


UPPER EAST SIDE & ROOSEVELT ISLAND ([//www.dnainfo.com/new-york/manhattan/upper-east-side-roosevelt-island](http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/manhattan/upper-east-side-roosevelt-island))

Health & Wellness ([//www.dnainfo.com/new-york/topics/health-wellness](http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/topics/health-wellness))

'Recovering Attorney' Teaches Free Meditation Classes in Central Park

By Lindsay Armstrong ([//www.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/our-team/lindsay-armstrong](http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/our-team/lindsay-armstrong)) | June 5, 2014 7:08am

| Updated on June 5, 2014 9:36am

 @lindsay_anne81 (http://twitter.com/lindsay_anne81)



Karen Nourizadeh

UPPER EAST SIDE — Lawyer Karen Nourizadeh (<http://karennourizadeh.com/>) felt stuck in a life she often found stressful and unfulfilling.

She spent her late 20s and early 30s working as a lawyer, first as in-house counsel for insurance giant AIG and later as a defense attorney in medical malpractice cases. Her intense work led her to develop stress-related headaches. One day, when she had a particularly painful headache, she tried meditation as a way to cope.

“I just sat down and tried to focus on my breathing for a few minutes because nothing else was working,” Nourizadeh said. “Within 15 minutes it went away, so I knew there was power in this.”

Now Nourizadeh, who gave up her tension-filled career to practice yoga full time, wants to teach New Yorkers to relax the way she did.

The stress management expert and yoga teacher is offering a series of free meditation classes in Central Park this summer. Every Friday from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., she'll provide instruction in breathing and concentration techniques as well as Yoga Nidra, a practice of deep relaxation.

Nourizadeh, 46, knows firsthand that a Zen-like state can be difficult to achieve, especially for harried New Yorkers.

She left her legal and corporate jobs for good in 2009 after brief stints in pharmaceutical sales and legal consulting. She took an \$8-an-hour job working the front desk at Pure Yoga (<http://pureyoga.com/>) on the Upper East Side and deepened her own practice. She started working as a teacher's assistant at Pure and later trained to be a teacher herself.

Now, Nourizadeh refers to herself as a "recovering attorney" — in a departure that delighted her but baffled some of her loved ones.

“I had left this reasonable professional world of what people could understand and became a yoga teacher, which no one could understand,” she said. “There was a lot of resistance from society and my friends and family.”

Jocelyn Tesson, who worked with Nourizadeh as a paralegal, was surprised when she left her legal position because of the time and money she invested into earning her degree and moving up in the field.

Still, she said it seems Nourizadeh made the right decision.

"I find that now with the meditation and yoga, she's a different person," Tesson said. "She's much less stressed. She's smiling all the time."

Nourizadeh's transformation inspired Tesson to start practicing yoga herself. She's taken classes for two years and realized some of the same benefits, she said.

Nourizadeh knew she wanted to help people find more balance as they deal with life's demands. In addition to teaching yoga, she studied meditation with Pure's master teacher, Yogi Charu, and worked with psychologist Henry Grayson, founder of the National Institute of Psychotherapies (<http://www.nipinst.org/nip/treatment/aboutus/>).

She developed an approach to stress-management that combines Eastern philosophy and Western science, and now leads workshops for private and corporate clients.

Nourizadeh’s ultimate goal is to help people deepen their awareness of their own lives, rather than operating on autopilot.

“It often feels like the world we live in is so fast-paced and shallow. We don’t even read emails fully anymore,” she said. “I want people to be aware of themselves, to ask, 'What is going to make me more internally fulfilled?' That's how the external world gets better, too.”

The Friday classes will meet at Pilgrim Hill (<http://www.centralparknyc.org/things-to-see-and-do/attractions/pilgrim-hill.html>) near East 72nd Street through August 22. Participants should bring a mat or blanket.



Oops! That page can't be



Recommended

EAST ELMHURST » ([HTTPS://WWW.DNAINFO.COM/NEW-YORK/QUEENS/JACKSON-HEIGHTS-ELMHURST](https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/queens/jackson-heights-elmhurst))

Magic Johnson's Infrastructure Firm Invests in LaGuardia Airport Renovation (<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170808/east-elmhurst/magic-johnson-jlc-loop-capital-laguardia-gateway-airport-investment>)



SOHO » ([HTTPS://WWW.DNAINFO.COM/NEW-YORK/MANHATTAN/GREENWICH-VILLAGE-SOHO](https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/manhattan/greenwich-village-soho))

Five Rainy Day Shoes Every Man in New York Needs (<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20131023/soho/five-rainy-day-shoes-every-man-new-york-needs>)



NEW YORK CITY » ([HTTPS://WWW.DNAINFO.COM/NEW-YORK](https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york))

Best Pools for Lap Swimming in New York City (<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20120709/new-york-city/best-pools-for-lap-swimming-new-york-city>)



UPPER WEST SIDE » ([HTTPS://WWW.DNAINFO.COM/NEW-YORK/MANHATTAN/UPPER-WEST-SIDE-MORNINGSIDE-HEIGHTS](https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/manhattan/upper-west-side-morningside-heights))

28 Romantic Movies Set in NYC and Where to Watch Them This Valentine's Day (<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170213/upper-west-side/romantic-comedy-movie-set-in-nyc-valentines-day>)



(<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170213/upper-west-side/romantic-comedy-movie-set-in-nyc-valentines-day>)



(<https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york>)

DNAinfo is New York's leading neighborhood news source. We deliver up-to-the-minute reports on entertainment, education, politics, crime, sports, and dining. Our award-winning journalists find the stories - big or small - that matter most to New Yorkers.

Terms of Use

(https://blockclubchicago.org/2018/07/01/terms-of-service/)

Privacy Policy

(https://blockclubchicago.org/2018/07/01/privacy-policy/)

Copyright © 2009-2018

NEWS

FEATURES

DNAinfo

FOLLOW US

Arts & Entertainment (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/arts-entertainment) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/arts-entertainment)

Crime & Mayhem (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/crime-mayhem) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/crime-mayhem)

Education (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/education) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/education)

Food & Drink (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/food-drink) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/food-drink)

Health & Wellness (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/health-wellness) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/health-wellness)

Parenting & Schools (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/parenting-schools) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/parenting-schools)

Politics (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/politics) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/politics)

Real Estate (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/real-estate) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/real-estate)

Transportation (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/transportation) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/transportation)

Urban Animals (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/urban-animals) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/urban-animals)

Weather (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/weather) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/columns/weather)

Terms of Use (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/terms) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/terms)

Privacy Policy (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/privacy-policy) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/about-us/privacy-policy)

Copyright © 2009-2018, DNAinfo.

All Rights Reserved.

 **SUBSCRIBE** (/www.dnainfo.com/new-york/account/news-letter) (https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/account/news-letter)