



An Introduction to
SOLA Yoga® Stikk
Manual and DVD

by Nicole M. Hamory
and Yael Calhoun, RYT, MA, MS



SOLA Yoga® Stikk is dedicated to the yoga enthusiasts at the Huntsman Cancer Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah, and to all the women who have experienced SOLA Yoga Stikk through Women Beyond Cancer. Their inspiration, charisma and willingness to try something new continues to fuel the passion and vision behind SOLA Yoga Stikk.

It will always be an honor and a pleasure to serve you all. May SOLA Yoga Stikk continue to connect you with your divine essence and your radiant being.

In deep appreciation, servitude, courage and love,
SOLA Nikola

The SOLA Tenets

Self-awareness

Observation

Love

Acceptance



Authors' Note:

Nicole Hamory is the yoga model for this manual and DVD.

This manual is an expanded version of the DVD.

Using the manual is appropriate for:

- 1) beginners as a way to explore the richness of yoga;
- 2) yoga practitioners as a way to deepen a personal practice; and,
- 3) yoga teachers as a way to expand and enrich their teaching repertoires.

Disclaimer

This Guide (manual/DVD) is intended as a general guide for practicing yoga. It is to be used with the understanding that the authors and GreenTREE Yoga are not giving advice to individuals who should seek professional medical services before engaging in physical activity.

If you are uncertain about your physical abilities or the physical abilities of your students, please consult an appropriate health care professional. Therefore, the authors and GreenTREE Yoga take no responsibility for any liability, loss, or risk taken by individuals as a result of applying the suggestions put forth in this Guide (manual/DVD).

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Visit our website for updates on the release of New SOLA Yoga® Stikk DVDs and to purchase hand-painted SOLA Stikks.



Acknowledgements

Many thanks to KULA Yoga Center in Salt Lake City for allowing us to use their beautiful studio (www.kulastudio.com).

Much gratitude to Steve Floyd, Steve Cary Productions, for his unending patience, talent, and guidance.

And much appreciation to our board member, Loren Lambert, for sharing his keen editorial eye in order to make this manual a more accessible and user-friendly document.



Testimonials

“I have done yoga in the past, but never have I enjoyed it as much as with the SOLA Yoga Stikk. Your body feels so good -- as if you have exercised for hours, and the Stikk has done all the work for you!” ~ **Marie-Therese Retourne**, Washington, D.C.

“Congratulations, Nicole, for including those of us who may not be regular exercise enthusiasts so that we may also reap the benefits that Yoga can provide!” ~ **Deborah Mutter**, Miami, FLA

“The Sola Yoga Stikk gave me confidence to engage in yoga. I am now more motivated to improve my posture and balance. Yoga is much more fun with the Stikk. Thank you, Nicole!”
~ **Pat Olivier**, Augusta, ME

“I have witnessed SOLA Yoga Stikk change the lives of myself, cancer survivors and at risk teenagers. SOLA provides an understandable, and tangible way to connect the mind, body and spirit in a positive, self empowering manner. I recommend it for people of all ages and all levels of fitness.”

~ **Tessie Palczynski**, MS
Post High School Special Education Coordinator, Park City, UT
Women Beyond Cancer Advisory Board member and Retreat Coordinator

“SOLA Yoga Stikk at the Huntsman Cancer Institute has been a vital link in my improved health and well being. Since taking the class for the past two years, my flexibility and strength have improved markedly...To me this class has become a community of caring, healthy adults, and I'm grateful to be a part of it. Namasté.”

~ **Terry Sebastian**, Salt Lake City, UT

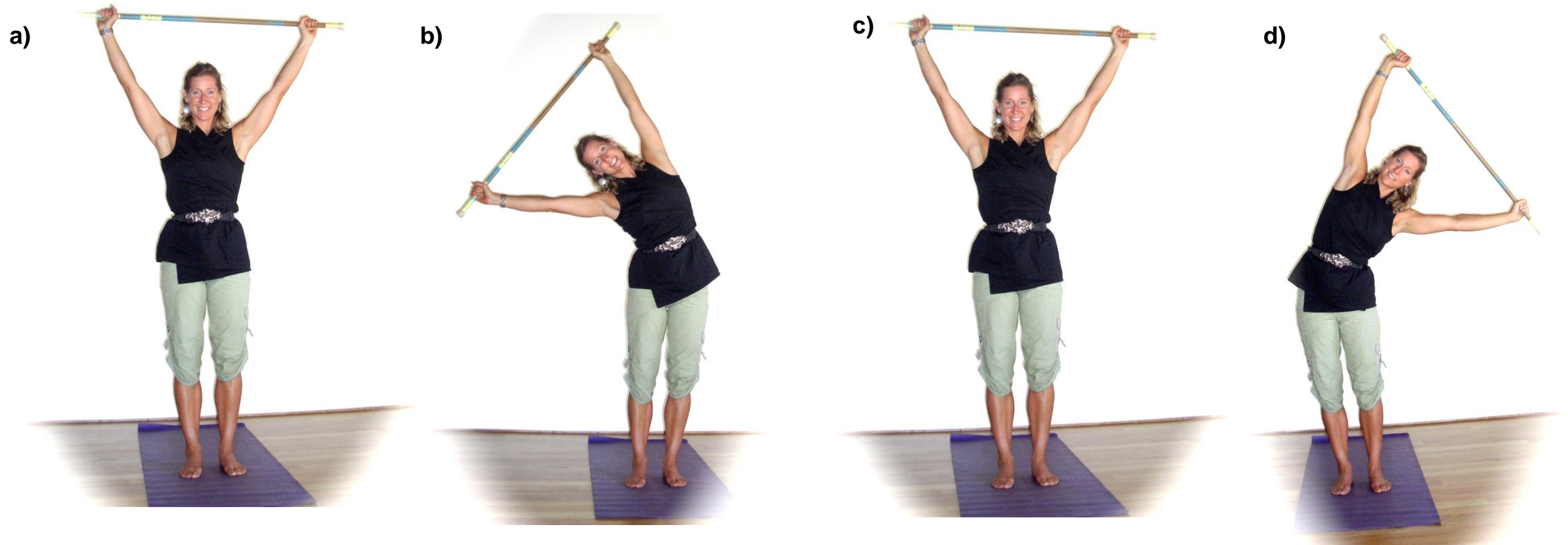
“I would say that as a 56 year old women SOLA Yoga Stikk practice has enabled me to gain confidence in myself, enhance my balance (physically, mentally and emotionally), strengthen my entire skeletal structure, muscles, and lengthen tendons that were very constricted from surgeries. I was able to meet with an incredible teacher, Nicole Hamory, and gather knowledge from her and all the wonderful folks that joined in our time together.”

~ **Debbie J. Carter**, Huntsman Cancer Institute, Salt Lake City, UT



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G. Crescent Moon/Tic Toc Letter Y (Utthita Tadasana)

1. Crescent Moon

- (a) Plant your feet firmly, take a deep inhale and lengthen your arms toward the sky as you expand into the letter Y.
- (b) On your exhale, tic toc your letter Y to the right side, reaching and bending gently as you stretch the core muscles that help to align your spine.
- (c) And again, deeply inhale and expand back to the letter Y.
- (d) Then, while sustaining that feeling of expansion, exhale to the left side. And now, inhale back to the center as you reach through those fingertips for the sky. On the exhale, return to standing. Keep your breathing strong and even.

Benefits:

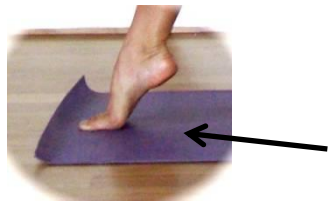
This pose helps to lengthen the intercostal muscles between the ribs, the spinal extensors, the transverse abdominus, and the obliques. About 90 percent of yoga therapy is designed to reestablish proper alignment in the spine, and this sequence just stretched and strengthened some of the muscles responsible for keeping the spine healthy.



a)



b)



Strengthen and intensify this pose by lifting the heel.

3. Reverse Warrior 2 (Viparita Virabhadrasana)

(a) Now let's reverse SOLA Warrior 2 by lifting the Stikk and planting it so it lines up with the middle of the back foot. Let your back arm and torso lengthen by pushing the Stikk away from your body. Take a deep breath, and as you exhale, feel your expression as you seek a greater challenge by bending your front knee. Now turn your right palm up and paint a rainbow across the sky with your fingertips. Reach up and back toward the left arm.

(b) If you want to increase your balance and strength, peel your front heel off the mat.

(c) Inhale back to center. And now, make your way back to Warrior 2 with the Stikk overhead in a letter Y.

Benefits:

The Stikk's support allows the practitioner to deepen the stretch through the sides of the body. This pose also tones the kidneys and adrenal glands and strengthens the legs and feet.

c)



VI. Seated Poses

A. Seated Cat/Cow (*Bidalasana*)

(a) From your seated position, extend your legs to make a wide letter A. Our focus is to lengthen the space between the vertebrae as well as create more space between our ribs. Take a deep breath in as you press the Stikk against the backs of your thighs and peel your heart open.

(b) On the exhale, press the Stikk against your calves while you tuck your chin and curl your back so that from the side you form a letter C. On the inhale, pull the Stikk against the back of your thighs again, using your strong arms to find that open feeling in the chest. What a beautiful way to maintain a healthy spine. Repeat this sequence several times.

Benefits:

This pose increases mobility in the neck, shoulders and back by lengthening and strengthening the muscles that support the spine.





*It is my hope that you have experienced a deeper connection
with your body and your mind through your SOLA Yoga Stikk practice.
Let's give our bodies an opportunity to connect with the benefits of our practice
by resting in Savasana for at least five minutes.*

*Lie back on your mat with your palms open the sky and your feet falling naturally open to the sides.
Close your eyes and let the powerful energy that you've connected with through your practice bring a feeling of balance, calm and peace into your heart
and mind.*

Namaste ~



Laszlo, my beloved dog, showed
me how much fun it is to play with a stick.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Nicole Hamory is a 500 Hour Dana Baptiste Certified yoga instructor. She is the creator of SOLA Yoga® Stikk. She also is the coauthor of *Yoga for Kids to Teens: Themes, Relaxation, and SOLA Stikk Yoga* with Yael Calhoun and Matthew Calhoun (Sunstone Press, 2008). Nicole has studied and practiced yoga since 1997. Her yoga has a strong influence from trainings with Baron Baptiste, Ana Forrest and Anusara Yoga (Adam Ballenger). The Huntsman Cancer Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah, features SOLA Yoga® Stikk weekly as a style of yoga specifically designed for cancer survivors. Nicole also teaches SOLA Yoga® Stikk worldwide for retreats with Women Beyond Cancer and Hacienda Del Sol in Costa Rica. Nicole is a full time teacher at Paradigm High School where she teaches Yoga, Foods & Nutrition and Health. She is also a coauthor of *Yoga For You: A Curriculum Guide to Lifetime Health and Fitness for Teens in Grades 7-12: Manual/DVD/CD*, GreenTREE Press, 2008).

Nicole's introduction to Yoga began after an intense relationship with her body as a Division I rower. Her body was riddled with pain, injury and misalignment. Yoga quickly became a physical healing tool as well as a mental necessity. SOLA Yoga Stikk was created as a tool to make Yoga more user-friendly for all shapes and sizes. Nicole's education includes a B.A. from Rutgers College in Elementary Education and American Studies, as well as coursework towards an M.Ed. in Marriage and Family Therapy from University of Massachusetts/Boston. In her spare time, Nicole loves to do anything in nature with friends, family and her beloved dog, Laszlo.

Yael Calhoun, RYT, MA, MS, is the Executive Director of GreenTREE Yoga, a 501c3 nonprofit. She is the co-author of *Create a Yoga Practice for Kids: Fun, Flexibility and Focus* with Matthew R. Calhoun (Sunstone Press, 2006), a book Liliás Folan calls the "Best children's yoga book on the market today."

She also is the co-author of *Yoga for Kids to Teens: Themes, Relaxation, and SOLA Stikk Yoga* with Nicole Hamory and Matthew Calhoun (Sunstone Press, 2008). Yael created the CD *Yoga for Kids and Classroom*. Yael's education includes a B.A. from Brown University, as well as a Master's Degree in Education from SCSU and a Master's Degree in Natural Resource Science from URI.

Her job experiences include teaching in the classroom, both at the college level (Environmental Biology) and the primary school level, working as a municipal environmental planner, and teaching yoga. Yael is also the author of over a dozen books.

Yael has studied and practiced yoga for 20 years. Her practice and teaching is both influenced and inspired by Judith Hanson Lasater, Liliás Folan, Charlotte Bell, Donna Farhi, and Adam Ballenger. Yael continually demonstrates her commitment to, and passion for, sharing the benefits of yoga with people of all ages and abilities in a variety of settings. Yael enjoys life in Utah with her husband, Patrick A. Tresco, and their three sons, Alex (12), Ben (13) and Sam (15). She enjoys skiing, hiking, kayaking, mountain biking, and is learning to rock climb.



Hand-painted SOLA Yoga Stikks are available for purchase at www.greentreeyoga.org or call 801-656-7885.



You can make a SOLA Yoga Stikk from a 4 foot/1 inch wooden dowel or pvc pipe with rubber stoppers on each end.

Some ideas for decorating SOLA Stikks:

1. For a program over several (or many) weeks, decorate a portion of the SOLA Stikk each week before the practice.
2. For team building or bonding within a group, have one person decorate half and another decorate the other half (mother/daughter as an example).
3. For people undergoing a medical treatment and doing any type of healing, decorate a section of the Stikk each week as a way to chronicle growth and healing.
4. SOLA Yoga Stikks can serve as transitional objects in a variety of therapeutic settings.



Right: a SOLA Stikk made by a 15 year old Vietnamese boy who spoke no English and had been in Salt Lake City for 2 months. Through a translator, he explained that his Stikk was about a path to healing. By the time you reach to the top of your stikk, your heart is healed.