

## Welcome

Hey Shakti community,

Thank you for being here.

If we haven't met yet, I'm Ruby (she/her)-- I'm the owner here at Shakti Athens. As Shakti continues to grow and evolve it's important to me that you, our community, have the opportunity to actually see what we're up to. These pages are a reflection of that.

Now more than ever I know who Shakti is, and she knows herself.

*Shakti is alive.*

So, while I recognize that it is unconventional as a business owner to share with you (the community) in this way, *here we are.*

**This document is about who Shakti is, where Shakti is headed, and choices at Shakti that impact you.**

I invite you to consider this as an emergence of a bigger vision.

I consider a growing community to be one where there is clear communication, access to education, and a willingness to share. This is my contribution to our growing community.

*In short, Shakti is up to something bigger, and I'm inviting you along.*

This is what you'll find here: **Intention, Choices and Action, Impact, and the Path Forward.**

## Intention

SHAKTI (as a concept) is the feminal principal of divine energy. SHAKTI's origins lie in Hinduism where she is also referred to as 'The Great Divine Mother.' She is creativity. She is fierce passion. She is power. She is action. She is responsible for creation, and she is the agent for all change. SHAKTI moves things forward. (she/her) (1)

Our mission at Shakti Power Yoga Athens is to bring SHAKTI to life:

"Shakti Athens creates community through authentic connection. We are joyfully committed to showing up with power yoga that inspires a vibrant and empowered life."

(written by our fall 2018 Shakti team)

Creation. Power. An agent of change. Ready to move things forward.

Our intention is to empower you (*give you the tangible tools, access to resources, equitable opportunities, and a space to show up, so that you can step into your rightful power as a human being and become your own best teacher*), our community, to harness and manifest SHAKTI from within.

This intention is embedded into the core of who we are. It's why we exist, and it's how we operate. I think the best way to show you what I mean is to offer you access into our studio team handbook...

This excerpt from the first page of our teacher handbook puts it in clearer terms:

*"We believe in compassion, connection, and courage. Our goal is for each individual to leave sweaty and feeling seen (aka loved). That responsibility lies within our team of teachers, assistants, desk staff, and managers. We generate compassion through awareness and our own personal commitments to grow. We (Shakti Athens) support you (as a teacher) and encourage you to be courageous-- step out of your comfort zone to share yourself powerfully with your students. This creates connection, and connection is the only path to community.*

And to clarify it even more, here are our team commitments:

*As a teacher I commit to showing up for the Shakti Power Yoga teacher and student community and stand for the following:*

*At Shakti we teach power yoga and specific offerings that compliment our sweaty Shakti practice.*

*We believe in balance-- the yin and the yang-- and that it is important to be challenged and work hard when it's time to be challenged and work hard and that it is equally as important to rest and restore when it is time to rest and restore.*

*Each class at Shakti is more than a physical practice. Students feel inspired to be up to something bigger than themselves and leave feeling empowered and connected. This can only happen when the teacher provides the guidance and environment for their success and growth.*

*Shakti teachers are actively committed to questioning bias, blind spots, and unconscious discrimination through inquiry within and outside of the Shakti team. Shakti teachers commit to*

*acting in allyship for POCs and marginalized communities. We are committed to showing up and stepping into discomfort in order to open the closed doors that house internal bias and discrimination.*

*All teachers are committed to personal growth on and off the mat. Our way of being is YES!-- to presence, possibility, and power.*

*Shakti team members are committed to asking big, small, easy, and tough questions to inspire understanding and connection. This means dropping what you "know" and being open to receiving. Our team members ask questions and minimize assumptions.*

*We grow by sharing and listening as a contribution to the collective whole. 'I am committed to listening when I have the opportunity to listen, and to sharing when I have the opportunity to share- even if it's uncomfortable!'*

*We commit to inspiring our students to be in active listening and contribution to the whole of the class through meditation, inquiry, and asana.*

*At Shakti we are a team, a community, a family. We treat one another as such-- with respect, honesty, and authenticity. We treat our students like our family, too. We hold ourselves to a high standard of love and leadership.*

*Shakti is a special place because of our commitment to (consistently) Show Up, (let it get a little messy) Sweat, and (trust that we will always) Shine! "*

**It's important for you to see what our intentions are. It's equally important that you know that I know that *intentions are not enough.***

I lived a lot of the first-part of my 'yoga life' thinking intentions were enough. Then there was a watershed moment.

Old rule? Set intentions, the rest is luck (not my problem). Love and light. Namaste.

This old rule has a name, and it's called Spiritual Bypassing: *The use of one's spirituality, spiritual beliefs, spiritual practices, and spiritual life to avoid experiencing the emotional pain of working through psychological issues (2).*

I love how Robert Augustus Masters, PhD (he/him) puts it:

“Authentic spirituality is not some little flicker or buzz of knowingness... but a vast fire of liberation... providing both heat and light for what must be done.

Most of the time when we're immersed in spiritual bypassing, we like the light but not the heat, doing whatever we can to distance ourselves from the flames.

But if we really want the light, we cannot afford to flee the heat.

‘What gives light must endure burning.’ And being with the fire’s heat doesn’t just mean sitting with the difficult stuff in meditation, but also going into it, trekking to its core, facing and entering and getting intimate with whatever is there, however scary or traumatic or sad or raw.” (2)

The new rule? Look for truth. Acknowledge privilege, internal bias, systemic oppression, cultural appropriation, racism, inequity. Set intentions. **Accept the light and the heat.** Take action.

## Choices and Action

Because I am unwilling to stop at ‘good intentions’ or subscribe to ‘good vibes only mentality,’ there are choices to be made and actions to take.

What I have most learned while doing the work is to be ready at any moment to unlearn. A friend recently said to me, “It’s survival of the most open.” Feels like that, and I’m ready to lean in.

Instead of thinking of choices as changes, I like to think of them as the continual **emergence of a bigger vision**. It takes the edge off in my personal life to see my choices as creating the path for me to take right now instead of a crucial turn right or left, now or never, set-in-stone perspective. The beauty of life is that we get to evolve, hopefully together. And we are making choices every day.

Thankfully the roots of Yoga as an ancient practice serve as a guide for making these choices.

There are a few crucial topics that come up in bridging the gap from our intentions into action: yoga, health and wellness and the fitness Industry, diversity and inclusion, ethical pricing and accessibility, and giving back.

## 1) YOGA, then and now

We make the choice to honor and respect this sacred practice that we get to share with you.

The yoga we are most familiar with in Western culture is the physical practice, *asana*, but by definition yoga is a group of physical, mental, and spiritual practices that originated in Northern India over 5,000 years ago. (3)

There's a lot to unpack about yoga. The practice has a densely woven, imperfect history that (now) spreads throughout the world.

We commit to being in the work to honor and dig in to the extensive history of yoga around the world, bringing attention to its sacredness, injustice, and appropriation. We commit to being in the practice of appreciation for the transformational and comprehensive offerings of yoga, while at the same time choosing to bring you yoga in a way that relates to our modern age.

At Shakti we practice power yoga, and align with the principles of [Baptiste Methodology](#), an 80+ year old practice founded by Walt Baptiste (he/him), and developed and carried on by his son, Baron Baptiste (he/him).

"The Baptiste Institute and Baptiste Yoga exist to *disrupt the drift*. We awaken and empower human beings to live in wholeness and full potencia as a moment to moment experience.

We support the masses in discovering their purpose and provide structures to follow it. We are here to alter what is possible for ALL people."

**At Shakti we resonate with Baptiste Power Yoga as it is an intuitive practice, one that does not enforce any set of absolute rules. Students get all the benefits of traditional methods of yoga while still leaving room for creativity and play.**

It is the mission of Baptiste Power Yoga (and Shakti Athens) to make yoga accessible to anyone, from any background, looking for total physical, mental and emotional transformation. It is for everybody, no matter what level of fitness. It is purposefully challenging and active so that it can catapult students from wherever they are right now to whole new thresholds of physical and mental power.

What we love most about Baptiste Power Yoga is that it honors yoga as more than a physical practice.

We practice *Journey into Power* as an access to vitality, power, and freedom. We practice *meditation* as an access to getting present and awakening, and we engage in *inquiry* as an access to discovery and new possibilities.

Movement, meditation, and inquiry are the pillars of practice through which we are participants in life, ready to learn, grow and evolve.

We are here to *disrupt the drift*.

By August 2019, you will be able to read the ways in which each member of our team honors the sacred practice of yoga in their daily lives. We commit to sharing the roots of this practice with awareness and accountability, steering clear of cultural appropriation-- *the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing that you understand or respect this culture* (4)-- owning when we mess up, and stepping forward with new information. For example, by August 2019, we commit to replacing the dreamcatcher with a locally made macrame, because we realize and acknowledge the harm in using such a sacred artifact without the proper education and in a location where it is often touched by (dirty) feet. The relic is sacred, has not been properly or regularly identified and appreciated as such in our predominantly white space, and we are making the choice to stop harming. We will continue to use IGTV as a resource for digging deeper into the history and philosophy of yoga and will explore additional avenues to share resources and information to call attention to and honor the sacred practice of yoga.

We commit to being in the work, checking our privilege at the door, and taking action from the foundational principles of yoga with our roots in Baptiste methodology.

## **2) Health and wellness and the fitness Industry, especially as it pertains to bodies**

We make the choice to do things differently and to take a stand as health and wellness professionals.

If you're alive you have been impacted by the health and wellness industry. (Or as racial justice activist Rachel Ricketts (she/her) calls it: the wealth and hellness industry) The impact is pervasive, and it has been detrimental to all of us. (5)

The true magnitude is multi-faceted and interlaced with issues of access, manipulative marketing tactics, half-truth information, and the capitalization of human insecurities. I feel angry that so many of us (me too) have been taken advantage of. Health and wellness professionals and businesses so often rely on our natural desire to want to be healthy and live

longer. They prey on our insecurities, and before we can realize the illusion we are up to our eyeballs in corporate-fitness memberships, smoothie bowls, 'natural' groceries, culturally appropriated mantras, and lululemon. (Hi, it's me, 3.5 years ago.) In 2017, the health and wellness market was a 4.2 trillion dollar industry. (5)

Seeing wellness becoming more integrated into our lives is exciting, though. The evolution and increase of conscientious consumers is important. The industry becomes dangerous when wellness is served as a status symbol, self-care is commodified, and we continue to be shamed into trying to become 'better.'

Personally, I am committed to asking more questions: "Who is this wellness for?" "Is this really for my health?" "What are the facts?" "How can I make my health and wellness yoga studio business accessible, honest, and intentionally disruptive of diet culture?"

**One thing we already do at Shakti: we never promise you anything about your body.** This has always been non-negotiable. Shakti was founded on the belief that yoga, movement, and investing in yourself should never be about needing to lose weight or fix 'flaws.' We don't do core work to have abs, and we don't sweat to lose weight. We believe your body deserves to be cared for. We think it's more important to take care of yourself by modifying and making a pose work for you than what a pose looks like. **We believe in full-self integration, which means our bodies are not separate from our minds, hearts, emotions or spirit.** We believe that your intuition is your superpower, not whether or not your thighs gap. Bodies deserve to be celebrated.

Your body belongs to you, and we aren't going to tell you what you should do with it. (But we do recommend that you thank and celebrate it.)

Within our team we talk often about our 'lies.' Our lies are the things we tell ourselves that aren't true but we believe by default. Most of our lies can be summed up simply:

*I am not enough.*

The health and wellness and fitness industries offer us empty promises at the cost of a big buck to 'fix' our collective lie.

At Shakti we know that transforming our lies is a practice and it starts on the inside. You don't need us (or anyone) in order to transform your lie, but we are here to see you and support you along the way.

In fact a practice we like is as simple as something you tell yourself.

It goes like this...

The lie I give up is *I am not enough (or fill in your lie)*.

My new way of being is of *self-love (or joy or peace or love or celebration or whatever!)*.

We continue our commitment to not make empty promises about presumed results or tell you how your body should be. We commit to transformation from the inside out. We commit to questioning trends and being in continual pursuit of truth through research. We commit to calling out the bullshit when we see it and moving forward in shame-free practices in order to ethically support you. We commit to making movement accessible and honoring bodies as a piece of the whole puzzle of our individual selves.

### **3) Diversity and inclusion is much more than a PC trend**

We make the choice to acknowledge what has been missing from our space and take the necessary action to become inclusionary in order to create a safe space for everyone.

This step requires a willingness from me to see all the ways in which I have caused harm as a white, cis-gendered, hetero-sexual, able-bodied, raised upper-middle class woman in the South-- just by existing within the constructs of society. Only once I was willing to see my predisposition as harmful and take action in my personal life for the undoing of my own internal biases was I able to reconfigure my business to start to reflect a true desire to be diverse and inclusive.

In this process I had to come clean about a lot of truths I had never cared to see (or needed to due to my own status and privilege. *In anthropology, privilege is a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group. In sociology, privilege is the perceived rights or advantages that are assumed to be available only to a particular person or group of people.* (6)

Since Shakti (and the Western yoga scene at-large) is predominantly white, most of these uncomfortable truths involved my privileged position in our racist society:

- 1) I am (by nature in our society) inherently racist
- 2) Yoga in America is (by way of cultural appropriation and colonization) inherently racist
- 3) The only way to not be racist is to be anti-racist

Only once I accepted these truths could I do the real digging.

I started unlearning and relearning, observing and listening, having conversations and asking questions, and the path to diversity and inclusion became clear.

Intentional action through business policy, ethics, and doing personal work is the only way to make sure that inclusion (*the idea that everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities, and enjoy the same experiences*(7)) exists as more than a definition. The only way to bring diversity (*the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs* (7)) to life is to **invite diversity in**. It's the only pathway to belonging.

This is crucial, because as Gregory Lewis succinctly states, “**diversity is like being invited to a party, inclusion is being asked to dance, and belonging is dancing like no one’s watching.**” In other words, it’s not enough to simply have more seats at the table for marginalized folks if they don’t feel safe, or believe they need to act like someone they’re not in order to fit in (7).

*Unlearning old rules and relearning new rules has become my way of being. Instagram, books, and online articles have become my library, and I want to honor and recognize the works of all the scholars, activists, authors, and human beings for offering themselves as a resource for learning (especially impactful in my education have been Rachel Cargle (she/her) (8) and Rachel Ricketts (she/her) (9)).*

We commit to doing the work of anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion. We commit to inviting folks to the party, asking them to dance, and giving space to be fully seen and acknowledged. We commit to our team expectation that:

*Shakti teachers are actively committed to questioning bias, blind spots, and unconscious discrimination through inquiry within and outside of the Shakti team. Shakti teachers commit to acting in allyship for POCs and marginalized communities. We are committed to showing up and stepping into discomfort in order to open the closed doors that house internal bias and discrimination (excerpt from Shakti Athens team handbook).*

In July 2019, we invested in an Anti-Racism + Inclusion Audit with Rachel Ricketts (she/her). The audit ‘encompasses a high-level review of (our) business profile to advise of major flags, holes or blind spots in content, messaging, imaging and/or business operations as they pertain to anti-racism and inclusion.’ We are proud to implement her recommendations, and we commit to setting boundaries in Shakti by making clear what is and is not ok and why. We commit to intentional employment that reflects the diversity we desire to hold space for. We commit to continued consultation and collaboration with POC leaders and business-owners locally and globally in order to stay congruent with our vision for Shakti to be a safe space for diversity.

As the owner, I commit to listening, learning, and undoing the harmful actions of myself and my ancestors. I am committed to stepping aside in order to provide space for others to shine.

#### **4) Ethical Pricing and Accessibility**

We make the choice to utilize pricing that reflects the value of our services, is equitable in evening the playing field of income class, and includes the flexibility to make our services more accessible (especially to marginalized folx, as needed).

“(This) demands that we go bigger and broader than simply reconfiguring business-as-usual. It requires radical ways of rethinking money, value, reciprocity, access and equity...

We have to build new and intentional ways of being inside the containers that already exist. We have to move beyond the automatic, the assumed, and move towards that which has not yet been imagined, that which we can't fully fathom but that lives as a glimmer in our hearts...

This is about bold experimentation and paradoxical thinking.

This is about collaboration. Generation. Replenishment and repair...

This means letting go of the status quo.” (Bear Hebert, teacher and leader in ethical business strategy) (10)

I've been learning from Bear (they/them) for a few months now, and this-- *being in the work to operate with and within an ethical pricing framework*-- is the piece of the puzzle that previously seemed the most foreign. Bear's 'deepest purpose is to push us all in the direction of liberated moments.' All of their work happens in an anti-oppressions framework, which put this piece of the Shakti puzzle in relative perspective to the other pieces.

They recognize that capitalism is rooted in an interlocking system of white supremacy, patriarchy, ableism (and more). They are pro-fat, -queer, -trans, and -sex workers. They are actively looking at the intersections of power and privilege in themselves and they ask us to do the same. (10)

Understanding these intersections is the key to fitting this piece into its spot on the puzzle.

What I've learned from Bear is a way to structure pricing at Shakti in a way that feels ethical and takes into account accessibility with equity (11) in mind.

Making an informed decision about our pricing required me to consider the difference in equality (*treating everyone the same*) and equity (*giving everyone what they need to be successful*).

Equity and equality are two strategies we can use in an effort to produce fairness. Equality aims to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help (11).

This made me think about our Shakti core value to Empower: *to give you the tangible tools, access to resources, equitable opportunities, and a space to show up, so that you can step into your rightful power as a human being and become your own best teacher.*

Another watershed moment, and this one requires a total revamp.

Old rules?

- + Growth mindset over everything: Shakti must ALWAYS be growing
- + Scarcity as an underlying value: Always feeling broke
- + 'I want the most for the least'
- + More money up front, more people, more classes, more = better

New rules?

- + **Sustainability: The right amount of members, the right amount of classes**
- + **Trust as an upfront value and an internal sense of security**
- + **Reciprocity: We are in this *together***
- + **Generosity: Generate an equitable pricing structure that includes flexibility for making yoga fiscally accessible**

In light of these new rules, here are some things you can expect:

We are NOT going to money-shame you ("You can't afford not to!" "But it'll change your life!" "It's worth every penny!" "You'll get results with your dollars!") or bully you into paying for what your budget cannot support.

We ARE going to ask you to challenge your mindset of 'brokenness' and ask yourself, "Is this actually something I see great value in and I can afford right now?" When I come from this place, I get to invest in products and services I believe in and also I am acknowledging that everyone needs support sometimes. If I can pay the value right now, I want to, because one day I might need help, and with the new rules I trust that someone else can be there making it possible for me to receive help when I need it.

We are NOT going to penalize you for not having \$300, \$600, or \$1000 up-front, because most people don't. Consider that you can afford a monthly membership; this is reasonable for most people, those of us with paycheck to paycheck budgets. But you notice that you're having to

pay \$10, \$20, \$90 more over the course of time simply by not having hundreds of disposable dollars available up-front. It may seem like an equal opportunity offer, but it isn't equitable or reasonable if we want our yoga to be accessible to most people. This is why you will no longer see Semester Passes, 1 Year Unlimited, or specials that allow you to purchase longer memberships at discounted prices. It would be unfair for us to continue to offer discounts for paying up-front and charging 'full price' or 'more' for monthly payments. If monthly payments aren't your preferred way to pay, we'll be happy to take the full cost up-front, but we can no longer ethically offer you a discount for that.

I've crunched the numbers, and I feel really clear about our new [simplified pricing structure](#), set to start August 1, 2019.

In the process of learning and reconfiguring our pricing in favor of accessibility, here are some options I considered:

- + Payment plans-- That's what we do right now, and that's what we will continue to do as our primary option.
  - If you prefer not to use autopay, we are happy to take as many months up front as you prefer to pay at once, or we can set you up to pay your monthly membership in person each month.
  - A way you can be supported in this is if you need to pay each month in smaller increments instead of the full monthly payment once per month, we can set you up for multiple drafts per month.
  
- + Scholarships-- This is what we are adding with the simplification of our pricing structure. This is for moments of contraction when you need extra support so that you can ask for and receive the support you need in order to stay in your practice at Shakti.
  - At Shakti we talk a lot about asking for what you need. "Listen for what you need. Take care of yourself. Ask for what you need." We all have moments of contraction in life, when we need extra support for a while in order to take care of ourselves well. This is an opportunity to practice that off the mat.
  - This is a no questions asked approach. We are NOT going to ask you to prove or explain why you need support. We believe you. And we encourage you to be in continual inquiry about this-- Like, maybe in a few months you can afford more, or maybe you can afford less, or maybe it stays the same because your marginalized experience means that when your pay gap meets the standard of living, and you need some help somewhere! We've got you.
  - On our website, you'll see this above the link to fill out the Google form to ask for support:

"We Are Here For You.

\* At Shakti, we acknowledge that many people experience social barriers, privilege is real, and yoga isn't accessible at the same rate for everyone. We want to live in a world that is moving forward in equality, and so we are on a mission to do better. If there's something we know for sure it's that we are better together.

We have created this form and flexibility within our pricing structure to support you and your yoga practice at Shakti as we all try to navigate the world we live in. Shakti scholarships come in all shapes and sizes and are available as needed.

We believe you, no questions asked. Thank you for being honest and open to receiving support.

We suggest taking a few moments now to check in with yourself. Take a pause. Put a hand on your heart and breathe. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale.

Let us know what you need. We are here to support you however we can."

- + Sliding scale-- This is what we are NOT doing. Sounds like a reasonable idea, but I don't want Shakti to be a non-profit. I want Shakti to be a for-profit THAT GIVES BACK. Statistical evidence shows that collectively we are all so far over our heads in the 'I'm broke' inner dialogue, no matter how much money we make, that contribution on a sliding scale usually hovers just slightly above the lowest option. So unless we make our lowest option \$15, then we won't make it as a business, and if you practice regularly and pay \$15-\$25 per class, you really are gonna be broke.
- + Grandfathering members into pricing-- This is also something we are NOT doing. I thought a lot about this because I am so exceptionally grateful for your support, presence, and business, but doing business fully in alignment with our ethics right now means that creating equity is more important for our vision of our community, which means setting a clear structure and adapting from there. That being said, if your current price rate is your budget ceiling, please fill out the Shakti scholarship form-- that's what it's for!

The new simplified pricing structure only consists of 6 options after the 30 days for \$30: Drop ins, 10 class packs, and memberships (4x per month, 8x per month, Unlimited, and Unlimited for 2+ in the same household). Moving forward with this really does feel simple, clear, equitable and like we're moving forward in the emergence of our bigger vision!

We commit to making yoga accessible. **As of August 1st, our new pricing rolls out, and this includes Shakti Scholarships.** We commit to giving you the support you ask for, and we commit to not making you 'prove' yourself-- we believe you. We commit to experimentation, adaptation, and evolution when it comes to making our business work for us and you, together. We commit to being in the continual work of listening to you, educating ourselves, and communicating clearly.

As the owner I commit to working with you to make your practice at Shakti accessible and being available for you to ask for the support you need.

### **5) Karma Yoga, the art of Giving Back**

We make the choice to give back to our greater Athens community as a Shakti community, with your help and support.

We started giving exclusively to [the Get Comfortable Fund](#) at the start of 2018's Fall Term. This choice came from the desire to contribute to Athens as my home. As a business, we are asked to give in a lot of ways to a lot of entities. We are always up for giving yoga to raffles and organizations, but now we give monetarily with exclusivity to the Get Comfortable Fund.

Making an impact requires having a direction. A friend once said to me, "Consistency is honesty," and that really hit home. My hope with our partnership to Get Comfy is for you to know how your yoga studio gives back, and how you give back just by showing up.

The Get Comfortable Fund is a non-profit established by Creature Comforts Brewery with the intention to do the same thing: To give back in a way that is consistent, honest, and clear for the business, for the patrons, and for the community.

'We believe that discomfort emerges whenever needs go unmet. So in 2015, we created the Get Comfortable campaign in order to align the local business community to resource those agencies addressing our community's most pressing needs.' (12)

Some stats that they share include,

1 In 3 children in Athens-Clarke County grows up in poverty.

The poverty rate in Athens (35%) is double the state of GA.

Athens-Clarke County was given "Persistent Poverty" designation by U.S. Census.

1 in 5 people in Athens-Clarke County is food insecure.

To us, being part of the Get Comfortable initiative means being up to something bigger than our every day routine. It means making the conscious choice to see a need and step up to help fill that need.

We commit to continuing our Get Comfy classes. These classes are a \$10 drop in, and 50% of proceeds go directly to the Get Comfortable Fund.

We commit to keeping Shakti x Get Comfy merch available for purchase. These are tees, tanks, and sweatshirts printed by Satisfactory Printing that give 30% of profits to the Get Comfortable Fund.

We commit to making all studio events donation-driven. This means that our events outside the studio are accessibly priced (usually \$10) and 50-100% of proceeds go to Get Comfy.

We commit to including you and keeping you informed of our collective contribution to the Get Comfortable Fund.

We commit to giving back with our time, and by Summer 2020, we will organize a Shakti community volunteer project to partner with a Get Comfortable active receiving agency.

## Impact

If we follow through from our intentions to contribute by way of clear choices and adaptable action, our impact will be felt and seen. **When our impact doesn't line up with our intentions, we commit to making new choices and taking new actions.**

As owner, I acknowledge that running a business is like life in that both require an element of grace and the ability to see the journey as the most important part. Here's what that journey looks like:

- Through yoga, we lean into integrity. We take a stand in our industry to address important issues and to communicate with you, our community. We ask tough questions and seek real answers. We strive to cultivate a safe space where everyone who comes can truly come as they are. We consider equity in our business planning, and we weigh our care for you and our care for the business evenly. We are committed to creating a business that is ethical, accessible, and impactful. Together as a community we lean into learning and embrace our evolution.
- Change is necessary for growth, and as long as we consider change as the emergence of a bigger vision, we stay connected to the importance of staying open and flexible.

- None of us can do this alone, but together we can actually shift things-- right here, right now, in Athens, Georgia, our shared home.

## the Path Forward

*What does all this mean for Shakti?*

- + We are an environment for radical honesty, acceptance, and growth
- + We honor yoga as an ancient, sacred practice
- + Come as you are, for real for real
- + No body-shaming, no money-shaming, no shaming
- + We stand behind a simple pricing structure that supports equity and accessibility
- + We engage with clear communication about WHAT and WHY, our ethics, and real life stuff
- + Our business probably isn't for everyone. It can't be and doesn't need to be, and if we aren't where you choose to practice, we are still incredibly grateful that you chose to enter our space at all, and we hope you find a community where you can connect and grow.
- + We get to live into our values, unapologetically
  - Show Up: Connect
  - Sweat: Empower
  - Shine: Awaken
  - <https://www.shaktiyogaathens.com/values>

## A Bold Request

Creating Shakti Athens has been the greatest challenge and the deepest joy of my life so far. **I am passionate about cultivating a community that is continually evolving and in contribution to a greater cause.** I have an unquenchable desire to be up to something bigger than myself, and Shakti gets to be part of my contribution.

*What does all this mean for you?*

First, let's remember that we're all doing the best we can with what we've got, and while we are resilient and determined enough to get shit done alone, we get a hell of a lot more shit done when we do it together.

**My request from you is that you join me in the work, show up, ask more questions, get connected to each other and to our team, hold each other accountable, have tough conversations, welcome one another, make the choice to be part of this community, move things forward.**

There are three themes of [Baptiste Methodology](#) :

Be a Yes

Give up what you must

Come From You Are Ready Now

I am a yes for community, transparency, integrity and responsibility.

I give up hesitation, and I commit to sharing.

I am ready to speak clearly and move forward with purpose.

Thank you for helping me move things forward with SHAKTI energy.

Thank you for trusting me.

Thank you for holding space for me.

I see you.

*Thank you to the people who have ever helped make Shakti Yoga Athens and this work possible: Sheila Chandler, Molly Chandler, Lauren Farina, Kelly Farina Carter, Mary Nell Roberts, Jake Reuse, Kate Moore, Julie Reuse, Maggie Scruggs, Emily Unwin, Berry Galazka, Jordan Gonzalez, Katie Waters, all our teachers, assists, and desk staff from 2017-now, Amy Lawrence, Teena Wilhelm, and Rachel Ricketts.*

## Additional Resources

### (1) More about SHAKTI

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakti>  
<https://chopra.com/article/shakti-universal-force>  
<https://asiasociety.org/education/shakti-power-feminine>  
<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Shakti>

### (2) Spiritual Bypassing

<https://www.robertmasters.com/2013/04/29/spiritual-bypassing/>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritual\\_bypass#cite\\_note-FOOTNOTEFossellaWelwood2011-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritual_bypass#cite_note-FOOTNOTEFossellaWelwood2011-1)  
Welwood, 2000  
<https://dopeyogi.com/when-spirituality-becomes-harmful-spiritual-bypassing/>

### (3) Yoga

<https://www.ananda.org/yogapedia/yoga/>  
<https://www.yogapedia.com/definition/4/yoga>  
<https://www.yogabasics.com/learn/history-of-yoga/>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-25006926>  
<http://assets.press.princeton.edu/chapters/i9565.pdf>  
<https://www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?25096/Yoga+Its+Origin+History+and+Development>  
<https://www.baptisteyoga.com/>

### (4) Cultural appropriation

<https://medium.com/@DevynSpringer/resources-on-what-cultural-appropriation-is-and-isn-t-7c0af483a837>  
[https://bento.cdn.pbs.org/hostedbento-prod/filer\\_public/whatihear/9-Cultural\\_Approp-Viewing\\_Guide.pdf](https://bento.cdn.pbs.org/hostedbento-prod/filer_public/whatihear/9-Cultural_Approp-Viewing_Guide.pdf)  
<http://www.aihfs.org/pdf/8-1-16%20Cultural%20Appropriation.pdf>  
[https://www.du.edu/housing/media/documents/cultural\\_appropriation\\_studentfaculty\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.du.edu/housing/media/documents/cultural_appropriation_studentfaculty_toolkit.pdf)

### (5) Health and Wellness Industry

<https://www.marieclaire.com/health-fitness/a23652473/wellness-industry-problems/>  
<https://www.fastcompany.com/90247896/these-10-market-trends-turned-wellness-into-a-4-2-trillion-global-industry>  
<https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/2019-global-wellness-trends/>

<https://www.rachelricketts.com/blog/2019/4/25/pretty-ugly-the-beauty-industrys-issue-with-diversity>

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780203633977>

<https://www.dazeddigital.com/beauty/soul/article/44463/1/commodification-self-care-good-thing>

[https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/zmdwm4/the-young-and-the-uncared-for-v25n4](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/zmdwm4/the-young-and-the-uncared-for-v25n4)

<https://hbr.org/2018/08/how-self-care-became-so-much-work>

(6) Privilege

<https://nccj.org/what-privilege>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_privilege](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_privilege)

(7) Diversity and inclusion

<https://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/diversityoffice/definitions.htm>

<https://medium.com/@yiorgosboudouris/its-more-than-a-seat-at-the-table-where-diversity-and-inclusion-efforts-fall-short-f6141f7201a0>

(8) Rachel Cargle

<https://www.rachelcargle.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/rachel.cargle/?hl=en>

(9) Rachel Ricketts

<https://www.rachelricketts.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/iamrachelricketts/?hl=en>

(10) Bear Hebert

<http://www.bearcoaches.com/>

(11) Equity vs equality

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/equality-is-not-enough/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z68vke2iD6E>

(12) Creature Comforts / Get Comfy

<http://getcurious.com/get-comfortable/>

<http://getcurious.com/get-comfortable/method/>