

THE SOCIAL PSYCHIC RADIO SHOW



Featuring

Jason Zuk

Podcast

Jason Zuk Interviews Melissa Carroll, The Yoga Writer

May 24, 2018 at 8:00 p.m. EST

Summary: Jason Zuk will interview Melissa Carroll-The Yoga Writer about her use of mindfulness, yoga, and writing to help others. Melissa Carroll is an Acclaimed Writer, Certified E-RYT 500 Hour Yoga Instructor, Reiki Master, and Meditation Guide. She is the Editor of the essay collection *Going OM: Real-Life Stories on and off the Yoga Mat* (Viva Editions 2014), with a foreword by Cheryl Strayed, author of The New York Times Bestseller, *Wild*. Melissa is the author of two poetry chapbooks: *The Pretty Machine* (ELJ Publications 2016) and *The Karma Machine* (YellowJacket Press 2011), which received the Peter Meinke Award. Her work has appeared in *Brevity*, *Mantra + Yoga Magazine*, *Elephant Journal*, *MindBodyGreen.com*, *The Literary Bohemian*, *Sivana East*, *Poetry Quarterly*, and elsewhere. Carroll is on the faculty of the Yoga Teacher Training Program at The Lotus Pond (located in Tampa, Florida), teaches writing at Ringling College of Art and Design, and leads Yoga and Writing Workshops and Retreats all over the world.

Carroll engages in her lifelong passion and finds balance through mindfulness, yoga, and writing. She fuses these practices to help others connect to their own creative spark and inner peace. As a certified E-RYT 500 Hour Yoga Teacher, Reiki Master, Writer, and Meditation Guide, Melissa aims to assist her students with navigating through the challenges of daily life. Carroll once suffered from Anxiety and Depression, but through the adoption of Reiki Energy Healing and Yoga principles she developed healthy coping mechanisms to effectively manage her Anxiety and Depression. Carroll received her Master in Fine Arts Degree in Creative Writing from the University of South Florida. Her website is www.theyogawriter.com.

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- Progressive Ad : [00:00:00](#) Progressive Presents, get pumped inspiration to help you do insurance stuff. Okay, time out. You're going to let your budget be the boss of you. Take control with progressive's. Name your price tool. Tell us what you want to pay for car insurance and we'll help you find options that fit your budget. Here's some music to get you pumped down, down, down, down, down, down. I hear your budget laughing at you. Oh wait, that's just those kids laughing at me. Hey, no casualty insurance company. Price and coverage limited by state law.
- Intro to Show: [00:00:34](#) Hello and welcome to the Social Psychic Radio Show featuring Jason Zuk. Jason has been an intuitive psychic medium since 2004. This show will cover a variety of topics relating to spirituality, mediumship self-improvement and intuitive guidance. Whatever interests you remember that we are all here to share and learn. Sit back and get ready to socialize with the Social Psychic.
- Jason Zuk: [00:01:05](#) Hello and welcome to the Social Psychic Radio Show. This is Jason Zuk. I have with me this evening, special guest, Melissa Carroll, a personal friend of mine for many years. Melissa is known as the Yoga Writer. The reason I decided to have Melissa on the show this evening is because she has developed a very useful approach when it comes to incorporating mindfulness, yoga and creative writing to help herself and others. Melissa is an acclaimed writer, a certified e R, y t 500 hour yoga instructor, a Reiki Master, and a meditation guide. She's the editor of the essay collection, Going Om, Real Stories On and Off the Yoga Mat, and she's also been involved with two other poetry chapbooks called a Pretty Machine and the Karma Machines which received the Peter Award. Her work has appeared in Brevity, Mantra Plus Yoga Magazine, Elephant Journal, Mind, Body Green.com, the Literary Bohemian, Silvana, East Poetry Quarterly and elsewhere. She's also on the Faculty of the Yoga Teacher Training Program at the Lotus Pond, which is located in Tampa, Florida. She teaches creative writing at Ringling College of Art and Design and leads Yoga and Writing workshops and retreats all over the world. Without further ado, I am pleased to have and welcome Melissa to the show. Welcome to the show, Melissa. Hi.

Jason Zuk: [00:02:39](#) Thank you for coming onto the show this evening. I just gave you an introduction and went over your background. I know that one of the things I left out was that you have a Masters in Creative Writing from the University of South Florida. Is that correct?

Melissa Carroll: [00:02:55](#) Yes, that's right.

Jason Zuk: [00:02:57](#) And, uh, one of the things I wanted to talk you this evening about was how you're able to incorporate creative writing and yoga meditation and other aspects of your mindfulness concept. I'd like to have you kind of share that with us today. Tell me a little about your background. Originally you were from New Jersey that right?

Melissa Carroll: [00:03:19](#) Yup, that's correct. Good old New Jersey. Getting to say, I've been living in Florida now for 15 years. I got my undergraduate and my graduate degree here and it was in grad school that I really started to fuse together these practices and these paths of yoga and mindfulness and creative writing, like you mentioned in the intro. So that's where, that's where things started to gel after practicing yoga and meditation and also being a creative writer for many, many years. I hadn't put all of those pathways together until I was in my last year of graduate school.

Jason Zuk: [00:04:05](#) I know one of the things I wanted to, how one of your publications I mentioned Going Om and that's been out for about almost four years now. Is that right?

Melissa Carroll: [00:04:14](#) Yes. Yep. She'll be four years old this fall.

Jason Zuk: [00:04:21](#) And what, what motivated you to create your, your editorial essay collection of Going Om?

Melissa Carroll: [00:04:27](#) That's a great question. Well, the book actually. It really is an outgrowth of my combining all of these passions, right? Between creative writing and the power of storytelling and how language and story is really served to connect us and forge empathy between, between each other and also in just sharing the narratives behind yoga and how yoga can improve or, or change and benefit our lives in so many profound ways. Yoga has really become this incredible cultural phenomenon in the West in the last few decades and especially in America in the last, um, you know, just 15, 20 years it's exploded. And uh, there's something like 30 million Americans practicing yoga now. And so when I was in my last year of graduate school, it was my mentor Ira Segrungrun, who in his own right is an absolutely fantastic writer

and teacher. He said to me, you know, you're, you're a yoga teacher, you love Yoga, you love writing about yoga.

- Melissa Carroll: [00:05:40](#) And um, obviously you're also a writer and you love writing. Why don't you merge these, these two passions. And so I decided to create a book to curate book of stories from writers who I knew also practiced yoga because there are, of course, many, many books of yoga wisdom out there and we need those books. They're essential, but there weren't many contemporary books of literature that really dug into the power of storytelling and how yoga can change our lives, especially in the modern world. So I wanted to share those stories. I wanted to get those stories out there. Um, so I contacted a bunch of writers and fortunately they were all very, very gracious. And this book came into the world. It became a real thing.
- Jason Zuk: [00:06:34](#) That's phenomenal. I know before we got on the air, we discussed your idea of what created Going Om. I want to see if you can share that in particular with our audience.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:06:45](#) Yeah. You know, for, for me too, it was really a journey for myself. How writing has helped me with my own anxiety and depression. Right? And how I know for so many other people we live in our heads and we think that we're the only ones who experience suffering and isolation and loneliness and we all have those nagging voices within. And I think, you know, my aim and what really happened when so many of these writers shared their stories with me when I was collecting the works for this book was that their stories were about their own personal struggles. And the thing is, you know, we all have different details. The details of our lives are different of course, but the underlying universal emotions that we all experience are the same. You know, we all want to feel like we belong. We're all seeking inner peace.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:07:48](#) At the end of the day, we're all seeking that, that sense of tranquility. Y'All want to be happy and are universal, you know, um, how we arrive at those states of being might look different, but the qualities themselves remain the same from person to person. And this is why for most people you read a novel and you've been brought to tears or certainly watched a movie, right?
- Jason Zuk: [00:07:48](#) Definitely.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:08:14](#) And you've been brought to tears because the details are, yeah, the details are unique and specific, but we're all human.

Jason Zuk: [00:08:23](#) I love the way you. You bring up the fact that I get to watch a movie and you have one of those really emotional moments and you're trying to hide the tears so no one can watch you getting teary eyed or if you're by yourself, you might, you know, ball your eyes out and not think anything of it. But that emotional response. I think that that's something that you could, you could definitely. Everyone can identify with that when they, when they see something that just really impacts them emotionally. Having the ability to utilize that and reflect on that. And I believe probably utilizing meditation and Yoga as well as creative writing a can all touch on that type of an idea where you could take thoughts and, and passions and put them into words.

Melissa Carroll: [00:09:08](#) Exactly, exactly. You know, words are so powerful and I know you know this, but the words that we're, we're natural storytellers. The human species, uh, thrives and survives on stories. This is how we pass on vital information from generation to generation and arguably our capacity for sophisticated, complex language is really what enabled our species to survive and basically take over the planet. And this is why stories resonates so deeply with us. Exactly like you said.

Jason Zuk: [00:09:47](#) Everybody has a story to tell everybody and reveal something about themselves through their stories. It's part of the shared human experience that we call our memories and our culture and our individuality as well. When it comes your creative writing career, I know that Going Om was not your first thing that you were involved in. Can you tell us a little about your earlier projects?

Melissa Carroll: [00:10:15](#) Sure. I would be happy to, um, prior to the book, Going Om, coming out, I also had a Chapbook of poetry. A chapbook is just a smaller book of poetry and um, that was published by a smaller press that's based in Tampa, actually a Yellow Jacket Press and they're a wonderful supporter of the literary arts and um, so that came out. I had a smattering of publications with some literary journals as he mentioned in the intro as well. Thank you for that.

Jason Zuk: [00:10:52](#) You're welcome. What prompted you to want to pursue creative writing as your passion?

Melissa Carroll: [00:11:00](#) Oh, that's a, that's a great question. So I love how you said everyone has a story to tell. Right. And I completely agree with that. That is something I think is so, so true. And not everybody wants to share their story via the written word. That's, that's of course perfectly fine. But for me, I knew I wanted to be a writer from the very beginning. Technically before I could even write would draw stories when I was four years old and I would

actually, I would self publish, I would staple them together and I would make my own book covers. I would, uh, I would wrap them in wrapping paper. My mom always had a stash of wrapping paper in our, you know, like in the den so I would staple wrapping paper over my books and read them. I, you know, because I, of course I could interpret the terrible pictures that I had drawn on these pages and I would read them to my Labrador, my pet Labrador, Sandy in the living room.

- Jason Zuk: [00:12:08](#) I was gonna ask you, how did you get into poetry?
- Speaker 4: [00:12:12](#) Well, poetry is one of those forms that just always resonated with me. Obviously been growing up. I always loved to write and be creative and I loved reading poetry even though I didn't always understand it. And um, I think I learned a lot. I know I learned a lot in graduate school and uh, I really, really dug into the craft and the art of writing. I think it's the same way a musician might be compelled toward a particular instrument. You know, there, there is a natural instinct for music. Someone has a natural ear and a talent, but then there's a skillfulness that needs to be explored and refined through practice, through studying the greats that came before you, through just practicing on your own doing the work, so whereas some writers really gravitate toward novels and they're amazing at fiction. For me, I gravitate toward nonfiction writing because I believe the truth is stranger than fiction. The real life is crazy enough and poetry as well. I just, yeah, love it.
- Jason Zuk: [00:13:32](#) In terms of yoga itself, in popular culture, I know you mentioned earlier in the show how there's approximately \$30 million yoga practitioners at this point.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:13:42](#) Yeah.
- Jason Zuk: [00:13:43](#) One of the questions I wanted to ask you is yoga being portrayed in popular culture. What's your viewpoint on how media, various forms of media, social media, print media, movies, television, radio. How do you feel the portrayal of yoga in all those various forms depict what Yoga really is all about?
- Melissa Carroll: [00:14:06](#) Jason, that is a really good question. How much time do we have?
- Jason Zuk: [00:14:06](#) Laughing.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:14:14](#) We can do a whole podcast just on this one topic. I have no shortage of opinion, but to answer your question, it is a really

interesting phenomenon that's occurring because yoga is a really ancient tradition. Um, the ancient scriptures of Yoga, the texts of yoga are thousands of years old and in its original intention Yoga stems from the sanscript word for huge, which means to yoke together, to unite, to bridge together. And so we often interpret this and especially in the modern world as uniting our ego self, the part of us that identifies with our personality, our likes, our, our judgments, our opinions, our preferences with our higher consciousness that we're so much more than just our set of personal identification. And so that brings us to this really interesting convoluted scenario as yoga emerges.

Melissa Carroll:

[00:15:34](#)

And, and, uh, some people, you know, I get perhaps, for lack of a better word, they say yoga evolves through the ages. And the beauty of yoga. I will say this, the beauty of the practice of yoga is that there are so many dimensions to it that it is really like water. It can fill any container that you put it in, right? So if you're really, if you're low back pain, which is one of the most excited as being one of the most common reasons why people seek out yoga these days, especially in America, if you have low back pain, yoga can help you on the physical dimension. Yoga will help you feel better and a more balanced, more open within your muscles and your connective tissue within your joints, you'll feel better. Um, however, yoga is a multidimensional practice and we also know the Yoga studies very, very clearly.

Melissa Carroll:

[00:16:31](#)

Talk about how the physical dimension is directly interwoven with the mental, emotional, and energetic dimensions of ourselves too. We also know this on a biological level. So if I go to a yoga class because my low back hurts, I actually just had a student tell this to me. Um, last week he started coming to yoga because he has a herniated disc and he's discovered that not only is his back's feeling better, but all sorts of other things are starting to feel better too, and he's experiencing less stress in his life and he's able to take deeper breaths throughout the day, which allows him to be more calm and more at peace even when he is, let's say, stuck in traffic or getting tense at work or something like that. The effects of Yoga will, if you let it, you know, the effects of yoga will permeate into these other avenues, these other areas of your life.

Melissa Carroll:

[00:17:27](#)

Um, and, and that's the beauty of yoga. It's, it really is an amazing practice. And I do, I do also want to add that because we do live in the west, I heard it said once that we are a body focused culture, you know, especially in America, we're a hyper attentive to the physical form and fresh for all of its benefits and all of the negative attachments that come with that. Right. Um, so we've really attached to the physical practice of yoga the postures. But

the ancient practice of yoga really didn't focus on the physical element at all. It was really more on the meditative qualities to get us out of the egoistic mind and into that higher space of consciousness where we are more connected, which as we were chatting about before, is actually the same idea with writing how stories connect us. Right when we practice your ritual.

Jason Zuk: [00:17:27](#)

Exactly.

Melissa Carroll: [00:18:32](#)

Yeah, it's beautiful. It's really beautiful. There are so many parallels between yoga and storytelling, so I could go on...

Jason Zuk: [00:18:46](#)

Just the whole idea is phenomenal. I would want to know when you practice yoga at the term practice applies to so many different aspects of it. Learning it, mastering it. I don't think anyone really masters Yoga. It's a process, right? It's a journey. How does meditation play into attaining your mastery of yoga itself?

Melissa Carroll: [00:19:09](#)

That's a wonderful question. It's a really important question and I wouldn't consider myself a yoga master. I've been practicing for 12 years, but I also want to qualify that the first like two years or so. You know, I started out. I'm not naturally flexible. I'm. I never felt like I was athletic growing up. I was the girl taking yoga classes at the YMCAS, sweating and shaking in the back row. I wasn't like just one day stepped onto my mat and you know, everything clicked and it was beautiful and that was not the case and I don't think that's the case for many, many people, especially many modern people.

Jason Zuk: [00:19:09](#)

I'm sure.

Melissa Carroll: [00:19:52](#)

So yeah. So I just wanted to qualify with that and actually while I was starting my yoga practice 12 years ago, I was also really getting into my personal meditation practice and they were separate. At the beginning I was taking Buddhist meditation classes, which you also know about because he went to a couple of Tampa, Florida and they really, those classes as weekly hour long meditation classes. My life in such a profound way because not only did I learn that just by sitting still typically still and slowing down and looking inward. I could uncover that sense of inner peace that I had always been seeking, but of course I had been seeking inner peace in the external had been really seeking outer peace and that wasn't working. I'd always thought happiness from achievements, right, or validation from other people, from from being liked, from feeling like I belonged.

Melissa Carroll: [00:21:03](#) Now, these are really essential traits are essential parts of what it means to be human, but it didn't give me that lasting sense of serenity that I had always desired, especially growing up with depression and anxiety. I just wanted to feel content. I wanted to just have that, that, that magical something that I knew though, those yoga masters, these enlightened being deemed to have and it seems so elusive, and through those meditation classes I started to taste inner peace and it was what I'd always thought and it was like, oh, I didn't have to search outside myself. Right? It's the great illusion, the pursuit of happiness. The pursuit implies that we have to struggle for happiness when all we have to do is close our eyes and turn inward and remember that everything we're seeking is already residing within us.

Jason Zuk: [00:22:01](#) I love that. Actually. I think the fact is so many people don't realize you can journey inward and have a phenomenal experience with that process. You're getting to know yourself on such a level where spirituality, that I feel very strongly, it really reflects our connection within ourselves and the larger collective whole. I'm not talking about organized religion, I was talking about spirituality itself. Having that capacity to connect to your higher self, being able to develop that strong meditative state of mind. And um, I, I, you know, I've tried to do yoga myself and I haven't been so successful with it. A couple of fire ants demonstrated that once during one of your outside sessions, but definitely I definitely want to expand my own perspective regarding yoga and the future and I know you've always offered me that opportunity. I need to take you up on that more than just words. Let me ask you this.

Jason Zuk: [00:22:01](#) Go ahead.

Melissa Carroll: [00:23:03](#) Oh, I was just gonna say, I mean, I know how intuitive you are and I know, um, you know, how you help people so much through your own intuition that I, I can guarantee you that moving mindfully in a yoga practice would only amplify your gifts so much more.

Jason Zuk: [00:23:23](#) That would be phenomenal. I have a lot of clients that come to me and ask, how do you meditate? I don't know how to meditate. I try. It doesn't work, and I tried part of my sessions with them to give them some basic pointers. I'm one of the things I recommend to them is learn yoga. Then I also say try to find a guided meditation class and usually they'll come back and follow up me and telling me that they've actually been able to attain some level of a meditative state. I think that's our greatest challenge with all our devices. We're so plugged in trying to unplug for just a little bit of time and you know that's also one of

my challenges. Going back and trying to be one with nature, unplugging, not having to check your status update with your social media for a few days or a few hours. Those are our challenges in this modern age that we live in right now and I guess what I would like to ask you is for anyone who's wishing to unplug a little bit, how would you recommend that they learn more about yoga?

Melissa Carroll: [00:24:22](#) Oh, that is such a, it's such a great question. And so, so many good points too. Um, I know it's hard for all of us to unplug. We've become addicted to technology and social media, right? Social media is specifically designed to give us those hits of dopamine and those hits of Serotonin so that we crave it. We want to keep going back. We want to be. How many likes do I have? Even if like, I know you and I both, we post a lot of content about mindfulness and inner peace and yet we're still craving like how many likes did I get on that post? From my Rumi Poem. It was pretty funny. It was Rumi's intention when he wrote that poem for it to go viral, but you know, that's okay.

Melissa Carroll: [00:25:09](#) But. Oh, I was just going to say, so to reiterate your question then, how can people kind of start exploring a yoga practice or meditation practice? Correct? Correct.

Jason Zuk: [00:25:09](#) Correct.

Melissa Carroll: [00:25:24](#) Okay. Um, that's, that's a really great question. So there are so many different styles of yoga that are currently on offer in America, and a lot of times it's funny because the. This also goes back to your previous question about the landscape of Yoga in America these days. They're really globally to, in our modernized civilization. Um, the yoga that is practiced today is a reflection of the energy of the modern world. Much of the yoga that is offered if you walk into most yoga classes that at least I've experienced around the United States, they're pretty vigorous. They're pretty powerful and some of them are in heated room. Hot Yoga is so popular and with that sense of activity, it's a very physical practice.

Melissa Carroll: [00:26:17](#) It's demanding, it's pretty, it's it, it'll promise you all sorts of things from losing weight to amping up your metabolism to getting as strong as all those sorts of physical benefits that we attached to in the West because we're so body oriented. So I would tell people who are new to yoga, to not just to walk into any old yoga class to really start with either a class that is designed for beginners or a class that is specifically called gentle, um, because those classes will be more mindful and will go slower in nature. They will be tailored to the needs of a beginner.

They will give you proper alignment so that you don't injure yourself. Um, yoga is not designed to injure us when it is done improperly. Of course when the teacher is not teaching skillfully enough or the student has previous injuries or they're just competing with themselves or competing with the person on the mat next to them, which is a very natural human, a conditioned response in the yoga class.

Melissa Carroll: [00:27:19](#) As in life, I'm a lot of people push too far and it's part of my mission to see that people don't push too far anymore that we actually start to let go. And so starting with beginner classes, you can even, you know, why not utilize social media for good because there is so much good that comes out of social media. There are lots of classes offered on Youtube. I'm going to be starting to offer some youtube yoga classes because I want to take advantage of these platforms. There are pros and cons to everything, right? Even even social media. Yeah, there are same with meditation. There are lots of great meditations on Youtube. There's one for specific needs to. I know for myself, when I've gone through periods of stress and I've suffered from insomnia, I will specifically look up guided meditation for Insomnia and they helped me go back to sleep. It's, it's a beautiful, beautiful thing. They're very healing.

Jason Zuk: [00:28:22](#) That's great. We actually have a call. Melissa. Welcome to the show. May I ask who is calling. Yes.

Chris: [00:28:22](#) Yes. This is Chris.

Jason Zuk: [00:28:36](#) Hi Chris, Welcome to the Show. Do you have a question?

Chris: [00:28:37](#) Oh, okay. Well, um, no. I was just thinking I've been great fans of both of you. Your abilities are off of the charts. I mean I've followed you both on the topic of this podcast is in guiding and I, know, you were saying Melissa, I mean the whole point of the practices is kind of tuned into this higher consciousness, but I'm just curious. I mean, I know find myself now being ridden with anxiety. I want to either self medicate or kind of fall prey to those vices or limitations. I mean, would you recommend that when you feel that way, you look into yourself and reach out to that higher consciousness or to kind of just maybe take a few deep breaths and center yourself and trying to stay in this plane, in this kind of consciousness.

Melissa Carroll: [00:29:26](#) That's such a great question. Thank you so much for calling in to Chris. I really, really appreciate that. Oh Great. I'm really, really good question. So this state of higher consciousness can really only be accessed. It can mostly be accessed through dedicated

and Those dedicated practices, like you mentioned, deep breathing exercises of which actually the yoga tradition outlines many different techniques. There are so many different practices that we can explore and everybody is unique and different techniques will work better for you depending on the situation, depending on the day and just depending on on you yourself. Right? So I'm actually, why don't I guide us all in one of the most fundamental breathing techniques, which is known as the three part breath. It's a, it's called the derga breath and it's also referred to as the full yoga breath, and this is something that your listeners can do that anybody can do it.

Melissa Carroll: [00:30:35](#) It's perfect and you can do it when you're sitting in your car, when you're having a, you know, when you're in the office or when you're having a conversation with someone because all you have to do is breathe and you're already doing that all the time. Anyway. The breath is to answer, to answer your question, simply, uh, working with the breath and working with these different breathing techniques will really help to soothe anxiety. Um, and like you pointed out for myself, I have struggled with anxiety, uh, for many years and I still struggle with it. I'm not going to pretend like I'm enlightened or like I've got it all figured out, but I do know that these practices have been so deeply powerful. They've been so key to helping me live in a state of contentment. And even when I have been caught in a state of anxiety, I can do these practices and they really ease so sensation because anxiety is a physical experience and we all feel anxiety differently.

Melissa Carroll: [00:31:45](#) You know, for me, I feel it in my shoulders, my shoulders get really tight, my jaw clenches and I get a tingling in the belly. And about a third of our nervous system actually lives in the lining of our guts. So we feel a lot of emotions in our, in our guts. And the other amazing thing is that this breath and most of these breathing techniques will allow you to take a deeper breath. They have the diaphragm. I'm getting the little particular now,

Jason Zuk: [00:31:45](#) No problem.

Melissa Carroll: [00:32:17](#) but the diaphragm, when you take a deep breath, it descends and you can take in more air and you actually soothe those nerves along the lining of your gut. You can really biologically create some shifts for yourself. Uh, and there's, there's the field. It's incredible. There's so much of modern science too is catching up and doing studies to really prove that these techniques work. And we also know that taking these deeper breaths shifts the nervous system out of the fight or flight response and moves us into the person or the relaxation response to a parasympathetic nervous

system. So, um, yeah. So with all that said, are you guys okay with trying a few deep breaths?

Chris: [00:32:17](#)

Sure.

Jason Zuk: [00:32:17](#)

Absolutely.

Melissa Carroll: [00:32:17](#)

Okay, great. So the first thing, wherever you happen to be, I'm assuming you guys are sitting down to out there, uh, and if you're driving, when you're listening to this, just make sure you keep your eyes open. Eyes can stay open or they can be closed. Whatever feels. Just make sure that you're in a comfortable seat and if your legs are crossed, uncross them just so there's more of an evenness across the Hampton and also the shoulders because everything's connected. And make sure you're sitting up pretty tall so that you're actually opening a little across the chest and your lungs can then take in more air. For most of us, we breathe really shallow. We're only taking in about a third or a quarter of what our lungs can hold. So on your next inhale, I'm going to invite you to breathe a little deeper to imagine as though you could draw that in breath down into the base of your lungs, and then as you exhale, just let it go.

Melissa Carroll: [00:34:12](#)

Let the breath release, and then again as you inhale, soften your belly. As you exhale, let your navel drawback toward your spine. So we're emptying on the exhale and we're filling up on the inhale. So the inhalation create softness. Soften your belly. As you exhale, your navel gently pulls back toward the spine. We're not engaging like when you're doing a setup, but just there's a movement there like a wave we breathe in, the belly softens, we breathe out, navel hugs back toward the spine. This is the first stage. Inhaling, imagining that breast drilling down into your lower lungs, exhaling, letting the breath go in. The other magic thing as you continue to breathe deeply here is that when you refocus your attention on these specific techniques in the body, your mind concentrates more, and then suddenly all those busy thoughts that we had swirling around that tend to cause us anxiety and stress and tension.

Melissa Carroll: [00:35:24](#)

They start to fall away slowly and slowly, slowly and slowly. So then on your next breath, take in a deep breath, fill up, soften the belly, and now forget about the belly and just let the breath rise up into your solar plexus, across the sides of your ribs. And as you exhale, let all of that go. And again, we breathe in, down into into your navel, and then let the rest rise up into your solar plexus, flaring out the sides of your ribs. Exhaling completely. Now we'll get the whole thing. All three parts, breathing and down to the belly. The solar plexus, the top of the breath rises up

across your heart, your chest, and we exhale slowly emptying and we'll just take one more deep breath in the belly, solar plexus, all the way up into the collarbones, the buoys of the upper lungs. Exhaling, nice and slow. So that's a pretty quick introduction. You can of course return to your natural breath or feel free to continue.

- Jason Zuk: [00:36:28](#) That's amazing.
- Chris: [00:36:31](#) I already feel notably more relaxed.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:36:34](#) That's so great. I'm so glad.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:36:40](#) That's why I practice yoga.
- Chris: [00:36:44](#) I'm intrigued to see where this journey takes me. As Jason said, you know, that's what life is all about. It's a journey we are on, and to keep on learning more and more. As much as I can kind of everyday.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:36:56](#) Exactly. That's exactly it.
- Chris: [00:36:59](#) Thank you so much both for really. Thank you so much. So I'm really grateful.
- Jason Zuk: [00:37:06](#) Thank you so much Chris. We appreciate your call. Thank you. Thank you. That was great.
- Jason Zuk: [00:37:18](#) I would call that the primer of a short meditative state literally was very relaxing. Hopefully our audience can try that as well when they listen to this, if they are either now or in recorded version, uh, that, that was really good. It's very nice. You know, it's interesting. One of the things I will tell you ever since I started doing my readings professionally as an intuitive psychic, one of the things that I've developed as you go, you just develop your strategy over time. And um, I do three or four deep meditative breaths before I do a start of a reading to kind of channel myself, ground myself and get me focused on whatever intuition I could pick up or, uh, from my, from my readings. And I think that the breathing aspect, the breathing exercises you just described and everything, I really do think everything goes hand in hand, our bodies are equipped to be in deep meditative thought into, you know, even for people interested in growing their intuition or their connection to others. It's all interconnected. It's all interrelated. I think you could definitely learn how to improve your intuitive abilities through meditation, through Yoga, through breathing exercises. There's so many benefits to it.

Melissa Carroll: [00:38:35](#) Absolutely.

Melissa Carroll: [00:38:38](#) Yeah. It really is. It's all, it's all connected. So many of these paths lead us to the same place and I'm so glad that you're already naturally doing it. And I think a lot of us are already naturally doing it. In some ways. I even will say to my beginning, Yoga and meditation students that, you know, when you're feeling overwhelmed or super stressed out, most of us will like take a deep sigh. You know, when you're just having a rough day, you get into the car by yourself and you're take a deep inhale and exhale and just let it all go. That's your body, that's you. That's your innate wisdom telling you have to practice what in Yoga is referred to as Pranayama, deep breathing and energy techniques, because we know that it holds these gifts for us and that it can move us into a state where we're, we're not gripped by stress or anxiety or busy thoughts. We can move through it and beyond it even for just a few moments.

Jason Zuk: [00:39:41](#) Absolutely. I, uh, I know personally from talking to you, you had some very interesting stories regarding, uh, your yoga retreats that you've been on where you literally unplugged everything and I wanted to see if you could share some of that with our audience regarding when you're in a, in a very meditative state of mind for a prolonged period of time.

Melissa Carroll: [00:40:05](#) Sure. Absolutely. Um, so and again, you know, for, for me, I, uh, I struggle with, I struggle with my mind racing with getting caught up in my own stories. That's part of us being storytellers too, right, is we're constantly telling ourselves the story of our life in our own heads and that's what can lead us to anxiety. And it's usually some, some story that sounds like I'm not good enough or I am. I've never, I never have good luck. I'm always unlucky in love or I, I, things will never work out for me or that's not possible. Um, all of those stories can really hijack us. So it's so important to use these tools which are available to us if we choose to. And meditation and being in those deeper meditative states is so powerful. So I go once a year to North Carolina where I actually lead a yoga and creative writing retreat and we're going back this fall. We'll be there from the last, the very last weekend of September into early October at this beautiful, beautiful place called. It's called the Art of Living, which is wonderful. And, um, it, it really is up there that we, work with these varying practices like we were talking about at the beginning, the podcast where we journal and work into our stories and the power of language, and then we start to move beyond that. That's where those deeper meditative states actually come in because as much as I love language, I also have to recognize the limitations of language. That language is only here to create a label. And if I get

so caught up and attached to a label, I'm sort of missing that bigger picture. So when you sit in meditation, and I should also say that all meditation does not have to be seated. Walking Meditation is great for me. I, I gained a lot of my meditation from being outside in nature and either if I'm just sort of sitting outside but also walking and being in nature is a really powerful way to reconnect us and help us remember that we're.

- Melissa Carroll: [00:42:31](#) So we're, we're part of something that is so much bigger. Of course that's true on a biological level, um, but it's true on the level of the heart as well. And in those deeper emotional state, or I'm sorry, I should say deeper meditative states, my resentments, my grudges, they start to fall away. I have a capacity for forgiveness towards myself and towards others that I didn't have when I was just sort of going through my day and reacting to the things that happened to me. Which is the normal human response.
- Jason Zuk: [00:42:31](#) Absolutely.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:43:10](#) Meditation allows me, yeah, it allows me to like to access this wellspring of compassion for myself and for others that you know, I didn't even know was there.
- Jason Zuk: [00:43:21](#) I think that's a valid, very valid point. The fact that when you utilize meditation and Yoga, the mindfulness of it, it makes you realize that a lot of the things that bother us or consume us could have a big impact. You can take you to really reprogram the thought process. Just from how you, how you manifest your ideas surrounding it. You know, you brought up the stories we tell within ourselves, our thought processes, and I consider that the what if moments. I tell my clients all the time, erase your negative What if moments and focus only on positive one because anything, what if is, what if that? It doesn't exist. It doesn't need to be even focused on.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:44:05](#) That's such. That's such great advice and I actually, I think that is a massive key to anxiety. Anxiety is really rooted in that negative. What if story pattern, isn't it? It's like, well, what if this happen?
- Melissa Carroll: [00:44:21](#) Let me freak out about it now and then it'll somehow be prepared in case it does happen because I'm already freaking out, which is really not an effective way to go through life.
- Jason Zuk: [00:44:33](#) Absolutely not. You just don't want to have to deal with that at all on any level.

- Melissa Carroll: [00:44:40](#) Right Right. Beginning to rewrite those stories is so key. And using meditation is what helped me start to rewrite my own stories. Um, I was so somber. I was, I was one of those, those people growing up, college who could really put on a happy face externally. I could sort of like flip the switch and have that public persona. But deep inside I was really sad. I had a, you know, all of this uncertainty and all of this rumbling within my emotion and it was um, when I started to practice Reiki and meditation and Yoga that I started to smooth those rumbling emotional states out, not by seeking anything on the outside, but by looking even deeper inward beyond those emotional states and then through them.
- Jason Zuk: [00:45:48](#) For sure. Getting into the Energy Healing. I'd like for you to talk about that for a little bit. Can you tell us how you got involved in the Reiki energy healing?
- Melissa Carroll: [00:45:52](#) Sure. You know, it's funny how life works. When I graduated college, I wanted, I, okay. When I graduated from college I immediately thought like, great, I'm a poet and didn't have a practical plan of how a poet makes a living. You know, how I could actually get a job as a poet. Unfortunately there aren't too many of those on offer, but I did get a job as a freelance writer in Tampa, just very, very part time stuff and it wasn't paying the bills, so I had to get a night job as a receptionist at a spa. And you sometimes you just think like, oh, I'm just going to do this, this thing, this side Gig or whatever. This small activity, it's not going to amount to much, but it's going to help and that's the thing that changes everything. We never know what the profound turning point in our lives is going to be.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:46:50](#) And for me, getting this job as a receptionist at the spa allowed me to meet my reiki teacher, Maggie Wilcox. Uh, she came in one day. It was a beautiful spot that specialized in not only massage of course in facials, but you can also get these, these energy treatments which I had never heard of or really been a around or exposed to. And when she showed up at the spa, um, I had a little break and nobody else was there. So she gave me a free Reiki treatment and I experienced this opening, this and that sense again of inner peace that I'd always wanted. And I was like, oh my goodness, what is this Reiki stuff? I have to learn everything about it. Teach me. And she did over the course of the next year, I went through what in the Reiki tradition. I'm sure some of your listeners are very familiar with this.
- Melissa Carroll: [00:47:46](#) They're referred to as the attunements, so the first attunement level is for self healing and then the second attunement level enables you to also heal others and then the third level enables you to give those attunements to actually help other people open

up to this healing path themselves. And reiki itself is very, very simple, very gentle, and yet very powerful practice because it works with Prana or chi. It's called Prana in the yoga tradition, the Sanskrit word, it's called Chi of course in Japanese. Reiki is a Japanese word and it's referred to as Chi in, uh, in the Chinese tradition such as Chi Gong or in Tai-chi. We've heard of these practices that work with that luminous of vital life force energy that just like the breath can, make us feel more relaxed, more deeply at peace in very, very simple ways.

Jason Zuk: [00:47:46](#)

Wow that is great aspect of things for sure.

Melissa Carroll: [00:49:01](#)

Yeah, I've experienced tremendous, tremendous changes in my life because of Reiki and, um, that, that's the only reason why, that's why I do these practices because they worked for me because they've helped me heal. And I've been so fortunate that now, uh, it's exciting. I get to see these practices help other people heal too. Whether it's journaling, whether it's through yoga, meditation. or through through Reiki. It's, it's really, really beautiful.

Jason Zuk: [00:49:36](#)

What is the best thing about energy healing that you think can benefit the average person listening to your episode right now?

Melissa Carroll: [00:49:43](#)

Such a good question. I think the best thing about energy healing is that it does not operate on the same mention as the mind and the mind is usually what gets us into trouble. So the mind what is mostly with what's governing our experience because our thoughts are for most of us mere humans, unless you are a yoga master, right?

Melissa Carroll: [00:50:12](#)

Who meditates all day long. Most of us have our thoughts constantly narrating our human experience. It's endless. Um, and actually one of my meditation teachers refers to this catalog of inner voices as the committee and we all have an inner committee and we have different committee members. You know, you have that inner voice of anger and that voice gets really, really loud and it's hard when we're angry. Our thoughts are so loud rattling in our brains that it's really hard to hear anything else going on. It's hard to hear your own inner wisdom or let alone advice from a friend and uh, conversely though we do have another committee member that the quietest committee member, which is the voice of inner guidance, of inner wisdom, of inner truth that is more deeply connected to that higher consciousness. The thing is that voice whispers, so we have to get very quiet ourselves through these practices so that we can hear our own inner wisdom, our own inner truth.

Melissa Carroll: [00:51:20](#) And that's what I love about energy healing. You could be, you know, your mind could be racing, but if you get a Reiki treatment, Reiki is operating on the level of energy and energy is, is a more subtle, more refined element then, and I don't mean element as, as, as, as a measurable element, but it's a in these spiritual traditions. It's this subtle refined quality that animates us and that gives rise to all life and all of this vitality that we experienced on planet earth. And we can tap into that and be more connected to that and we can use it to uplift us when we're feeling down. There are breathing techniques that can really, really rev up your energy, and we joke and yoga that it's like a free shot of espresso, of course, Reiki, Reiki and other forms of pranic healing.

Melissa Carroll: [00:52:18](#) They generally helped to sue's right. They're very calming. There are very, uh, very sweet, but they also do a lot of deep work: Prana, chi, that deeper life force energy it'll get in you and it will start bringing up and helping you work through your old wounds and your old stories that are holding you back. And so just so that you can move past them and move on with your life.

Jason Zuk: [00:52:18](#) And I think a big part of that has to do with the Chakra aspect of things. Can you explain that briefly?

Melissa Carroll: [00:52:50](#) Absolutely. Um, so the Chakra system is in the yogic tradition, and also many other spiritual traditions, a way of looking at this subtle life force energy. And um, I, I've heard it said, I believe it was the famous yoga teacher, Shiva Rea who said anytime you travel to new territory you don't really know where you're going. It's really helpful to have a map from the people who've been there before and they have already charted out that territory.

Melissa Carroll: [00:53:24](#) The chakras are that map for us as we begin to navigate this really subtle layer of experience. You know, it's really obvious if you stub your toe, you're going to feel that because that's a very physical aspect, but energy is also very physical and it's very powerful because stress is very energetic, right? Stress isn't actually stress manifests physically and it causes all sorts of problems. For us, it causes heart disease, it causes back pain. It causes TMJ because it's tension. Headaches had arguments with your kids, it causes all sorts of problems, but stress itself is only energy, a very, very subtle aspect of reality. And so the Chakras are these condensed forms of energy. There are many, many different traditions and um, there are multiple Chakras within the human system, but for ease, most of us recognize that there are seven primary Chakras that run along the human body from the route, from the base, uh, at the, at the base of the hips, and that run all up along the spine through the crown of the head.

Melissa Carroll: [00:54:45](#) And these different concentrated areas of Prana, of energy. Uh, they are related to different physical aspects of ourselves. For example, the Root Chakra or Mula Dara Chakra that is related to our lower sort of the lower body, and even in the legs. There are seven unique Chakras just there alone in between the knees, the calves, the ankles, the soles of the feet that are a little bit more know, more specific. But in general, this root area also governs metaphysically or metaphorically how we feel rooted in our lives. Our primary concerns, you know, Are our finances secure? Do we have our primary relationships intact? Do we feel at home, in our own skin? Do we feel safe? Do we have shelter at night? Are we worried about when our next meal is going to come in? These are first Chakra issues and if you find that you're having issues in your life, you might feel what do we, what we often call this block right here. This area is blocked. Somehow this could show up in the. I could show up in all sorts of different ways. So I know for you to Jason as an energy healer and intuitive, you can kind of look at somebody's energy field and really see where there might be a sense of block or some fuzziness throughout their system.

Jason Zuk: [00:56:18](#) Yes, for sure. I know I do the pranic healing and it's very similar to Reiki because I've done the basic level of Reiki. And I just think energy healing is something that a lot of people should really learn about, just like yoga and meditation, I say all these things are very important to get exposed to it and learn about it and then practice it. The more we incorporate these types of modalities, healing modalities and practices into our daily lives, I feel like the more you'll be balanced and uh, you'll, you'll just be happier. You'll be more satisfied, you'll be more attuned.

Melissa Carroll: [00:56:51](#) Right? Right. At the end of the day, I exactly. That's what it's all about. If it's discovering that sense of inner peace and that happiness.

Jason Zuk: [00:57:05](#) Let me ask you this, the title of Your Essay Collection, "Going Om," tell our audience about the meaning of Going Om itself. I know there's some meaning there for any yogi out there.

Melissa Carroll: [00:57:20](#) Sure. So, uh, well the word ohm, OM itself, it's of course sometimes spelled and pronounced as OM, but ohm is considered to be that ancient sound vibration that connects us all. And this actually ties directly to what you were just saying in terms of energy healing. Uh, so with energy healing, we recognize that all matter is vibration that all particles operate on wavelengths. And so of course we look at the world around us, we look at ourselves and we see density, we see hard tactile, concrete objects, but that's only through the equipment of our

five senses. When we have more sophisticated equipment that allows us to see that vibration, we're able to see the electron swirling beneath everything. And so a sound, sound vibration is one of the most direct ways that we as humans can access a energy, right? And I think this is one, music itself is so powerful, white people are drawn to going to concerts or just listening to beautiful music can really change our mood.

Melissa Carroll: [00:58:39](#)

Um, that vibration gets into us and it affects us too. And I often use the metaphor of a tuning fork. You know, if you strike a tuning fork, it'll vibrate at a certain pitch, at a certain frequency, and then if you set that tuning fork down on a table, the table will also vibrate at that very same frequency. So it's contagious vibration. And we know this because we even use the word vibrate, right? You walk into a room, you can sense if they're a good vibes, are bad vibes. Even give me a skeptic who was like, yeah, whatever Reiki is fake. Um, they, they themselves have walked into a room and just gotten some weird sense and they might've said, yeah, I got good vibes from that person, or they seem, they seem pretty cool. I could trust them or I got bad vibes from that person.

Melissa Carroll: [00:59:28](#)

I'm probably not gonna. Call them again. We're picking up on these vibrational signals that don't necessarily require the equipment of our analytical mind. More subtle than that, but we're picking up on that stimulus, those signals all the same. So where does this bring us to OM? Well, OM is a vibration itself and the ancient yogic scriptures depict, OM as being this exceptionally powerful vibration. They're even doing, they have done many studies on cancer patients who chant OM, and because also that vibration is said to stimulate the vagus nerve in the body that helps to bring us into more of a relaxed state. These cancer patients reported feeling better, feeling more and more at ease. And uh, there, there are so many studies like that going on. Um, so OM itself really is the end all be all it. It's sort of like the starting vibration that gave rise to all matter that takes shape in the world. Me, you, the trees. One of my teachers, actually the owner of the Lotus pond, Val Fees. She says that OM is the sound of the waves crashing against the shore. It's the sound of the breeze between the leaves and it's the sound of your heartbeat and it's the sound of all of our heartbeats, right? It's that connective unifying by vibration.

Jason Zuk: [00:59:28](#)

I love that.

Melissa Carroll: [00:59:28](#)

Isn't that beautiful?

Jason Zuk: [01:01:01](#) Yeah. That is beautiful. We actually have another caller by the way.

Jason Zuk: [01:01:05](#) Oh, okay. Hold on one second.

Jason Zuk: [01:01:05](#) Hello Amala welcome to the show.

Amala: [01:01:14](#) Hi Jason. How are you?

Jason Zuk: [01:01:15](#) Good. Good. Thank you for calling in. Do you have a question for Melissa?

Amala: [01:01:21](#) I'm just listening and it's very beautiful. What you're saying I'm an avid yoga practice person as well. I don't teach it, but I'm doing it for five years, so I loved the practice doing pretty much like five to six times a week.

Jason Zuk: [01:01:21](#) Do you have a particular question at all that you'd like to ask Melissa?

Amala: [01:01:45](#) I don't. I was actually, you know what I just timed into the show but I'm looking up Melissa, your retreat so I might be interested in coming to that in the fall.

Melissa Carroll: [01:01:59](#) And so that sounds. That would be wonderful. Yeah, that would be great.

Amala: [01:02:04](#) So do you, do you do reiki healing? Is that what you do as well?

Melissa Carroll: [01:02:10](#) Yes. Yeah. So I also give Reiki treatments and they can be in person or long distance and I also attunements.

Amala: [01:02:10](#) Oh, you do attunements too.

Melissa Carroll: [01:02:10](#) Yeah.

Amala: [01:02:24](#) And how long have you been how we've been practicing or teaching yoga?

Melissa Carroll: [01:02:28](#) I've been teaching yoga since 2008, so 10 years. And I started all of these practices in 2006.

Amala: [01:02:40](#) Oh Wow. that's really cool. It just, I happened to be indian. So I really am into the Yoga myself. My parents got me into it in the eighties. I got into it. Yeah.

Melissa Carroll: [01:03:01](#) Yeah. I'm fascinated by the sort of cultural shifts and you know that that's all I just everything with how yoga is.

Amala: [01:03:01](#) Yeah.

Melissa Carroll: [01:03:13](#) Yeah. I've learned so much from all of my teachers.

Amala: [01:03:16](#) Yeah, it's, it's such a beautiful thing. The OM thing is like, I love it. This is the beginning of class and then at the end to seal the deal. It's a wonderful way to come home. It's beautiful. So I just really enjoy the whole scope of it. Not just the, the awesomeness but just the um, it is a mind body spirit connection and I don't know if you heard of the saying it is meditation and meditation in motion.

Amala: [01:03:44](#) And so, so I think it's just, I like, I like the traditional yoga practice. I mean a lot of it is um, if people make, have their own ways of intertwining what they've learned and making it their own. But I really enjoy the hot yoga and Men Jasa actually like that as well too, because you get both, you get your challenging in the positions and then you're also using your breath. Of course. And my favorite thing, my favorite thing is have breakfast. I don't even notice I'm using it so much. So the Darth, we'd have breath, so.

Melissa Carroll: [01:03:44](#) Yeah. yes, yes.

Jason Zuk: [01:04:32](#) That's phenomenal that you have been able to exercise that yourself and have been able to utilize it within your own lifestyle.

Amala: [01:04:35](#) Yeah. And it's interesting. cause like you, Melissa, you're a writer too. And, and I'm, I'm actually writing about, um, and it's interesting because I get my thoughts of course creativity while I'm on the Mat and uh, had, you know, something to record during class but, and I actually practiced that, a center to make a long story short, it's interesting that the, the beauty of the awareness, the mindfulness that you could just, it within just 60 minutes of just transporting yourself into a different zone and the different level of, of consciousness.

Amala: [01:05:15](#) So yeah, yeah. Beautiful.

Melissa Carroll: [01:05:20](#) So yeah, these practices are very powerful.

Amala: [01:05:26](#) They are, they are. And it just mind buddy.

Amala: [01:05:30](#) I can't even describe it. It's like a then land. It's like a mental totally different world when I'm on that mat and it's just, it's very,

it's fascinating. I'm learning so much about myself, you know, and I've been practicing for five years, but it's never, it's never ending. It's never ending and it's just a great way to, to really expand when there was moment a few years ago, I was doing an intensive study course and I and I realized how little I knew how much there is to know, of course the depth and the breadth of the yoga traditions because of course there are so many traditions were really in the West just practicing a very modern adaptation of Patanjali's Yoga, which is where the Haka of Hatha Yoga, Pradipika and then Vinyasa is really pretty recent and most people think the Asanas are like 500,000 years old. But originally there were only four yoga postures and they were just variations on meditation, but I didn't know that.

- Amala: [01:06:41](#) Very cool. Awesome. So where is Boone, North Carolina?. Where is that near?
- Melissa Carroll: [01:06:50](#) So, um, you know, I'm not super familiar with like North Carolina geography. I know it's near Appalachian State University have you can either fly into Charlotte airport, the closest airport of my head and then it's about like a two and a half hour drive from Charlotte. It's a gorgeous center. It's right on the top of the Blue Ridge mountains, so it's also off the Blue Ridge Parkway. It's a beautiful place.
- Amala: [01:07:20](#) I thought you were from there. Where are you from?
- Melissa Carroll: [01:07:24](#) Florida. From Tampa. So I traveled there. Yeah, I, uh, so the, the studio that I'm affiliated with, the Lotus pond, we lead retreats were in Tampa, but we lead retreats there. Um, and I lead the fall retreat.
- Amala: [01:07:39](#) Uh, interesting. I'm very interested in that. I had to get out more on your website, but um, that looks, that looks bad. My first yoga retreat was for my 40th and I went to Hawaii and I was like, it went to Maui is so much fun. It's a great vacation and you're, you're, you're getting in shape at the same time.
- Amala: [01:08:10](#) I'm going to definitely listen. I'm from Connecticut.
- Jason Zuk: [01:08:17](#) Okay. You are calling from Connecticut. I was just curious. I know you called in before because we're down in Florida. I was very curious to find out what's going where you're from because that's, you know, it's great to hear your perspective for our show.
- Amala: [01:08:34](#) Thank you. and a half and also sharing a little bit more. I am also legally blind, so I'm basically, I have central vision, I still can read

other good stuff. So the exploration of yoga has really helped me. I'm totally, no pun intended, opened my third eye, like nobody's business and it's just, the awareness is just absolutely fascinating and it's, I just can't even tell you. Um, and I'm writing about it in the sense. I know this is one of my lines. I feel more full losing my vision than I did when I had more vision when I was driving, when I was, when I was in college, reading normal books and all that other good stuff.

- Amala: [01:09:15](#) And now that, I mean I could still read, but I'm a little slower at it in the sense of vision issues with the glare and stuff. But that's not. Yeah, it's just, it's fascinating. I can't even tell you how much yoga has helped me through the really, really tough times of the ignorance and facing all of that. And I still do. And feeling like, you know, people. Uh, it's no, it's no, it's just, I don't know how to describe it. I don't, I don't blame anybody for it, just where they're at, where people are at, they don't know, so they, they make judgments and all that other good stuff, but I've learned only by the ignorance, ironically enough to fully love me unconditionally and the more I love myself through the practice of Yoga and meditation, I, you know, I'm my own best friend
- Jason Zuk: [01:09:15](#) Absolutely.
- Amala: [01:10:14](#) Yeah. Yeah. So it's interesting again.
- Amala: [01:10:24](#) Yeah. I just, I just get so like when I just said the yoga writer, I was like, wow. Yeah, that's all me. So I had to, I was just listening. Thank you so much. I appreciate everything and Melissa see me in person and Jason, you too.
- Amala: [01:10:43](#) Maybe you can come to yoga.
- Jason Zuk: [01:10:44](#) I would love to be in the deep end and maybe sign up for Melissa's retreat as well.
- Melissa Carroll: [01:10:54](#) We'll get, we'll get to there one way or another, Jason.
- Amala: [01:11:02](#) Just one thing before I leave. I liked the fact that you offer the weekend and the full week, so that's nice that you do that with the, with the price for the weekend. If you want to go, wow, I'd come for a week, but it's nice that people have that choice, that option, so thank you. Great. Thank you.
- Melissa Carroll: [01:11:21](#) Yeah. We tried to make it fit people's lives.

Amala: [01:11:26](#) Yes, absolutely. This sounds very intriguing. I've always wanted to go to North Carolina. Anyway, my parents were newlyweds there, so it's just I've always wanted to go. I'm going to go.

Melissa Carroll: [01:11:26](#) It was so nice to chat with you.

Jason Zuk: [01:11:26](#) Yes. Thank you so much for calling into our show. We appreciate it.

Amala: [01:11:51](#) Okay. You too.

Jason Zuk: [01:11:55](#) Melissa, It's been a great episode. Even despite our slight technical difficulties. Well, I'll do my best to have that edited in the future for our podcast. I know we went a little over, but I also felt that the information you're sharing right now, to me, it's so pivotal for our listeners, and I love your angle. I love that you can incorporate creativity with mindfulness, yoga and that you're tying this all together and creating your own brand of trying to help other people. I just think it's such a strong and such a vital, powerful thing.

Melissa Carroll: [01:11:55](#) Thank you!

Jason Zuk: [01:12:34](#) Before we end our episode. You're welcome. You're welcome. I am so lucky to have you as a close friend and fellow colleague on this stuff. It's great to welcome you to our show. I wanted to make sure that I brought up your website so that if any of our listeners want to learn more about you, they can go and click on your site and check you out. So if you can share that with us, I would deeply appreciate that at this time.

Melissa Carroll: [01:13:01](#) Oh yeah, absolutely. My website is the yogawriter.com, so that's easy. You can also find me on instagram @theYogawriter it is the.yoga dot period, the period yoga period writer. But my website is just www.theyogawriter.com. And there you can learn more about the book going on. You can even read a sample of one of the essays in the book. You can learn more about the retreat or um, any workshops that I offer as well. And, uh, soon there will also be more and more videos and guided meditations available for free and I do have a blog that I try to keep relatively updated, will be better at updating it.

Jason Zuk: [01:13:57](#) Could you let us know when your next retreat is going to occur?

Melissa Carroll: [01:14:03](#) Yes. So that retreat, that is the yoga and writing retreat that we were just chatting about and that's going to be the last weekend of September. It's going to be, um, I believe the dates are

September 28th. You can just stay on from Friday to Monday until October first or um, you could stay the whole week if you, if you want to as well until October fourth.

- Melissa Carroll: [01:14:03](#) Again that will be in North Carolina.
- Jason Zuk: [01:14:32](#) And what about your workshops? When are those going on?
- Melissa Carroll: [01:14:36](#) My workshops are primarily in Tampa, Florida at the Lotus Pond Yoga Center. So, um, those upcoming workshops can either be found on my website or even the Lotus pond, uh, the Lotus funds website for any of your listeners who are in the Tampa Bay area. But I'm also, you know, if somebody has a healing center or a Yoga Center, um, I do also love to travel and teach workshops and lead retreats all over the world.
- Jason Zuk: [01:15:04](#) That's excellent. That's excellent. I really appreciate you having on our, on our show today. So glad that you came on and shared your personal story with us and everything that you're working towards right now. I will promote you to everybody I know because I know everything that you're doing is such a vital and positive thing for so many who need this. I am so excited that we were able to have this episode today and go over this information and I wish you the best and I definitely want to have you on the show again in the future.
- Melissa Carroll: [01:15:38](#) Oh, me too. Thank you. I can't thank you enough, Jason, that you've been such a great inspiring friend to me all of these years and it's great to chat about the things we love. So thank you. Thank you so much.
- Jason Zuk: [01:15:54](#) Absolutely. Thank you so much, Melissa.
- Melissa Carroll: [01:15:57](#) All right, take care.
- Jason Zuk: [01:15:59](#) I just wanted to tell everyone, our audience to tune in weekly to our episode Thursday nights. If anyone ever would wish to contact us, we do have a website now for the actual radio show, which is www dot d, the letter d, social psychic radio.com. Check out our site. It lists our upcoming feature guests and it also has some information about our episodes and the topics that we're covering, all those types of great things. Thank you so much for tuning in today and we look forward to having additional episodes with you each week.
- OUTRO : [01:16:41](#) Thank you for listening to this episode of the facial psychic radiation. Don't forget to join us for another episode next time.

If you enjoyed the show, we'd love for you to subscribe, rate, and give us a review on iTunes. You can also check us out on Facebook and don't forget to visit the facial psychic Youtube channel. Until next time. It's a big world out there. Keep an open mind. Embrace your paradigm and know that the universe is always yours to explore.

Macy's Ad:

[01:17:13](#)

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