things that are likely to arise as a signpost. You know, I was in church the other day and they're talking about, like, how do you know you're living a life in alignment with the Holy Spirit? It was a sermon on the Holy Spirit. And there was just this wonderful bible quote that when you're living in alignment with the Holy Spirit, basically it's marked by joy, by patience, these are signposts along the way, that there's a right alignment, you know, that you can learn to recognize. But you can also say, well, where are the pitfalls and where are the, uh, where are the problems that are likely to occur?

Christina : [00:30:08](#) And so, and I think that there's something about the practice that, those outside reflections and guidance can be super important and helpful, but they are to me about us finding, essentially, how it is to recognize what's happening from inside ourselves. And people asked me a lot, how'd you get into yoga philosophy? And I mean, how did you not? Because to me it's

not so distinct. I tease them out. I can say, this is this and this is that. But to me, they're really intersecting sets. And I started an Iyengar Yoga and it was very heavy on physical alignment, and I was young and it always seemed to me part of mindfulness and part of awareness. I mean, it can be dry or it can be boring and tedious. It could be picky. It could be all these things,

Christina : [00:31:02](#) but it never seemed to me separate from something philosophical. And the whole thing didn't seem that divided to me. And in fact, I can think about, I've said this before, but I think about, you know, in all the times I've been practicing asana, probably a few times I got up from my mat not feeling better. Maybe I tweaked something, or I've got my feelings hurt somehow, or some emotions came up, maybe half dozen, you know, not a lot. And countless times I've practiced, I don't know how many times, I've rolled out a mat, taken Shavasana and got up and went about my day, and almost every time whether I liked the practice or not and had a good time on my mat or not, almost every time I feel better when I'm done. And so there's something in it that's working.

Christina : [00:31:52](#) And I think that part of the education that I'm interested in as a teacher and um, and some of those, you know, discourses about how it relates is this thing that's working on us know, most people have that experience, most times we feel better. And I think it's something worthwhile to get into a relationship with a conscious participation with that thing that's helping transform us. If this thing is helping me feel better so many times in my year, and then year after year, then to me it seems like, well, I might want to get interested in how is it that that becomes less haphazard or circumstantial? And I can start to learn how to be in a deeper relationship with the power behind that process that I'm involved in and that's changing me. And so I'm very interested in pointing out some of the ways that it relates, because sometimes people spark on, um, they spark on something at the intellectual level or they can't relax.

Christina : [00:32:52](#) You know, if you're a suspicious type, you're going to be like, "I'm gonna need this explanation before I'm going to go there with you." And so I'm game for all that. And I think though that we're all a little bit different, you know, what we kind of need, but I also think that it's very, it's a very practical endeavor. I think Asana and, and even spirituality for me is, well A - we have practices, so it's practical, but I, I feel like it's can be very ordinary thing to explore the dimensions of who we are. And so even something that to me is very esoteric, like a transcendent state of consciousness and how that got understood and experienced in meditative techniques over time. All of that is

fairly esoteric but it's also, it's not so woo-woo, it's very smart stuff, you know, and it's ordinary, but it's really extraordinary.

Christina : [00:33:46](#) And I don't think it has to come with a lot of... I don't think we have to talk in a weird voice to discuss spirituality, I don't think I have to dress differently. I don't think I have to have angelic music in the background. I mean, some of that to me starts to feel like theatrics and I feel that what yoga is, is "where is your foot right now, and how does that relate to the feeling inside your chest? How does that relate to..." All of this very immediate, very ordinary, very accessible, and it's a little preachy, I guess, right now, but I, I don't think that that it requires much more than that other than some education and some inspiration perhaps, and practice. And I have that suspicious, like a little bit, my hackles will go up, you know, if there's too much woo-woo, and I say woo-woo, but I love esoteric teachings. It's that when it feels theatrical or it feels like someone also doesn't trust me to manage myself. So I feel handled, like you're over nurturing me or over, over or under something. And it's like the thing is gonna happen for me. And so I trust that people's process is happening. The Yoga is gonna find them where they are and then also each person in a room, they have to go grab the yoga. I mean,

Christina : [00:35:20](#) and I don't think that it helps me if you tell me to love my thighs in Yoga class cause I'm looking at them. I'm either liking them or I'm not, or I've forgotten about them. But if you tell me what to do with this part of my leg and keep my mind on the actions, the experience, the feelings, all of those rise up bigger than what I feel, think, or think you think about the size of my thighs. And so, so when I first read first started talking about body image and yoga, people were kind of like, "but you don't talk about body image," and like, yeah, I know, I just brought you into your body -- off of image -- into your body.

Tiffany : [00:35:53](#) Which is what you experienced from Yoga. Right? Like, you're offering that back to people. You're not sermonizing on loving your body. Just developing, helping people develop a relationship and awareness of their body.

Christina : [00:36:09](#) Right. And frankly I think it's a lot of pressure to feel like I have to love my body all the time. It's just too much. I find that exhausting. What if I don't? Like, today I'm actually feeling really good in my body. You know, I took a bike ride, I did a little Asana, Kelly gave me a little acupuncture, I have a good day of body care going today. I felt good. I felt strong, you know, nothing's aching too loudly or anything like that. And everything's fit how I wanted to fit it when I put on my pants,

you know, okay, good day. Right? You know, I'm on the upswing, let's say. But let's say my jeans didn't fit right today and I felt not great inside my body. I would have to find a way for me to just be with that too.

- Christina : [00:36:57](#) But I can't always just change that with some affirmation or then it becomes this pressure thing that not only am I not liking my body, I should be liking my body and I write books about that. I'm Christina Sell, you know? But sometimes it's just a day where I don't like how I feel inside my body or I don't like how I think my body looks or I'm projecting something. Sometimes I still feel, um, I'll feel a feeling of fat rather than scared. And I have to learn to go, wait, what? If I'm feeling bad, have I been bingeing? Have I, you know, is there something I absolutely do need to address at that level?
- Tiffany : [00:37:44](#) But fat's not feeling right?
- Christina : [00:37:46](#) Right, exactly right. So fat's not a feeling, but it comes over sometimes, like this mixture of shame and, and self-loathing, and it's, it's really not a feeling on its own. It's like a distractive layer of feeling. And I had a lot of help in therapy and 12 step communities, unpacking that feeling to go "what's underneath that?" And I remember even calling up a 12 step sponsor, like, "I just want to eat!" "Well, how are you feeling?" "Well, I'm feeling hungry!" It was like, "well, hungry is not really a feeling," "Well it is a feeling!" You know, I was arguing, I was so mad and she's like, "Well it sounds like you're angry."
- Christina : [00:38:29](#) I'm like, oh, okay. Yeah. And so to me, I learned to look at both sides about whether I wanted to eat, but also when I wake up in the morning and decide to go on a diet. I'm like, really what else is going on? And, so I would say that I have periods of time very free from that thinking and I have times that thinking revisits me and I can see it for what it is, so what I've learned in my time, I would say at 50, at working these principles of practice for many years now, is not necessarily that it's all going away, but a part of the meditative practices, I think, whether it's holding a pose and focusing on your breath rather than focusing on wanting to get out of the pose or, or sitting in meditation and repeating a mantra rather than focusing on dinner and breakfast or whatever. All of that is an interface with the nature of, of the way my mind functions. And that has over a long period of time when I have, oh, that voice typically is not to be believed at the surface level. The Voice of, "Oh, you're fat and worthless or oh you should probably go on a diet today or maybe you need more green juice in your life" or whatever the

thing is. I mean, sure, if you need to clean up your diet, clean up your diet, I mean that's fine. Most people are fine.

- Christina : [00:40:00](#) The number of women I know who could just put down the green drink and do a little therapy, you know, they'd be a lot better off.
- Tiffany : [00:40:09](#) That's interesting too because you know, I keep finding myself thinking, you know, how harmful is it that so many of us, me included, for so long, like ascribe the word fat as a negative feeling that comes along with like a lot of self hatred and all of this stuff and that it, all I can think about is, Huh, no wonder we have so many like moralistically negative feelings about people who embody the shape fat.
- Christina : [00:40:42](#) Well we've internalized the fat phobia that our culture, You know, it's like we've internalized misogyny and so many women hate themselves. We've internalized our culture's fat phobia and so it becomes the worst thing that could happen to us.
- Christina : [00:40:57](#) And we did. Now we're doing the job of the marketing machinery for ourselves.
- Tiffany : [00:41:05](#) Yeah, totally. But I love, I love this idea of engaging the practice, allowing that to have its space and being able to be with that discomfort without immediately going to whatever gets triggered, whether, you know, whatever it is. It could be..
- Christina : [00:41:21](#) Right, like binge, restrict, feel ashamed, you know, fill in the blank, you know, or just project something out on to criticize others. Criticize yourself. Yeah. I had it at some point in this recovery process, I remember I was dating a guy, he was also in 12 step recovery as a recovering addict. And, um, and I would say, do I look fat? You know, which is, for any guy, regardless of whether he's in recovery or not, you know, you're in between a rock and a hard place with a woman you love. If that's the question she has, there's no right answer.
- Christina : [00:41:52](#) We're crazy in that moment and we're going to get them involved in our crazy. And then he said, at one point he said to me, "what do you want me to say when you say that to me? What's really going on?" And I've thought about it cause I knew he was sincere. You know, we're really good friends as well. And I said, "well, I'm generally feeling scared that I'm not lovable in that moment." And he goes, "okay, well, so, um, what do you need then?" And so we have this script worked out where if I would say that I'm feeling fat or do I look fat, trying to go

around and sideways, he'd say, "I love you, you're lovable. Ask your higher power for help." It was like, Oh, okay. Right.

- Tiffany : [00:42:52](#) I'm just thinking, "How can I start using that on people?"
- Christina : [00:42:55](#) Because it wasn't about,
- Christina : [00:42:56](#) it wasn't about how I looked. It was about that feeling that comes over me, and it's sitting on top of that feeling that from childhood of, "am I really lovable as I am?" Because the truth is if I gained 50 pounds, I'm every bit as lovable.
- Christina : [00:43:15](#) If I gained 50 pounds in the next six months, maybe because I'm going through menopause, or it might be because I'm not behaving in a loving way to myself in relationship to food. But I also might be just having a good time, but, but I, regardless of what's behind the reason,
- Christina : [00:43:39](#) lovability at that core level that feels threatened is not at stake. And so it doesn't, it doesn't soothe the deep fear. If someone says, oh no, you don't look fat.
- Christina : [00:43:51](#) That's what I want them to say - "Oh No, you look smoking, honey." That's what, you know some part of me wants them to say, but that's not what's really behind the question. Behind the question is I'm scared
- Christina : [00:44:02](#) that I'm not lovable and I'm feeling distant from myself and my source. That's what's really behind that. Because regardless of the size body I'm inhabiting, um, I am lovable. Everybody is lovable regardless of the size body that they're inhabiting. And some people have large bodies and have high degrees of health. Some people have small bodies with not a lot of health. And we have everything in between. And even we look at health as multi factorial, you know, like multi-systemic, we're going to have someone with really great cholesterol and really, you know, a really socially endorsed body size and their emotional health and wellbeing is really, um, in some ways sacrificed to the alter of that appearance. And so even though their numbers would be good at the doctor's office and then they look really good, they might be a crazy person relative to food and diet or relative to their relationships, might not be out of whack. And they might just have a fast metabolism. And meanwhile, someone who might even have, uh, you know, not great cholesterol and they might have a larger body, they might have incredibly good self esteem and a sense of satisfaction in their life and relationships, and every combination of those things

from, some people have high cholesterol in a small body and some people have it in a large body. And the whole thing is what is it for you? I mean, there's no real way to say.

Tiffany : [00:45:38](#) And the evidence really shows that too, like all the research shows that it's not very prescriptive really. And yet we all, you know, and yet we come, we come with all of these, these issues, but then we have to learn to sit with

Christina : [00:45:58](#) Yeah. I don't know that we ever really unravel it. I don't. I feel at some point, you know, that's the other thing I would say how it's changed over time is I do feel less pressure to have it all get unraveled in this lifetime. And I remember back, I mentioned this in one of my books that one of my counselors in the early recovery was, I must have been 19, and he said, you'll probably deal with this your whole life. I was so pissed. I was, you know, so ambitiously oriented, hardworking type, you know. So I was like, yeah, fuck you. I am going to kick this eating disorder's ass and I will be over this by the time I'm twenty. And he was right. Yeah. It's my thing, you know, it's like how far do you get over? We get over and we get through things. But then there's also, I think a lot of things we incorporate and integrate and they're just part of us, you know, and some of those things I like about myself and some of those things I don't like, I haven't succeeded in a personality overhaul and I've been at this a really long time.

Tiffany : [00:47:01](#) And does it change your value or your lovability or any of that? Right. You say it in the book that your practice these days is, you know, you've got asana and Pranayama and meditation and all those things you say, but a lot of your practice is with mood, bhava. I was like, oh, that's where it's at, I feel like, right? Mood.

Christina : [00:47:30](#) Yeah. My spiritual teacher, Lee Lozowick, he had a deep affinity for this group of practitioners out of Bengal and they called themselves the Bauls and they're, like itinerate beggars. So they wander the streets and they sing and they beg and they dance. They have an asana practice. Sometimes they pull into retreats for some periods of time. So they'd use very different methods and means of practice. But, um, they have this saying that they, they said, well, you do the technique until the mood arises. And then you work with mood until Rasa comes. And then once you have Rasa, you don't need anything else. The rasa being the juice of life, this sort of nectar, sort of essence of life. And, and it's something I think about a lot, this idea that, okay, if the technique gets us into the room of mood and then, that's the thing is that if the mood of love doesn't arise, then all the technique in the world is not going to reorient us, I think away from self-hatred because if the mood of self hatred is in the

presence of technique, we have one nitpicky thing after another that we're never good enough at doing.

Christina : [00:48:47](#) And so, and once we're in the room of a certain kind of mood, how we got there is a little bit less important. I mean, in terms of asana, sure, let your knee go weird enough times and you know, your knee is going to pay the price. So you gotta be smart about it. But, um, but there's this way that, to me, that mood is about, um, whether it's asana or making dinner or being with children or it can be a chore, or it can be a place of, "Oh this is my moment here and now to be in what life is giving me," to be in gratitude, for me a quality of devotion is, is a mood that I like. It's not a mood that resonates for everybody, though, so it can be a little dicey of a word cause it tends to trigger a religiosity, which can be a good thing or a bad thing.

Christina : [00:49:42](#) Um, so I think for me I'm like, I'm going to gratitude. But I also like that mood of devotion in the sense that I'm connected to something larger than my own thinking mind and my own habitual organizational strategies. I think this is in some ways a lot of what, you know, they were talking about in the Bhagavad Gita about why is it that even offering a simple flowering of Krishna tells, you know, Arjuna, even a simple flower offered with sincerity can, will bear fruit. And the fruit he was talking about in my understanding was that alleviation of the effects of our Karmas. It's not just that it will bear fruit, like it'll start to shift those patterns of thought and patterns of behavior that are keeping us in our habitual patterns and eventually on, you know, incarnated and all that. But I think that's no small thing to really consider, what is it that I am doing in my life as an offering or in some mood of devotion or in a recognition or of life as it is giving me this and me participating with it as fully as I can.

Christina : [00:50:50](#) That to me is all in that same vein. It's like, well how does that bear fruit of changing patterns of all this is drudgery, or yoga only happens here on my mat, but we can't always get to our mat. And some days we're hurt, we shouldn't get to our mat, but there's always dishes. If there's one thing that's certain, there's always dishes and house cleaning, you know, and I, I can say, wow, I could really do that in this state that I might be chanting or just thinking about making a nice space for myself and my family. Or I can do it as like, "What the hell, oh my God." And as a total victim, and still I'm vacuuming.

Tiffany : [00:51:32](#) Right. Either way.

- Christina : [00:51:34](#) Either way. There's still the housework and I think that's a lot of what that mood to me is about is, you know, that there's formal practice.
- Christina : [00:51:43](#) You can say, "I did it. I did my asana 45 minutes, I did my five surya namaskars. I did my meditation and set the timer." I like that. I'm achievement oriented. I like all that stuff. Like check, check, check, check. I'm a good person, you know, but I feel like that's a very limited way that hasn't stood the test of time for me. And uh, there's times you can't do formal practice or times we don't want to or times we're injured and we shouldn't be on our yoga mat. So, um, and then even those formal practices, if they become rote and they then they are just in service to that same old patterning. So I think that's kind of like, that's the spirit of it to me is just opening up, you know, ordinary life to be that veil between the domains is just a little thinner, you know.
- Christina : [00:52:35](#) Can you like surf between those, those ranges just on gratitude or on acceptance or on, oh, just to me it's remembrance or um, just even invoking that, ah, I might not know, I call it God. I don't know what other people call it, but I feel it like there's a flavor when I'm in, when I'm in remembrance of it. I don't have it in an intellectual, and I'll chart it all out for you, and this is how you... It's more like there's a flavor right? When it's not just all me all the time about my worries, concerns and desires. Although all those are still there.
- Tiffany : [00:53:16](#) Well, I think that that's interesting to me because it made me think of where you said, you know, you're, you're not so interested in
- Tiffany : [00:53:26](#) like being great all the time, which I feel like can, can relate to so many things, right? Like you don't want to feel terrible, but it's too much pressure to have to always feel, like, excited and interested and inspired and beautiful and all of these things all of the time. And so you said something like, um, you know, you're shooting for like a deep and abiding sense of okayness or something.
- Christina : [00:53:52](#) Yeah, totally. It's a lot of pressure.
- Tiffany : [00:53:55](#) It's a lot of pressure, but I feel like that whole idea of contemplating and cultivating
- Tiffany : [00:54:02](#) mood can be really useful in that. Right?

- Christina : [00:54:05](#) Yeah. And you know, when you're really, like, I remember when my mom died was just really sad, you know, like I remember when wellsprings of grief would come up and I'm not psyched about wellsprings of grief, you know? I'm not like, "I'm welcoming my grief and it's in harmony," I'm not like that. I'm crying and I'm sad. I miss her and all of those things, and there's something really okay in that and really good and not that the feeling is my preference, but the authentic expression of what is real. There's a harmony there. You know, there's a way that just being with that, since that's what it is, there's a harmony of being that is present in a state that's not my preference. I mean, hey, I try my best, if I could be happy all the time that'd be awesome. You know,
- Tiffany : [00:54:54](#) But that's not really compassionate either with what is, and sort of with the fluctuating waves of life.
- Christina : [00:55:03](#) I feel a lot about that harmony that I'm describing. Like, okay, this is what is as it is for me right now and I'm in some kind of congruence with its expression, recognizing it and the expression of it. Not that every feeling we have, we're going to have time and availability to give it its full expression. A lot of things are going to get suppressed, repressed and put away. We just, things are busy, but I do feel that the big things, you know, the big things that, when there is some kind of congruence between, I actually do feel angry and I'm expressing and setting boundaries or I'm feeling sad and I'm crying or I'm afraid and I'm speaking to it or I'm happy and my face shows it, you know, like, when someone's like "I really happy about that,"
- Christina : [00:55:48](#) and I'm like "You should tell your face." Cause that goes underground too. You know, our capacity to experience our own joy and to share it with others. But when there's that congruence, to me, I feel like that's what we're talking about in yoga with equanimity. I don't feel like it's this flat state of, I'm just like flat lining renunciant sort of nothing happening. I feel like, oh, I'm just not being slung around between all of the patterns of avoidance and overexpression or under expression. I feel like there's something happening in that harmony of congruence between what's actually going on for me and, and how I'm expressing it in the moment. And that to me is part of that. And in that I find that I'm really okay, even if it's uncomfortable or painful emotional state, you know? And we all have our limits. We might be like, "Whoa, I gotta go watch a movie right now. I gotta go have a beer." I don't know what people do. People do different things, you know, but I, I'm not, um, like I said, when I say I'm not a purist as, not like "let's feel every feeling." Yeah. We have life to live, and it's when the

backlog happens and, and it starts to interfere with our life and be that food, drink relationships, shopping, Netflix.

- Tiffany : [00:57:07](#) Right. It's like, can you like, not that it's not that it's not okay to have these sorts of like coping mechanisms or anything. It's like we want to be aware that, oh, I'm coping with something right now. I'll revisit that.
- Christina : [00:57:20](#) Yeah. It's like a light of distraction is a problem. Yeah. Yeah. Coming up to the shallow
- Christina : [00:57:27](#) end of the pool occasionally, that's needed. You know, we got to regroup and.
- Tiffany : [00:57:32](#) Yeah and that also takes the pressure off, I think, you know, like letting, letting go of that need to be like perfect
- Tiffany : [00:57:39](#) and spiritual all the time too.
- Christina : [00:57:43](#) Oh yeah. And I think that people, a lot of us come to yoga looking for relief from that stuff. If you take one step into the yoga tradition, you're going to have way more fuel for self criticism than you ever dreamed possible. So when people say, I just wanted yoga to make me feel better,
- Christina : [00:57:59](#) I'm like, yeah, that's called the movies, you know, because like, we have precepts in yoga, things like compassion
- Christina : [00:58:06](#) for all human beings. You talk about a vow that you're not going to be able to do, I mean, but how will you learn compassion even for yourself if you're always doing it well?
- Christina : [00:58:18](#) You know, so it's just from compassion
- Christina : [00:58:26](#) to practice every day to all of these different things. I mean, most perfectionistic types, man, you'd have a field day within the yoga tradition trying to do it so well.
- Tiffany : [00:58:38](#) I think sometimes that's the lesson, you know, come, come to yoga and then a lot of stuff gets revealed and then there's like a lot of information and ways in which you should be doing the practice and then over time your, you're like, Oh, part of the practice is learning to not put so much emphasis on like perfecting how I'm doing the practice.
- Christina : [00:59:04](#) Yeah. It's a growth process. And I think that anybody, I think a lot of people, um, get disillusioned in that phase, A- when they

realize they're not going to get it perfect ever, and that you know whatever it is for different people. You know, and I think people have a lot of different of their own pathways through, and at some point what I have just hoped for students and fellow practitioners and teachers, I just want people to, um, hope that we find increasingly compassionate means for practice to come alive for each of us individually. You know, you do this thing and come into all of these groups. I, I think it's a very interesting time and most people I interview about yoga, you know a huge reason why - I say like "why yoga," and they like community, and it's also a very interesting thing as we are coming into community,

Christina :

[00:59:49](#)

we're at a time in culture where churches are breaking down and our political structures are breaking down and all kinds of structures of society in places where a community were I think are being um, less available as resources. Good and bad. And I think yoga is picking up some of that slack, but there's also this element of it that's really a very personal thing. It's like each person comes into that class with the community experience is coming from a different set of circumstances and a different body with different psychological predispositions and different historical influences, different ethnic backgrounds, different identities, racial, different genders, different size bodies. All of it is so different. And then here's this shared practice, but then really, I don't know exactly what everybody in that class needs for themselves other than they need a personal practice. You know, they need a personal relationship to the thing that I'm offering and the thing that yoga has for them. And we're coming into groups to work on ourselves and also to be fed by a group. And I think it's a landmine in there.

Tiffany :

[01:01:04](#)

Yeah. Yeah. That's such an interesting perspective cause you're right, yeah. We're coming into groups and into, into all of the like group dynamics that exist. And so it adds a lot. But then again, I, you know, I think so often like yoga reflects life and the process of starting and moving through all of the phases of a yoga practice so often reflects all of the ways in which we move through life and how it's messy and, um, and in your book, the subtitle is moving beyond body image to wholeness and freedom. So I just think, you know, that's a lot of what we're talking about. It's something so much more important than even... You know, like, like body image and the way that we view and treat bodies and all of that, like that's a given, it's like the water we're swimming in because it's a part of our culture. Um, and yet no matter what your body is or how you see it, there is a relationship there that could be explored right through practice.

- Christina : [01:02:20](#) And you know, I think for me it really keeps coming back to that because I'm not really interested in someone turning a negative body image-- as a yoga teacher -- now as a friend, I would want all of my friends just feel great about their bodies and have a wonderful body image, you know, that would be great, that'd be wonderful, you know, but as a yoga teacher and in terms of, in terms of what I think yoga can offer us is glimpses of how to get off that conversation altogether. So whatever body we're in today, whether you feel good about it or not, there's still domains of consciousness that have a less identity around the body and the mind only. There's ways to feel interior expansiveness that's connected to something much larger than ourselves, regardless of not just the size and shape of our body, but how we feel about the size and shape of our body.
- Christina : [01:03:14](#) You know, that is only one layer that does not actually have to get fixed to repeat a mantra for 20 minutes. It does not have to get fixed to do downward facing dog pose. You can do all of those practices while you don't like the body you're in and it's not great, but it can be done. And I can testify that it's not a requirement for experiencing expanded states of consciousness to love your body. And, and like the more times I think that we dip into those expanded states, it starts to go, okay, well if I think I'm 100% my body, how it looks and how I feel about how it looks and how I think other people feel about how it looks. This is where my sort of body image, worldview is all about. Like, what do I think about it? What do I think you think about it, blah, blah, blah.
- Christina : [01:04:02](#) And then I go, oh, but every day I'm dipping into something better. Just a little bit at a time. Then at least it's like this might just start to go 99 to 1% you know? And then 98 to 2% and over time I think those regular dips into something bigger, it just starts to give, Um, you know, instead of this being the whole of my experience, this whole thing of my body image world view, it's just contextualized within something that I also know to be true, and and I don't necessarily know that they cancel each other out, or I mean there's a lot of different metaphors for it, but I do think that that I've experienced that recontextualization of, I do know when those things hit me that it's really not all that I am, I'm not this feeling I'm not even again I'm even if I was in a larger body in the moment, like I'm having a a moment and even if I had gained weight, it's really none of that.
- Christina : [01:05:00](#) That's not the worst thing in the world. Those aren't separate things and I think it's trading, although I think people should love the body they're in. I mean because let's say for some reason someone did need to lose weight for a health concern,

there are people who um, they do need to change their diet, or it's going to happen best from a place of love. Anything that we want to do, whether it's continuing to inhabit the body in the exact same size and shape it is today. Or for some reason someone might need to gain weight. Plenty of people recovering from eating disorders have to learn how to gain weight. Plenty people I know's strategy for recovering from certain eating disorders I had, it was just eat everything and give no restrictions and that can lead to other problems.

Christina : [01:05:48](#) Right? So at some point, I know a lot of recovering bulimics who at some point had to curtail their eating without it re triggering an eating disorder because they did have weight related health concerns. Not everyone has them in a larger body, but some people do. And then we want to say, oh, at that point, how do I address my weight, my diet without it triggering the whole big nine yards and whatever that is is going to have to be hopefully contextualized with the feeling of love and the feeling of compassion and spaciousness and all the things the practice has to offer. So I feel like it's a little bit dicey to just say, oh yea we just need to all feel good about our bodies. I'm like, well that'd be great. A, it's a lot of pressure, B, it might not be possible. And yoga has more.

Tiffany : [01:06:34](#) That is really key especially for people are feeling really um, are feeling really left out or, or are feeling feelings of not enoughness because of a body positivity movement that is like love your body, that's the path to freedom. And they're like, I don't love my body. Or my body is in pain all the time or my body is ill or I just don't love my body. And so what's there for me? Can I never be free of it? And so thinking about that all the time, that's where the suffering lies. And yet we're so much more than that. And if we can, can explore and expand that view, then there's freedom in there.

Christina : [01:07:33](#) I remember being in certain classes and they're really theme heavy, where it's like make your postures an offering of beauty and all this crap. And I think it's wonderful if you feel beautiful in your postures then yeah! But I can't tell you the number of times I've been in class, I feel stiff, awkward sore, and stocky. Yeah. I don't feel fluid, free and goddess-like, you know, it's a lot of pressure to just feel what I feel and then, but the practice works and I always feel better when I'm done. So to me I think that, um, and I, and I think that people have their own journeys, you know, and there is a time where, gosh if you were in my house, you know, I have tons of pictures of women of different sizes and that's been a huge healing for me of artwork, of rubenesque women. And people give me paintings. And so

expanding my images of beauty and there's nothing wrong with small bodies or anything wrong with large bodies, the big thing that's wrong is that we prize and make only one okay. And it has so many ways it can play out for people. And I think some of the shadowy side of body positivity,

Christina : [01:08:46](#) and I don't think this is intended, you know, is that if someone wants to lose weight, there's like a shame in that. And what I think what we're really, um, also sort of seeing culturally is the time, you know, I wonder if it's really part of the breakdown of patriarchal structures. In some ways what you're talking about here, what we're talking about is agency and autonomy around our own bodies and about determining this, um, how we feel in them kinesthetically, even not being pressured to feel a certain way about them, whether it's good or bad. I mean when I sort of, I think pointing to some of these very deep issues of,

Christina : [01:09:34](#) so much of that I wouldn't want to just trade somebody else's narrative for my old narrative. What I would want is an evolved narrative of my own to emerge. And I would want that for you. So I want don't want you to feel good about your body if you don't just, cause I said you should, it's really the same flip side of you feeling bad about it because someone said that you should. I think what yoga has to offer us is how is it that you feel?

Christina : [01:10:04](#) and what ELSE do we feel?

Christina : [01:10:08](#) and how, what's the largest possible reference point for those feelings that we can engage continually, you know? And, and then that I think starts to be part of the transformation. I think it's very slow and circuitous. And so but you don't put that on a flyer, you know?

Tiffany : [01:10:30](#) Maybe not on the flyer, but we're talking about the reality of it, right? Like managing expectations and all of that sort of thing. That's really important.

Christina : [01:10:39](#) And you know, even I in the Christian Church, you know, I was listening to something about the resurrection of the body, you know, and this whole promise in heaven that the body is resurrected. And I was talking to.. My sister's got a friend with MS, and she was saying how her friend with MS is a Christian and that they really object to that narrative. It's an ableist narrative that your heavenly body will be resurrected in some kind of perfect glory as though.. She's been in a wheelchair. Like, will she get a wheelchair body in heaven, the body she's had her whole life

Christina : [01:11:14](#) or will she get, you know, some new and improved body? So even in the spiritual, you know, promise of heaven there's this ableist narrative of this and then what will, I dunno, how's all that work? You know, I was talking to one of my friends about it in churches, like how does all that work? I mean, do I get the body, which body, you know, like do I get the body that I liked 10 pounds ago, but do I get the feelings about the body I have today? You know, they of course were, you know, not psyched about the conversation, but my point is that all of those things, even in something that we might just hear a lot if you go to church or not even think twice about is this, you know, relationship to this sense that the body, there is a clearly a connection between the body and the spirit, certainly, but that somehow this improved body as an improved spirituality. And what about people with chronic illness, chronic pain and who, who lost some function of their body or limb or something and their spiritual evolution is coming along where they're angry... I just feel like it's a very, um, precious thing to have a body, and it's a very unique and personal thing.

Christina : [01:12:43](#) And, and, and to allow for a range within ourselves, even throughout life. So you might freeze frame and go, yeah, I've got it. My jeans fit, I ate according to what I want. Um, I did great, and then you know, you get sick tomorrow or there's something else that's much bigger than your body occurs, you know, a loss or some big change. And I feel like we're in a moving stream and so we are never really even, no matter what promises, I don't think, even if it's like great today, like I said, yeah it was actually good day, good body day, but you know, I don't know what tomorrow holds and, and I'm getting older and all these things are happening. So I feel like yoga's promise is like, what are you going to do? Kind of just nail it down and be like, and today's the day? There's gonna be another day tomorrow for all of us and another year, next year if we're lucky enough to be here for it, you know, and some of us will, next year we'll be in a body of greater health and vitality and some people in a year from now, will have weathered a storm in and through their body. And so Yoga can be there throughout all of it,

Christina : [01:13:48](#) but I don't think that it's promise is that because yoga is going to be there throughout all of it, our body's going to necessarily be on this constant upswing, and that our feelings about our bodies are gonna... I feel like that's unrealistic.

Tiffany : [01:14:06](#) Yeah, I think so. I think so and so hopefully the gift that yoga brings us is like a deep and abiding sense of okayness. Whichever way it kind of goes.

Christina : [01:14:19](#) Yeah. What's happening for me today is I'm really struggling with my body image thing or what's happening for me today is I'm on a good, good swing. I'm liking it today or what's happening for me today is I'm down and I'm low, and I feel like that's kind of what a yoga has to offer, not this promise of a new and improved body image in a new and improved body and a new and improved... Some people engage the practice and they really wanted a new and improved body and the practice broke them down in some way physically. And they're dealing with chronic pain now as a result of what they thought was a building practice.

Tiffany : [01:14:54](#) Yeah absolutely.

Christina : [01:14:56](#) That's happening a lot. And there's a lot of disillusion and a lot of upset, understandably, didn't go as planned. And that happens outside of Yoga, you know, my mom followed the, you know, low fat, high fiber diet of the 80s and she had a stroke. She should not have had a stroke according to she did it all right. So it's not just that you follow certain protocols in Yoga and yoga is the only thing letting people down and it's happening. We're all, we don't, there's no guarantees. We don't know. It's an experiment.

Tiffany : [01:15:25](#) Gotta learn to live with what is in some ways, right? Be with what is and, you know, move on.

Christina : [01:15:35](#) Yeah. Yeah. And take, you know, action as you can if you need to. So yeah.

Tiffany : [01:15:43](#) Okay. I could talk to you forever forever forever.

Christina : [01:15:46](#) Well this was fun.

Tiffany : [01:15:48](#) Really fun. Thank you so much. Can you tell people where they can find you?

Christina : [01:15:53](#) Absolutely they can visit my website at [www.livethelightofyoga.com](http://www.livethelightofyoga.com) and I'm a Google search away with all kinds of things about Asana on youtube and all kinds of programs. It's sort of embarrassing, but you can Google Christina Sell and go down a rabbit hole.

Tiffany : [01:16:11](#) All the things come up?

Christina : [01:16:12](#) All the things come up.

Tiffany :	<a href="#">01:16:22</a>	Thank you Christina!
Christina :	<a href="#">01:16:22</a>	Okay, bye bye.
Pura Fe Sings:	<a href="#">01:16:25</a>	True freedom unleashes the power of beauty. Enables us to feel our empathy and compassion with a true sense of identity. Who are we? Powerful beyond measure. Who are we? Power of the creator.....