

# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 26, 2018

## THE MINDFUL BODY

*Application No.:* LBR-2017-18-028  
*Business Name:* The Mindful Body  
*Business Address:* 2876 California Street  
*District:* District 2  
*Applicant:* Maile Sivert, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* December 8, 2017  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Mark Farrell  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

The Mindful Body is a wellness business that opened in April 1994. The business is still at its original location in the Lower Pacific Heights neighborhood. It started out with various movement classes and offerings coined “Personal Inner Work” that were workshops and classes that were reflective, internal and meditative. The goal of the business was to be a “mini Esalen” in San Francisco – inspired by the Big Sur healing resort – a place of refuge; an urban sanctuary; a place where you could find meaningful community; a place that is kind and welcoming.

The Mindful Body was a bit ahead of its time, offering yoga before it became mainstream and found in every neighborhood. Yoga was established on the West Coast in 1955 with Walt and Magaña Baptiste’s studio in San Francisco, Yoga Philosophic Health Center. Walt’s father had been influenced by Vivekananda, and Walt and Magaña were students of Yogananda. By the 1970s, yoga was growing in popularity in California but did not yet have designated centers. It was mainly offered in living rooms and rented spaces. Integral Yoga Institute (1970) and the Iyengar Yoga Institute (1974) were two early yoga studios in San Francisco. The Mindful Body was at the starting wave when yoga centers and studios blossomed in the city.

Although yoga was the primary activity at The Mindful Body, the business also offered a variety of free form movement classes as well as meditation, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique, dance/movement, nutrition, poetry readings and therapeutic massage. The business has additionally had Pilates, Ayurveda, Breema, Rosen, nutrition coaching, live music, chanting events, community member fundraisers and acupuncture at different times throughout its history. Because yoga turned out to be the most popular offering, and because it was challenging to deal with so many practitioners, The Mindful Body decided to focus its energy on fewer activities such as yoga, massage and acupuncture.

### CRITERION 1: Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

No, the applicant has not operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years.





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

2876 California Street from 1994 to Present (24 years)

PER CRITERION 1: Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?

Yes. The Mindful Body has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of the Lower Pacific Heights neighborhood and, if not included on the Registry, would face a significant risk of displacement.

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Lower Pacific Heights neighborhood's history and identity.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- The Mindful Body is associated with the historical traditions associated with the practice of yoga.
The Mindful Body has contributed to the identity of the Lower Pacific Heights neighborhood and the yoga and wellness care community in San Francisco.
The business has been cited in the following publications:
San Francisco Chronicle
SF Gate
SF Examiner
KTVU San Francisco
Yogi Times

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, The Mindful Body is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the wellness business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that The Mindful Body qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Health and healing services - including yoga, massage, acupuncture and meditation.
Annual 200-hour yoga teacher training program.
A warm and "lived-in" feeling maintained in the style establish in 1994.
The original curtains that divide some of the rooms.
Exterior features, including escutcheons over doorways, keystones, large original domed skylights in the rear of the building and decorative brickwork patterns.





SAN FRANCISCO

**OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS**

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

**CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS**

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Health and wellness.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include The Mindful Body currently located at 2876 California Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager  
Legacy Business Program



# Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 26, 2018

THE MINDFUL BODY

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

*Application No.:* LBR-2017-18-028  
*Business Name:* The Mindful Body  
*Business Address:* 2876 California Street  
*District:* District 2  
*Applicant:* Maile Sivert, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* December 8, 2017  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Mark Farrell  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

## ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR THE MINDFUL BODY, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2876 CALIFORNIA STREET.

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

**WHEREAS**, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 26, 2018, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes The Mindful Body in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at The Mindful Body:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Health and healing services – including yoga, massage, acupuncture and meditation.
• Annual 200-hour yoga teacher training program.
• A warm and "lived-in" feeling maintained in the style establish in 1994.
• The original curtains that divide some of the rooms.
• Exterior features, including escutcheons over doorways, keystones, large original domed skylights in the rear of the building and decorative brickwork patterns.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain The Mindful Body on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Health and wellness.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on February 26, 2018.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

- Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

**Legacy  
Business  
Registry**

# Application Review Sheet

*Application No.:* LBR-2017-18-028  
*Business Name:* The Mindful Body  
*Business Address:* 2876 California Street  
*District:* District 2  
*Applicant:* Maile Sivert, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* December 8, 2017  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Mark Farrell

**CRITERION 1:** Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  No

2876 California Street from 1994 to Present (24 years)

**PER CRITERION 1:** Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?  
 Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**CRITERION 2:** Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?  Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**CRITERION 3:** Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?  Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**NOTES:** The business is currently going through a lease renewal, and the landlord has proposed a significant rent increase that is not feasible for keeping the business operating. If not included in the Registry, the Mindful Body faces a significant risk of displacement.

**DELIVERY DATE TO HPC:** January 11, 2018

Richard Kurylo  
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 2



City and County of San Francisco

**MARK FARRELL**

December 8, 2017  
San Francisco Office of Small Business  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4681

Dear Director Dick-Endrizzi,

I hereby nominate The Mindful Body, at 2876 California Street, San Francisco to the Legacy Business Registry of San Francisco. The Mindful Body started to provide Yoga and Massage before it was such a popular therapy for well-being and has continued to provide these services for the past 23 years.

The Mindful Body was founded in April of 1994 on California Street in the same location it now holds by Roy Bergmann and was subsequently sold to a long time co-worker, Maile Silvert in 2014. Roy still teaches Yoga classes at the business even though he is now in his seventies. The building itself was built in 1926, and is a mixed use commercial and residential property. The exterior façade remains mainly in its historic condition.

The Mindful Body has a very large footprint in the yoga and massage business community in San Francisco. The Mindful Body has always had the mission of serving "all people, of all ages, and all bodies". The business is centered on inclusiveness for all of those in the community regardless of their appearance, age, or ability and has a wide range of clientele that rely on the business for these reasons.

I look forward to the Mindful Body being added to the Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark E. Farrell".

Mark E. Farrell  
San Francisco Supervisor, District 2

APPLICATION FOR

# Legacy Business Registration

Legacy Business registration is authorized by Section 2A.242 of the San Francisco Administrative Code. The registration process includes nomination by a member of the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor, a written application, and approval of the Small Business Commission.

## 1. Current Owner / Applicant Information

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
The Mindful Body Inc.		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Maile Sivert, Owner		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:	
2876 California Street San Francisco, CA 94115	( 415 ) 931-2639	
	EMAIL:	
	maile@themindfulbody.com	
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.themindfulbody.com	www.facebook.com/TheMindfulBodySF/	https://www.yelp.com/biz/the-mindful-body-

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Maile Sivert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business Owner
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
	( )
	EMAIL:

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
1064128	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Founding Location: 2876 California Street
Current Headquarters Location: 2876 California Street
Operating in San Francisco since: 1994

NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:
Mark Farrell / Kanishka Karunaratne	11/27/2017

## 2. Business Addresses

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
2876 California Street	94115	1994 - Now
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING AND/OR HEADQUARTERED LOCATION? (check all that apply)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Founding Location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Current Headquarters	



OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

### 3. Eligibility Criteria

Attach the business's historical narrative.

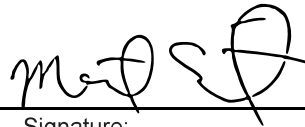
### 4. San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws, and Public Information Release

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.

Maile Sivert

11/27/2017



Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

# THE MINDFUL BODY

## Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

### CRITERION 1

**a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.**

The Mindful Body is a wellness business that opened in April 1994. It started out with various movement classes and offerings coined “Personal Inner Work” that were workshops and classes that were reflective, internal and meditative. The goal of the business was to be a “mini Esalen” in San Francisco – inspired by the Big Sur healing resort – a place of refuge; an urban sanctuary; a place where you could find meaningful community; a place that is kind and welcoming.

The Mindful Body was a bit ahead of its time, offering yoga before it became mainstream and found in every neighborhood. Yoga was established on the West Coast in 1955 with Walt and Magaña Baptiste's studio in San Francisco, Yoga Philosophic Health Center. Walt's father had been influenced by Vivekananda, and Walt and Magaña were students of Yogananda. By the 1970s, yoga was growing in popularity in California but did not yet have designated centers. It was mainly offered in living rooms and rented spaces. Integral Yoga Institute (1970) and the Iyengar Yoga Institute (1974) were two early yoga studios in San Francisco. The Mindful Body was at the starting wave when yoga centers and studios blossomed in the city.

The Mindful Body has an attractive interior enhanced by tall ceilings with skylights and two movement rooms, as well as showers and clean bathrooms, which many other yoga or massage places did not have in the 1990s. Soon, other competitors showed up and some followed its lead.

Although yoga was the primary activity at The Mindful Body, the business also offered a variety of free form movement classes as well as meditation, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique, dance/movement, nutrition, poetry readings and therapeutic massage. The business has additionally had Pilates, Ayurveda, Breema, Rosen, nutrition coaching, live music, chanting events, community member fundraisers and acupuncture at different times throughout its history.

Because yoga turned out to be the most popular offering, and because it was challenging to deal with so many practitioners, The Mindful Body decided to focus its energy on fewer activities such as yoga, massage and acupuncture.

The Mindful Body features many physically active yoga classes (e.g., Ashtanga, Iyengar, Vinyasa Flow, etc.) at popular times, which is what the San Francisco community seems to desire.

There is also a staff of wonderful, experienced yoga teachers, as well as many committed yoga students who went on to become well respected teachers themselves (Charu Rachlis, Jason Crandell, Chrisandra Fox, Deb Burkman, Thomas Fortel, Kari Marble, *et al*).

Over time, it became apparent that in order to remain profitable and viable it was necessary to utilize the space more efficiently and more frequently. The business expanded the number of massage rooms and rented out rooms to “like-minded” practitioners. It was also found that it was important to have yoga teachers in multiple times-of-day and days-of-the-week spots, creating opportunities for students with varying schedules to come to the Mindful Body frequently and consistently. This business model is the current operating procedure at the Mindful Body. The business currently has two full time yoga rooms and eight massage rooms and operates seven days a week. Like yoga, we offer a variety of massage modalities: Swedish, Deep Tissue, Sports, Pregnancy and Trigger Point, and we have a few therapists that specialize in massage for cancer recovery and people in chemotherapy.

The business is still at its original location in the Lower Pacific Heights neighborhood. The business is currently going through a lease renewal, and the landlord has proposed a significant increase that is not feasible for keeping the business operating. The landlord is asking for a \$6,200/month increase in rent (above what the business is currently paying). Due to the pay structure at the Mindful Body; and the increases of health requirements, minimum wage and the new maternity leave ordinance in San Francisco in the upcoming year; an additional \$200,000-250,000 in revenue would be needed in 2018 in order to pay the growing expenses. That also means that no one on the staff will be able to receive a pay raise in the foreseeable future, which is a significant stress to the employees who are struggling to be able to live in San Francisco without six figure salaries. It is also stressful to not be able to offer a competitive wage while attempting to hire new staff.

**b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?**

The Mindful Body has not ceased operations since it opened in 1994.

**c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.**

The business is not a family-owned business.

**d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.**

The business was started by Roy Bergmann in 1994. His daughter, Hillary Bergmann became a co-owner with him in 2002. They co-owned the business until 2014 when they sold me the business.

Current owner Maile Sivert began working at the Mindful Body in 2001 as a yoga instructor. She later became the yoga department manager from 2004 to 2010. She worked closely with Roy and Hillary during that time.

Roy and Hillary sold the business to Maile in November 2014 when Hillary decided to pursue a career in filmmaking instead of staying in the family business. Roy was in his 70s and ready to retire. However, he still teaches yoga at the studio.

Since 2014, the business has been a woman-owned business.

Following is summary of the ownership history:

1994 to 2002:	Roy Bergmann
2002 to 2014:	Roy Bergmann and Hillary Bergmann
2014 to Present:	Maile Sivert

**e. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.**

The building that houses the Mindful Body was built in 1926 and is a mixed-use commercial and residential property. It is a beautiful brick building that was said to have been a laundromat in the 1940s. The exterior façade is mainly unchanged from its original construction and is eligible for historic preservation status. However, it is not currently listed on a historic registry.

## **CRITERION 2**

**a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.**

The Mindful Body has a very large footprint in the yoga and massage business community in San Francisco. In the past three years, over 15,000 unique patrons have visited the business, many of them on a regular, weekly basis.

The Mindful Body also has many long-time clients from the surrounding community, San Francisco and other parts of the Bay Area as well. During Maile Sivert's 16 years at the Mindful Body, many of her clients have become more than just business relationships, as she has been a guest at the weddings and birthday parties of her clients. The Mindful Body is not solely a client-practitioner business, but a business that creates meaningful relationships with their clients, as well as their community.

**b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?**

The Mindful Body sponsors the Yoga Journal Conference which occurs every year at the Hyatt hotel in downtown San Francisco. The Mindful Body also hosts an annual event with the Drew School, hosting students for yoga classes as part of an "out of the classroom" week that is

aimed at giving students real-world experience. There is also an annual Thanksgiving fundraiser yoga class, for which the proceeds are donated directly to a charity and/or cause. This past year, the proceeds went to the La Luz Center in Sonoma County, which directly went to rental assistance for those that lost their homes in the North Bay Fires.

**c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?**

The business has been featured in several local media and publications including the San Francisco Chronicle, SF Gate, SF Examiner, and KTVU San Francisco as well as the industry publication the Yogi Times.

**d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?**

The business is not associated with any significant or historical people to our knowledge.

**e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?**

The Mindful Body demonstrates its commitment to the community in a number of ways.

The Mindful Body provides health and healing services – including yoga, massage and acupuncture – to those in the community that seek mindfulness and healing practices. As life becomes increasingly stressful, expensive and busy, people seek stress relief through multiple outlets, many of which are offered by the professionals working at the Mindful Body.

- Yoga offerings: Ashtanga; Ageless (all bodies, all ages); Hatha, Vinyasa; Gentle; Restorative; Hatha Flow; Prenatal; Postnatal with Baby
- Massage offerings: Swedish; Deep Tissue; Sports; Trigger Point; Pregnancy; Cancer Support
- Popular workshops: Pregnancy Preparation; Restorative for Parasympathetic Nervous System
- Free meditation

The Mindful Body offers an annual 200-hour yoga teacher training program. The curriculum is intended for advancing students who wish to deepen their practice and for aspiring teachers who are looking for a course that provides the tools with which to teach intelligently and confidently. The program certifies students to teach alignment-focused and philosophically-inspired Hatha and Vinyasa classes. The class size is small – 10 to 20 people – to ensure there is a vibrant group dynamic and everyone receives personalized guidance and continued support after the training.

The Mindful Body offers pre- and post-natal yoga practices, birthing workshops and pre- and post-natal massage, all of which are geared toward encouraging healthy birth practices, community and introducing and supporting people in similar stages of starting a family.

Lastly, the business has been very effective at hosting fundraising events for employees (two of which were terminally ill with cancer) as well as local charities affiliated with clients, including school fundraisers. Employees from the Mindful Body have attended GLIDE events to serve food and have participated together in the Women's March in 2017.

**f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.**

The Mindful Body has always had the mission of serving "all people, of all ages, and all bodies." There are many inclusive events and activities at the Mindful Body, including activities for the pre- and post-natal communities, ageless yoga (geared toward older people, which many yoga institutions are not conducive to) and yoga for people with disabilities or physical limitations that might have difficulty participating in traditional yoga or massage practices. The business is centered on inclusiveness for everybody regardless of appearance, age or ability. The Mindful Body has a wide range of clientele that rely on the business for these reasons.

**g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?**

The business is not associated with a historically significant building/structure/or object, however the business has been located in a Mediterranean-style building that was built in 1926 and is eligible for historic preservation.

Many of the clients have commented that the space is reminiscent of "old San Francisco" due to the cozy atmosphere of the business. The business is not the "newest, sleekest iteration" of a yoga studio, but one that has been visited, practiced in and lovingly operated for many years.

**h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?**

The Mindful Body has a very wide reach and is relied upon by many people in its community. As mentioned earlier, the business has attracted over 15,000 unique clients in the past three years alone. However, there is also a very strong core of clients that are all very neighborly and familiar with each other. Without the Mindful Body, these clients would be dispersed throughout the Bay Area in an attempt to find a similar studio providing the services that they currently access at the business. The Mindful Body also has 60 employees, 80% of which live in San Francisco. The remaining employees travel from other parts of the Bay Area. All of these employees would be unemployed and competing with each other for new positions at other studios should the Mindful Body need to close its doors. The business is both essential to its clients as well as its broad employment base in San Francisco and the wider Bay Area.

Due to the limitations of the massage permit in San Francisco, it would not be possible to relocate this business as the permit is not transferable to a new property. A new permit would have to be procured which is a timely and expensive process (our current massage permit cost \$15,000 in expenses and 1.5 years to procure).

### **CRITERION 3**

#### **a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.**

The Mindful Body is defined mainly by its welcoming feeling, its acceptance of all clients and its non-judgmental spaciousness, encouraging those who attend to be who they are when they are in the studio and outside. The employees know the names of each and every one of their clients and have created personal and almost familial relationships with one another.

As mentioned earlier, the business also maintains a warm and “lived-in” feel to it. Many yoga and massage studios that have opened more recently have a sterile, modern design. The Mindful Body however prefers the feeling of coziness and comfortability in maintaining the studio in the style that it was when it opened in 1994. The business has kept many of the original features such as the original curtains that divide some of the rooms, which has not gone unnoticed amongst the clientele. The business has repainted the interior walls to keep a maintained atmosphere, however many of the original features remain the same since the original opening.

#### **b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)**

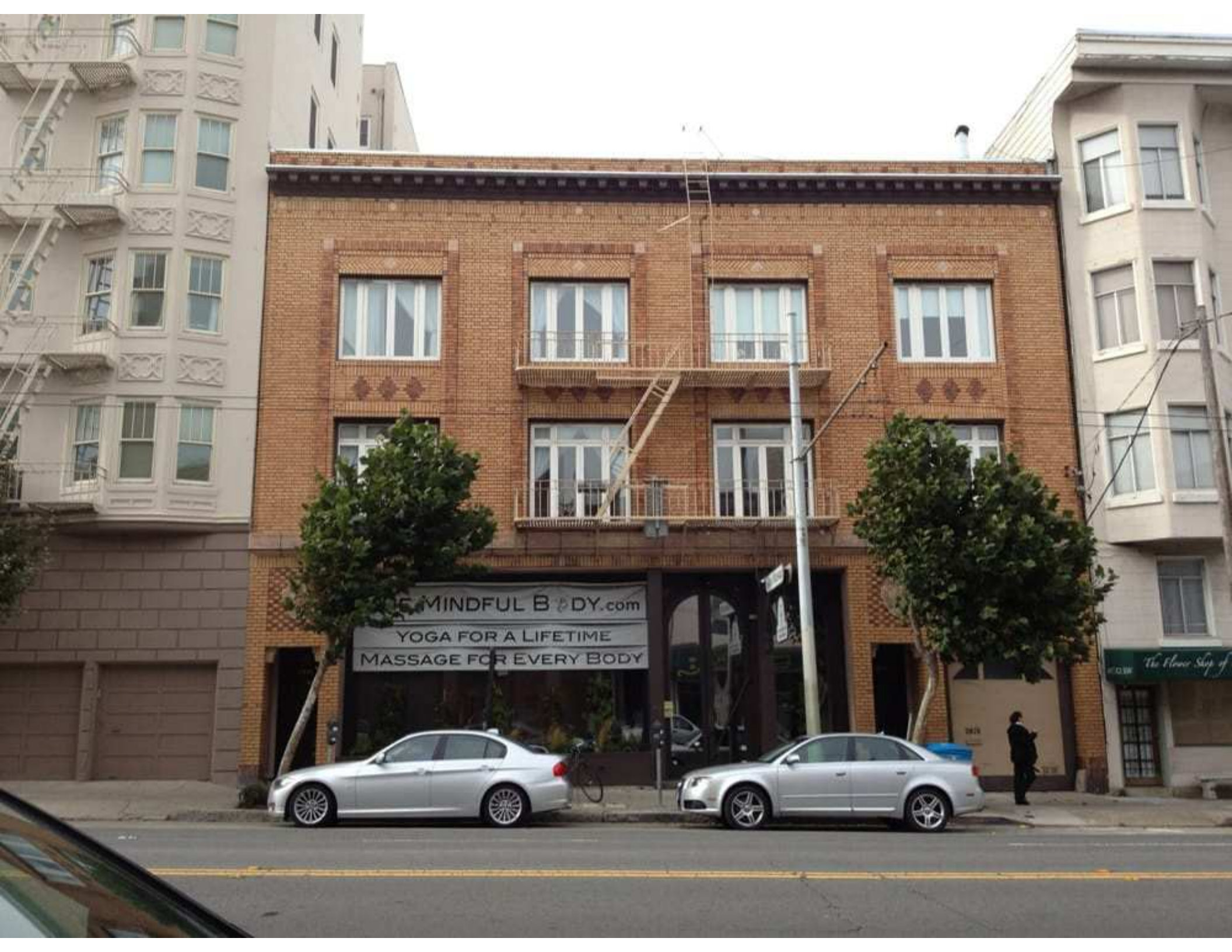
The Mindful Body is dedicated to maintaining the historical traditions associated with the practice of yoga. Many of these are rooted in the ancient practices of yoga such as Ashtanga, Iyengar and Vinyasa, which are all aimed at reducing the stress from the increasingly difficult day-to-day lives of the clientele.

The Mindful Body also proposes to maintain the massage offerings as meaningful, attentive, therapeutic healing.

Meditation will remain a part of the business, too, and the Mindful Body is open to offering all tools that can support people in dealing with stress in this increasingly busy urban environment.

#### **c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).**

The physical structure of the space has not changed since the business opened in 1994. The signage and paint on the walls have been upgraded over the years, however the original structure of the building still exists as it has since prior to the opening of the business. The building at 2876 California Street has many fine details such as escutcheons over doorways, keystones, large original domed skylights in the rear of the building and decorative brickwork patterns on the exterior.



THE MINDFUL BODY.com  
YOGA FOR A LIFETIME  
MASSAGE FOR EVERY BODY

The Flower Shop of



# Yoga & Massage

The Mindful Body

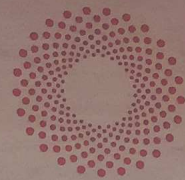


A Center for Movement, Bodywork  
and Personal Inner Work





THE MINDFUL BODY  
YOGA & MASSAGE



  
THE MINDFUL BODY  
YOGA & MASSAGE

  
CANCAN  
CANCAN.COM 415-439-0025

  
FRESH  
JUICE!























**History of The Mindful Body**  
**by**  
**Roy Bergmann, Founder**

**1. What made you decide to start this business? Is there a specific reason why or a story behind it?**

The Mindful Body really started with my early interest in music, art, science and philosophy during my teenage years and while an undergraduate at Northwestern University. However, that interest somewhat “went underground” until I was in my 40s.

After college I took a path via the U.S. Navy (as an officer/administrator/manager) followed by brief administrative and managerial work, Graduate School (MBA) - which led me into the corporate world of finance and economics. I became a Commercial and Investment Banker traveling and living internationally and domestically.

The stressors of travel, meeting deadlines and goals, and the internal “politics” of large corporations as well as family responsibilities (wife and 2 children) took its toll on my psyche and my body. Although I was physically active (mostly running and some weights and swimming) I did very little stretching. I also used too much alcohol to ease the anxiety. All of these factors plus my busy schedule resulted in less sleep (and disturbed sleep) than was healthy. My stomach was often upset and my lower back was “screaming at me”.

I began to research about how to reduce the intestinal and lower back pain and came upon books and articles relating to “holistic health.” This led me to a holistic MD in the Bay area and she, in turn, led me to my first Yoga class (Bikram based). I was “blown away”! I felt as though I had run 4-5 miles, but I was not tired. Rather I was both calm and energized. I followed this path for 3 years (averaging 6 days per week) and it ultimately led me into Ashtanga and Iyengar styles of Yoga ... including lots of reading and workshops related to the broader philosophic aspects of Yoga. I attended workshops at Esalen, including training in Massage and other bodywork modalities. I was so “taken” by all of this that I would schedule my business meetings around my yoga and other classes/workshops.

During the period of my divorce, I found the community of like-minded people in the yoga/spiritual world to be so helpful in getting me through this difficult time. Yoga and related activities (Feldenkrais, Alexander technique, Breema, Rosen work, chanting, etc.) brought me frequent periods of joy, calmness and feelings of good health. I also found myself being more “focused” in my work and life ... more mindful ... doing one thing at a time rather than frenetic multi-tasking.

Along the way, I often imagined myself opening a “Center” for such activities ... perhaps after I retire ... ?

Flash forward to my early 50s - when I was laid off from a major bank and received a severance package which included allowing me to keep my office and salary at the bank for one year but with no day to day responsibilities. Consequently, I was able to focus on my next steps and the first thing I thought about was the possibility of opening a healing center in San Francisco. I put together a business plan, interviewed many practitioners in the world of spirituality and holistic health, and 9 months later I opened The Mindful Body (April 15, 1994).

It was the most challenging and fear filled activity I had ever entered into. Although, from day one, The Mindful Body was always growing, it took 2 ½ years to become cash flow positive. I almost ran out of the resources to continue. However, with the emotional, financial, spiritual and advisory support of my darling wife-to-be, Janie (we married in 2000), The Mindful Body finally “turned the corner” in 1996.

This growth period was one of the most energizing and wonderful experiences of my life work ... interacting with Yoga teachers, massage therapists, psychotherapists and other practitioners of body and spiritually oriented activities. To this point, I want to highlight how important it was to have so many dedicated and loyal employees who were understanding and supportive during these difficult, growing times.

Another wonderful and important element of “luck” along the way was that, early on, Ron Nestor came into my life and became more and more of a right-hand person for me. His background in massage - and having once had a cleaning and maintenance business - provided me with an experienced, trusted and wise counselor. I especially believe his experience as a Zen Buddhist and Yoga practitioner served us well over the years as he has overseen the massage program, provided maintenance management and, realistically, day-to-day general management as well as overall advice/guidance. His responsible, focused and relaxed way of being also added an element of calm and stability to the atmosphere of The Mindful Body.

An equally important event occurred in 2002 when my daughter, Hillary, joined The Mindful Body and demonstrated her broad range of capabilities and character traits. She worked her way up through the various areas of administration and management to ultimately become the overall leader of The Mindful Body. Within these 12 years she enhanced our computer/technology capabilities, web site, back office systems and administration and, perhaps most importantly, dramatically improved the morale of our wonderful employees ... especially during the times in San Francisco when rents were skyrocketing and the regulatory and competitive environment was becoming increasingly

demanding. Her being here has been one of the highlights of my life ... to work closely with my adult daughter who had moved away from San Francisco when she was quite young.

## **2. What needs or desires are filled by our products?**

The Mindful Body started out with various Movement classes and “Personal Inner Work”. Those included workshops and classes with all kinds of related modalities. Yoga was the primary activity but we also offered a variety of free form movement classes as well as meditation, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique, dance/movement, Inner Child work, Nutrition, poetry readings etc.). My goal was to be a “mini Esalen” in San Francisco. However, Yoga (mostly asanas classes) was what turned out to be the most popular. And besides, it turned out to be much too challenging dealing with so many other practitioners who would come and go - and sometimes just not show up. As a result we decided to focus our energy on fewer activities (we started offering Massage after 4-5 months or so).

I remember when we designed an attractive wood sign outside which said “The Mindful Body - a Center for Movement, Bodywork and Personal Inner Work”. The size of the fonts could not be seen from across the street and once or twice someone asked, “What do you do in there??” Consequently we added signage in big letters saying “Yoga and Massage” to get the message out ... and that seemed to boost attendance!!

The Mindful Body was a bit ahead of its time ... just before Yoga began to “catch on” and become very popular. We had showers and nice clean bathrooms, an attractive interior enhanced by tall ceilings with skylights and with 2 movement rooms, all of which most other yoga or massage places did not have. Soon other competitors showed up and some followed our lead. We had lots of physically active yoga classes at the popular times (Ashtanga, Iyengar, Vinyasa Flow, etc.) and that was what the San Francisco community seemed to desire. We also had wonderful experienced yoga teachers ... as well as many committed yoga students who went on to become well respected teachers themselves (Charu Rachlis, Jason Crandell, Chrisandra Fox, Deb Burkman, Thomas Fortel, Kari Marble, et.al.).

What a wonderful combination it all turned out to be! Massage clients became yoga students and vice versa. The quietude of classes worked well with the same need for quiet during massage/bodywork. In addition, we had unusual “walls” between our two yoga rooms and the main hall ... in the form of canvas drapes (a creative solution for a unique place). Therefore, people were encouraged to speak softly -- quietude became the “watch word”. It felt ideal for going inward and finding a place for rest and rejuvenation in this busy world.

Along the way The Mindful Body became a center for a wonderful community of like-minded individuals who became friends and respected colleagues ... among the employees of The Mindful Body as well as including the students and clients. I have heard many employees and clients/students comment over the years about how they look forward to coming to The Mindful Body as a “safe and calming place of refuge”. It has been heartwarming for me to see these clients, students, employees and staff come and go and return again, many who have been with The Mindful Body for long periods of time - some for more than 20 years!

Over time, it became apparent that in order to remain profitable and viable it was necessary to utilize the “space” more efficiently and more frequently. So we began to expand the number of massage rooms from 4 to 10 and to rent out rooms to “like-minded” practitioners (like Mary Ann Molnar, a Physical Therapist who preferred to call herself “MA” - thus the name for one of our massage rooms). We also found that it was important to have Yoga teachers in multiple time and day-of-the-week spots, creating opportunities for students with varying schedules to come to The Mindful Body frequently and consistently.

Jaime Goodman (who started out with The Mindful Body as a valued massage therapist) started to grow her business as an acupuncturist by renting space/rooms from The Mindful Body. This blended very well with what we were doing and a wonderful partnership was born. (Her specialty in prenatal acupuncture particularly paired well with our pre/post natal yoga and massage program (with the Kari Marble as a major contributor).

### **3. The uniqueness and product differentiation:**

My overriding goal was always to provide a safe and nurturing space both for our clients/students and our teachers, therapists and staff ... with caring and understanding in a fast paced and competitive world. Perhaps, that is one of the differentiating aspects of The Mindful Body.

My experience with so many Yoga and other classes was and is that the teachers tell us what we are doing wrong ... rather than encouraging us in a direction which feels and is good for us. Along the way, I have met many "Ashtanga or Iyengar Police" ... and my body hurt after classes in which I was “pushing’ myself and being pushed beyond what was safe and helpful (sometimes with “rough”, inappropriate or unsafe adjustments/ comments by the teachers).

I have a great appreciation for how we as humans have a need to be heard, listened to and nurtured -- so many of us have self esteem issues. I believe that we need lots of kindness in our lives and we need a safe place to calm our busy minds, to focus on our breath and bodies in order to recharge our psyche ... to find a place of peacefulness. I wanted this to



be an important part of The Mindful Body's core values.

My original goal was to create a self sustaining center where the wonderful teachers, therapists and staff were valued, paid well and had an environment conducive to exploring ideas about health and healing as well as growing their careers. It turned out that one of these goals - to be paid well - was not so easily implemented. The challenges for a small business in an environment of escalating rents and increasing regulations, was frequently bumping up against the goal of being a self sustaining business. Intense competition from the numerous new Yoga and Massage establishments added another element of challenge.

Perhaps our varying successes relate to the overriding sense of calm and quietude, and the friendly, caring and nurturing attitude of our teachers, therapists, and staff. The challenge for me has always been about offering these attributes while not "turning off" the great majority of our population, a population who live in a competitive and goal oriented world where speed, multitasking and winning are so strongly rewarded.

#### **4: What I learned through this experience:**

First and foremost, I believe in the importance of establishing the vision/mission/goals of any organization ... and to be clear about the steps that it will take to get there. Remind oneself of that mission over and over again. Check it for reality, in light of real-time experience and feedback from employees and customers and be willing to modify the mission if necessary.

Secondly, I believe that the success of any organization is all about the people ... teachers, therapists and staff. So:

- Find responsible, consistent, reliable, thoughtful, caring and competent people who are committed to the mission/vision.
- Let go of the people who are constantly challenging to manage and who take the most time to deal with ... and let them go early on. If not, they will take management time that can be used in more important areas and may affect the morale of others
- Spend enough time to "vet" the newly hired people. This will reap rewards over the medium and long term. It costs a lot of time and money to replace someone.
- Provide clear guidelines to the people who help achieve one's mission ... and keep checking to see if they are supporting that mission.

- Separate responsibilities so that no one has exclusive and full access both to distribute jobs as well as to protect financial assets (cash, checking and savings accounts, etc.). Change the security “codes” often. “Trust in Spirit, et.al. ...but ... tie your horse to the fence post.”

Thirdly, ask for help!

- You can’t do it alone! Surround yourself with good people and trusted advisors.
- Listen to employees ... and develop access to the internal “grapevine”
- Delegate authority and responsibility - with accountability. Again, you can not do it alone ... and there are plenty of good ideas from the people who are working with students and clients day to day. This approach also enhances the morale of employees who feels trusted ... and are not constantly having someone looking over their shoulders, telling them what to do and not do, or feeling as though they have to “check with the boss” for every detail. (Naturally, this includes giving everyone clear information so they can make decisions on their own knowing that management will support them).
- Listen to your customers ... encourage feedback. Develop relationships with a few customers who will be honest with you and are “reasonable” from a business point of view as well as a philosophical viewpoint.

Lastly, be aware of what the competition is doing but do not necessarily follow or react to what they do. Take time to reflect and to “respond” after thoughtful reflection.

... and remember to go inside yourself and listen to your “inner guide”... while constantly doing reality checks.

## Former banker sheds his suit, chases a dream

### Quits high finance to start yoga school

By Kathleen Sullivan  
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

When Sanwa Bank told Roy Bergmann that his position would be eliminated in a restructuring, he decided it was time for a career change—not a move to another bank.

After 24 years in the banking industry, Bergmann let his passions—nutrition, fitness and yoga—lead him to his next venture, and The Mindful Body Center was born.

"Making the switch was the most wonderful experience I've had—combined with moments of terror," he said with a laugh.

Bergmann, whose career included stints at Bank of America's London office, used to wear expensive suits to work.

Last week, he greeted visitors at the California Street center wearing a faded plaid shirt, shorts and socks—no shoes. He said removing shoes helps students make the transition from the hubbub and noise of the city to the peacefulness of the center.

The center's two studios are separated by giant cream-colored curtains that hang from the ceiling and billow into the hallway. A row of massage rooms line the back wall. It has showers—a luxury in a yoga school—and a hot tub. Soothing music drifts through the rooms. The 53-year-old entrepreneur said he applied his expertise in financing multi-million-dollar power plants to his new enterprise. His former career required coordinating the work of lawyers, bankers and corporate executives. In his new venture, Bergmann has been overseeing the work of yoga teachers, contractors, carpet layers, building inspectors and massage therapist.

### Mothers, children welcome

The center, which opened a month ago, offers yoga classes—including one

for mothers and infants—t'ai chi and dance movement. For those who would like to return to the days of their youth turning cartwheels and doing somersaults, it offers classes in "yoga gymnastics." Linda de Mello, executive director of Alumnae Resources, a career development center in The City's Financial District, said Bergmann is living out a dream of many employees: to express an unexplored facet of their personality and value system in a new career. "What his experience reminds us is that losing a job through a restructuring is also an opportunity," de Mello said. "As difficult as that transition can be, once some one has dealt with the sense of loss, betrayal and disorientation of losing a job, it is also their chance to take the initiative and decide: Now what?"

It is a question that many people will be asking. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the average employee is expected to make eight career changes in his or her life.

Like all new small business owners, Bergmann knows The Mindful Body faces an uncertain future.

"I know that small businesses usually take one to two years to mature," he said. "Only time will tell if this will work out." Bergmann said the center will break even when it has about 300 students per month attending classes an average of 2-1/2 times a week. He estimated it will take about six months to reach that goal. The center's fees range from \$12 for "walk-ins" to \$1,050 for a one year unlimited membership. Bergmann, who is the sole investor, has three employees.

### Listening to your body

He said the center's goal is to promote "mindful" activities that teach people how to "listen" to their body, not drown out its voice with alcohol, television, food addictions, drugs or punishing exercise.

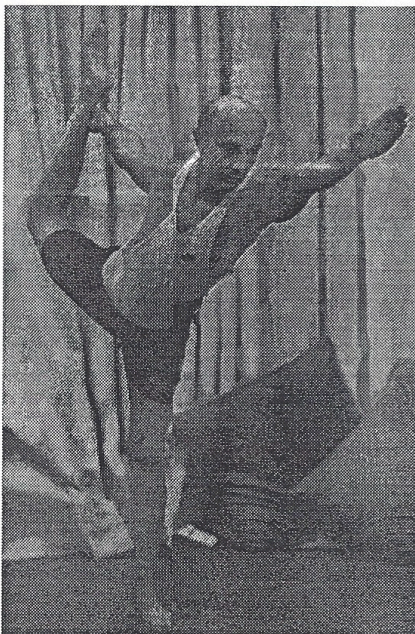
Yoga, which allows someone to pay attention to his or her body and learn the places where the tension of daily life is "stored," is such a "mindful" activity, he said.

Bergmann said yoga requires a concentration that drives deals, deadlines and personal worries out of the mind, leading to a feeling of relaxation and refreshment.

Bergmann practices what he preaches—starting each weekday with a 6:45 a.m. yoga class. His new venture also allows him to practice a business philosophy that relies on group process and the sharing of thoughts, ideas and goals.

He said implementing that philosophy has been the biggest challenge of his career shift. In the conventional business world, he said, many executives have the illusion they are in control when they are giving orders, setting target dates and creating budgets.

"If you had that attitude at The Mindful Body, you'd be a failure," Bergmann said. "People like yoga teachers and massage therapists don't live in that kind of environment."



<http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/From-Here-to-Serenity-Mindful-Body-studio-has-3238980.php>

**SFGATE**

## **From Here to Serenity / Mindful Body studio has yoga classes for all levels and schedules**

**Sam Whiting, Chronicle Staff Writer**

**Published 4:00 am, Sunday, May 7, 2000**



Image 1 of 1

From Here to Serenity / Mindful Body studio has yoga classes for all levels and schedules

Every yoga studio needs an instructor named Yolanda or Chrissandra or Charu, and the Mindful Body has all three.

Located in an old brick laundry, their classes are taught in two big rooms beneath 14-foot ceilings with steel beams and leaded skylights. When it rains, the skylights ping with a soothing sound, like a nature recording.

But the physical space is not what makes people hassle the parking on California Street past Divisadero and haul their purple mats to the Mindful Body from several blocks away. They come for the teachers. The Mindful Body has 17 of them, depending upon who is in India or Nepal on retreat, and a New Age name is not a requirement.

Among the most popular is Michael Cooper, a short, stocky, muscular man who is described by one student as "healer, spiritual guru, cheerleader, teacher and magician." He's also a Baptist minister and gymnastics instructor. When he has worked his class into a centered groove, he'll suddenly blurt out, "What time is it?" "Now," answer the regulars. "Where are we?" "Here."

That simple call and response sums up the Mindful Body. Just two steps past the door and off the bustling street, students are engulfed by serenity. For a long time Chrissandra Fox could convey mindfulness from her seat at the reception desk. But she's now moved on to teach prenatal yoga. Her class tends to a specific clientele, but what makes the Mindful Body so popular is its accessibility, as embodied in any of the "Yoga With Yolanda" classes offered on all levels.

The mat-thin Yolanda Bain has the patience and demeanor to bring yoga to the stressed out and tightened up. There are plenty of them out there. In the past two years, class attendance at the Mindful Body has risen from 40 people a day to 100. It used to be all women, with a man or two hiding in the corner. But yoga has crossed gender lines, and the classes are now maybe a third men.

Bain can give wary beginners the confidence to try the poses -- even stiff basketball jocks who arrive unable to sit Indian-style. Able to watch 25 students at once even as she leads them in the poses, Bain quietly gets up and tiptoes around to straighten everybody out, without embarrassing anyone or even drawing attention. At the end of class she gathers students in a circle for the traditional Indian salutation namaste, and even the cynics join in, having achieved some mindfulness, if only for the hour and a half of class.

The Mindful Body offers a therapeutic massage service, but it hasn't been the same since Blaise Martin, a miracle worker with tight backs and necks, left to open his own practice in Noe Valley. There are also hot tubs, but they are mostly for show. The biggest complaint, which is also the biggest compliment, is that the yoga classes are too crowded. And that's with 70 classes a week to choose from.

They start at 7 a.m. and run until 9 p.m. weekdays, with an only slightly shorter daily schedule on weekends. The hours are what inspired Roy Bergmann to open the place in 1994. An investment banker, he'd charge out of a meeting needing some quick yoga

and couldn't find it. So he got together with Cooper, an old friend from classes, and opened a studio offering many teachers, many styles, and most important, many hours of instruction.

As opposed to a studio run by a guru of a particular style, the Mindful Body offers a range of approaches to hatha yoga, meaning the physical practice of yoga positions, as opposed to meditation.

Each teacher brings a practice that may meld several others -- Iyengar, kundalini, Integral, Bikram, Astanga, Ananda, Kripalu -- names even more exotic than those of its teachers.

Prices range from \$6 for a drop-in community class serving all levels at noon Monday, Wednesday and Friday to \$8 for a class card to \$12 for drop-ins. A new student's first class is always half price. Most students practice barefoot, but it's always easy to spot a newcomer. They are the ones in white athletic socks.

**History of The Mindful Body**  
**by**  
**Roy Bergmann, Founder**

**1. What made you decide to start this business? Is there a specific reason why or a story behind it?**

The Mindful Body really started with my early interest in music, art, science and philosophy during my teenage years and while an undergraduate at Northwestern University. However, that interest somewhat “went underground” until I was in my 40s.

After college I took a path via the U.S. Navy (as an officer/administrator/manager) followed by brief administrative and managerial work, Graduate School (MBA) - which led me into the corporate world of finance and economics. I became a Commercial and Investment Banker traveling and living internationally and domestically.

The stressors of travel, meeting deadlines and goals, and the internal “politics” of large corporations as well as family responsibilities (wife and 2 children) took its toll on my psyche and my body. Although I was physically active (mostly running and some weights and swimming) I did very little stretching. I also used too much alcohol to ease the anxiety. All of these factors plus my busy schedule resulted in less sleep (and disturbed sleep) than was healthy. My stomach was often upset and my lower back was “screaming at me”.

I began to research about how to reduce the intestinal and lower back pain and came upon books and articles relating to “holistic health.” This led me to a holistic MD in the Bay area and she, in turn, led me to my first Yoga class (Bikram based). I was “blown away”! I felt as though I had run 4-5 miles, but I was not tired. Rather I was both calm and energized. I followed this path for 3 years (averaging 6 days per week) and it ultimately led me into Ashtanga and Iyengar styles of Yoga ... including lots of reading and workshops related to the broader philosophic aspects of Yoga. I attended workshops at Esalen, including training in Massage and other bodywork modalities. I was so “taken” by all of this that I would schedule my business meetings around my yoga and other classes/workshops.

During the period of my divorce, I found the community of like-minded people in the yoga/spiritual world to be so helpful in getting me through this difficult time. Yoga and related activities (Feldenkrais, Alexander technique, Breema, Rosen work, chanting, etc.) brought me frequent periods of joy, calmness and feelings of good health. I also found myself being more “focused” in my work and life ... more mindful ... doing one thing at a time rather than frenetic multi-tasking.

Along the way, I often imagined myself opening a “Center” for such activities ... perhaps after I retire ... ?

Flash forward to my early 50s - when I was laid off from a major bank and received a severance package which included allowing me to keep my office and salary at the bank for one year but with no day to day responsibilities. Consequently, I was able to focus on my next steps and the first thing I thought about was the possibility of opening a healing center in San Francisco. I put together a business plan, interviewed many practitioners in the world of spirituality and holistic health, and 9 months later I opened The Mindful Body (April 15, 1994).

It was the most challenging and fear filled activity I had ever entered into. Although, from day one, The Mindful Body was always growing, it took 2 ½ years to become cash flow positive. I almost ran out of the resources to continue. However, with the emotional, financial, spiritual and advisory support of my darling wife-to-be, Janie (we married in 2000), The Mindful Body finally “turned the corner” in 1996.

This growth period was one of the most energizing and wonderful experiences of my life work ... interacting with Yoga teachers, massage therapists, psychotherapists and other practitioners of body and spiritually oriented activities. To this point, I want to highlight how important it was to have so many dedicated and loyal employees who were understanding and supportive during these difficult, growing times.

Another wonderful and important element of “luck” along the way was that, early on, Ron Nestor came into my life and became more and more of a right-hand person for me. His background in massage - and having once had a cleaning and maintenance business - provided me with an experienced, trusted and wise counselor. I especially believe his experience as a Zen Buddhist and Yoga practitioner served us well over the years as he has overseen the massage program, provided maintenance management and, realistically, day-to-day general management as well as overall advice/guidance. His responsible, focused and relaxed way of being also added an element of calm and stability to the atmosphere of The Mindful Body.

An equally important event occurred in 2002 when my daughter, Hillary, joined The Mindful Body and demonstrated her broad range of capabilities and character traits. She worked her way up through the various areas of administration and management to ultimately become the overall leader of The Mindful Body. Within these 12 years she enhanced our computer/technology capabilities, web site, back office systems and administration and, perhaps most importantly, dramatically improved the morale of our wonderful employees ... especially during the times in San Francisco when rents were skyrocketing and the regulatory and competitive environment was becoming increasingly



demanding. Her being here has been one of the highlights of my life ... to work closely with my adult daughter who had moved away from San Francisco when she was quite young.

## **2. What needs or desires are filled by our products?**

The Mindful Body started out with various Movement classes and “Personal Inner Work”. Those included workshops and classes with all kinds of related modalities. Yoga was the primary activity but we also offered a variety of free form movement classes as well as meditation, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique, dance/movement, Inner Child work, Nutrition, poetry readings etc.). My goal was to be a “mini Esalen” in San Francisco. However, Yoga (mostly asanas classes) was what turned out to be the most popular. And besides, it turned out to be much too challenging dealing with so many other practitioners who would come and go - and sometimes just not show up. As a result we decided to focus our energy on fewer activities (we started offering Massage after 4-5 months or so).

I remember when we designed an attractive wood sign outside which said “The Mindful Body - a Center for Movement, Bodywork and Personal Inner Work”. The size of the fonts could not be seen from across the street and once or twice someone asked, “What do you do in there??” Consequently we added signage in big letters saying “Yoga and Massage” to get the message out ... and that seemed to boost attendance!!

The Mindful Body was a bit ahead of its time ... just before Yoga began to “catch on” and become very popular. We had showers and nice clean bathrooms, an attractive interior enhanced by tall ceilings with skylights and with 2 movement rooms, all of which most other yoga or massage places did not have. Soon other competitors showed up and some followed our lead. We had lots of physically active yoga classes at the popular times (Ashtanga, Iyengar, Vinyasa Flow, etc.) and that was what the San Francisco community seemed to desire. We also had wonderful experienced yoga teachers ... as well as many committed yoga students who went on to become well respected teachers themselves (Charu Rachlis, Jason Crandell, Chrisandra Fox, Deb Burkman, Thomas Fortel, Kari Marble, et.al.).

What a wonderful combination it all turned out to be! Massage clients became yoga students and vice versa. The quietude of classes worked well with the same need for quiet during massage/bodywork. In addition, we had unusual “walls” between our two yoga rooms and the main hall ... in the form of canvas drapes (a creative solution for a unique place). Therefore, people were encouraged to speak softly -- quietude became the “watch word”. It felt ideal for going inward and finding a place for rest and rejuvenation in this busy world.

Along the way The Mindful Body became a center for a wonderful community of like-minded individuals who became friends and respected colleagues ... among the employees of The Mindful Body as well as including the students and clients. I have heard many employees and clients/students comment over the years about how they look forward to coming to The Mindful Body as a “safe and calming place of refuge”. It has been heartwarming for me to see these clients, students, employees and staff come and go and return again, many who have been with The Mindful Body for long periods of time - some for more than 20 years!

Over time, it became apparent that in order to remain profitable and viable it was necessary to utilize the “space” more efficiently and more frequently. So we began to expand the number of massage rooms from 4 to 10 and to rent out rooms to “like-minded” practitioners (like Mary Ann Molnar, a Physical Therapist who preferred to call herself “MA” - thus the name for one of our massage rooms). We also found that it was important to have Yoga teachers in multiple time and day-of-the-week spots, creating opportunities for students with varying schedules to come to The Mindful Body frequently and consistently.

Jaime Goodman (who started out with The Mindful Body as a valued massage therapist) started to grow her business as an acupuncturist by renting space/rooms from The Mindful Body. This blended very well with what we were doing and a wonderful partnership was born. (Her specialty in prenatal acupuncture particularly paired well with our pre/post natal yoga and massage program (with the Kari Marble as a major contributor).

### **3. The uniqueness and product differentiation:**

My overriding goal was always to provide a safe and nurturing space both for our clients/students and our teachers, therapists and staff ... with caring and understanding in a fast paced and competitive world. Perhaps, that is one of the differentiating aspects of The Mindful Body.

My experience with so many Yoga and other classes was and is that the teachers tell us what we are doing wrong ... rather than encouraging us in a direction which feels and is good for us. Along the way, I have met many "Ashtanga or Iyengar Police" ... and my body hurt after classes in which I was “pushing’ myself and being pushed beyond what was safe and helpful (sometimes with “rough”, inappropriate or unsafe adjustments/ comments by the teachers).

I have a great appreciation for how we as humans have a need to be heard, listened to and nurtured -- so many of us have self esteem issues. I believe that we need lots of kindness in our lives and we need a safe place to calm our busy minds, to focus on our breath and bodies in order to recharge our psyche ... to find a place of peacefulness. I wanted this to

be an important part of The Mindful Body's core values.

My original goal was to create a self sustaining center where the wonderful teachers, therapists and staff were valued, paid well and had an environment conducive to exploring ideas about health and healing as well as growing their careers. It turned out that one of these goals - to be paid well - was not so easily implemented. The challenges for a small business in an environment of escalating rents and increasing regulations, was frequently bumping up against the goal of being a self sustaining business. Intense competition from the numerous new Yoga and Massage establishments added another element of challenge.

Perhaps our varying successes relate to the overriding sense of calm and quietude, and the friendly, caring and nurturing attitude of our teachers, therapists, and staff. The challenge for me has always been about offering these attributes while not "turning off" the great majority of our population, a population who live in a competitive and goal oriented world where speed, multitasking and winning are so strongly rewarded.

#### **4: What I learned through this experience:**

First and foremost, I believe in the importance of establishing the vision/mission/goals of any organization ... and to be clear about the steps that it will take to get there. Remind oneself of that mission over and over again. Check it for reality, in light of real-time experience and feedback from employees and customers and be willing to modify the mission if necessary.

Secondly, I believe that the success of any organization is all about the people ... teachers, therapists and staff. So:

- Find responsible, consistent, reliable, thoughtful, caring and competent people who are committed to the mission/vision.
- Let go of the people who are constantly challenging to manage and who take the most time to deal with ... and let them go early on. If not, they will take management time that can be used in more important areas and may affect the morale of others
- Spend enough time to "vet" the newly hired people. This will reap rewards over the medium and long term. It costs a lot of time and money to replace someone.
- Provide clear guidelines to the people who help achieve one's mission ... and keep checking to see if they are supporting that mission.

- Separate responsibilities so that no one has exclusive and full access both to distribute jobs as well as to protect financial assets (cash, checking and savings accounts, etc.). Change the security “codes” often. “Trust in Spirit, et.al. ...but ... tie your horse to the fence post.”

Thirdly, ask for help!

- You can’t do it alone! Surround yourself with good people and trusted advisors.
- Listen to employees ... and develop access to the internal “grapevine”
- Delegate authority and responsibility - with accountability. Again, you can not do it alone ... and there are plenty of good ideas from the people who are working with students and clients day to day. This approach also enhances the morale of employees who feels trusted ... and are not constantly having someone looking over their shoulders, telling them what to do and not do, or feeling as though they have to “check with the boss” for every detail. (Naturally, this includes giving everyone clear information so they can make decisions on their own knowing that management will support them).
- Listen to your customers ... encourage feedback. Develop relationships with a few customers who will be honest with you and are “reasonable” from a business point of view as well as a philosophical viewpoint.

Lastly, be aware of what the competition is doing but do not necessarily follow or react to what they do. Take time to reflect and to “respond” after thoughtful reflection.

... and remember to go inside yourself and listen to your “inner guide”... while constantly doing reality checks.



Lifestyle guide for the modern yogi

## the mindful body

by lisa maria

Reviews | Yoga Studios & Centers | Yoga Studios | San Francisco

**san francisco's yoga oasis**

Walking into the spacious loft-like atmosphere of [The Mindful Body](#) in San Francisco, the sounds and shuffle of California Street fade away. I feel instantly transported into a realm of tranquility, safety and love. The heavy, dark beams of wood framing the entrance offer me a grounding comfort, the delicate white orchid at the front desk soothes my eyes, and the warm smiles of greeting open my heart. Ficus trees, rubber plants, Bonsais...these touches of greenery throughout the space link me to the natural world, automatically slowing my pace and my breath.

Flooded with a canopy of sunshine from the many skylights that punctuate the 20-foot high ceilings, The Mindful Body is a sanctuary for personal healing via yoga and bodywork. They offer a full roster of yoga classes in their two studios; styles include Ashtanga, Hatha Flow, [Yin](#), Beginning, Pranayama and Meditation, Prenatal, Restorative and Community classes. Rates are extremely reasonable—a drop in class is \$14—and you can purchase a membership that offers further discounts on classes and bodywork. A wide range of bodywork (Trigger Point Therapy, Reiki, Tui Na, Shiatsu, Sports Massage and Pregnancy Massage) and Acupuncture are offered in their nine massage rooms with names like Om and Harmony.

In 1994, founder and owner Roy Bergmann decided to open a yoga center that embraced complementary healing modalities in order to fully free the body, mind and emotions. A former investment banker and New Yorker, Bergmann was burned out from stress and back pain, and also struggling with the challenges of divorce. An avid lifelong athlete, Bergmann found yoga in the '80s as a natural evolution of his spiritual and healing quest. He studied at Esalen, becoming a massage therapist, then studied Bikram Yoga and became a teacher.

Five years ago, his daughter Hillary Bergmann stepped up to the challenge of learning the family business. She greets me with a wide smile, her sleek strawberry blonde hair swinging around her face, her bright blue eyes full of warmth. She shares her father's motivation for opening The

Mindful Body. “He saw how yoga and bodywork changed his life and decided he should do it for a living,” she says. “His mission has been self-responsible health, the creation of a space of warm, welcoming energy and laughter. He feels that life should be enjoyed.”

Though today Hillary is the picture of glowing health, that wasn’t always so. She was sixteen when her father opened the studio and even though she grew up learning about health, receiving bodywork from her dad and learning about yoga, she became anorexic. She went through her own healing journey at The Mindful Body. Through the gradual integration of yoga into her life, she became more in touch with her body. “Yoga has been nurturing, strengthening and healing for me—all at the same time—I am loving it!”



*Photography by shiva das*

Speaking to the dovetailing of yoga and bodywork, Hillary offers The Mindful Body belief that “it’s about letting the tension release fully. Sometimes you need to have someone help you do it—you can’t just do it on your own. We hold a lot of emotions in our body, so when you’re getting bodywork, it not only releases your muscles, but your emotions.” She laughs, eyes crinkling, “It’s wonderful to see someone floating out of a massage!”

The reception area is welcoming; tastefully stocked with nearly 100% organic and eco-friendly retail items such as Jade mats, locally-made Strega Dia chakra oils, and Von Natur bodycare

products. A selection of books, T-shirts (one of my favorites was a tank emblazoned with “Emotionally Available”) and yoga props are also available for purchase.

Today, at the age of 65, Roy Bergmann still teaches regularly, though he’s given up his bodywork practice. A member of the Dolphin Club, Bergmann swims in the San Francisco Bay sans wetsuit, and practices yoga every day. His back pain from twenty years ago? It never returned.

Although the senior Bergmann still oversees the big picture of The Mindful Body, Bergmann junior helps run the day-to-day operation of the studio (along with yoga manager Maile Sivert, massage manager Ron Nestor and front desk managers Dustin Toshiyuki and Kate Lumsden). Hillary’s voice, sweet and musical, hums with gratitude: “I have a dream partnership with *so* many great people. I feel so lucky to be working with all these great energies...one of our goals is to be a place where teachers and therapists can grow and have a place where they can spread their wings.”

876 California Street, San Francisco, California - 94115, United States  
415.931.2639

*Filing Date:* January 11, 2018  
*Case No.:* 2018-001174LBR  
*Business Name:* The Mindful Body  
*Business Address:* 2876 California Street  
*Zoning:* NC-2 (Neighborhood Commercial, Small Scale)  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 1025/018  
*Applicant:* Maile Sivert, Owner  
2876 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Mark Farrell, District 2  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org  
*Reviewed By:* Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822  
tim.frye@sfgov.org

## **BUSINESS DESCRIPTION**

The Mindful Body is a wellness business that opened in April 1994. The business is still at its original location in the Lower Pacific Heights neighborhood. It started out with various movement classes and offerings coined “Personal Inner Work” that were workshops and classes that were reflective, internal and meditative. The goal of the business was to be a “mini Esalen” in San Francisco – inspired by the Big Sur healing resort – a place of refuge; an urban sanctuary; a place where you could find meaningful community; a place that is kind and welcoming.

The Mindful Body was a bit ahead of its time, offering yoga before it became mainstream and found in every neighborhood. Yoga was established on the West Coast in 1955 with Walt and Magaña Baptiste's studio in San Francisco, Yoga Philosophic Health Center. Walt's father had been influenced by Vivekananda, and Walt and Magaña were students of Yogananda. By the 1970s, yoga was growing in popularity in California but did not yet have designated centers. It was mainly offered in living rooms and rented spaces. Integral Yoga Institute (1970) and the Iyengar Yoga Institute (1974) were two early yoga studios in San Francisco. The Mindful Body was at the starting wave when yoga centers and studios blossomed in the city.

Although yoga was the primary activity at The Mindful Body, the business also offered a variety of free form movement classes as well as meditation, Feldenkrais, Alexander Technique, dance/movement, nutrition, poetry readings and therapeutic massage. The business has additionally had Pilates, Ayurveda, Breema, Rosen, nutrition coaching, live music, chanting events, community member fundraisers and acupuncture at different times throughout its history. Because yoga turned out to be the most popular offering, and because it was challenging to deal with so many practitioners, The Mindful Body decided to focus its energy on fewer activities such as yoga, massage and acupuncture.

The Mindful Body is located on the north side of California Street between Broderick and Divisadero streets in the Marina neighborhood. The subject business is located within the NC-2 (Neighborhood Commercial, Small Scale) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District.



## STAFF ANALYSIS

### *Review Criteria*

1. *When was business founded?*

The Mindful Body was founded in 1994.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes, the Mindful Body qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. The Mindful Body has operated for 24 years. While the business does not meet the 30 year threshold, the business has operated with no break in operations exceeding two years, it is significant to San Francisco history due to its early offering of yoga instruction, and the business would face significant risk of displacement if not included in the Registry.
- ii. The Mindful Body has contributed to the identity of the Marina neighborhood and the yoga and wellness care community in San Francisco.
- iii. The Mindful Body is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the wellness business.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

The business is associated with the historical traditions associated with the practice of yoga.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

No.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. The business has been featured in several local media and publications including the San Francisco Chronicle, SF Gate, SF Examiner, and KTVU San Francisco as well as the industry publication the Yogi Times.

### *Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business*

#### **Location(s) associated with the business:**

- 2876 California Street (1994 – present)

#### **Recommended by Applicant**

- Health and healing services – including yoga, massage, acupuncture and meditation
- Annual 200-hour yoga teacher training program

- A warm and “lived-in” feeling maintained in the style establish in 1994
- The original curtains that divide some of the rooms
- Exterior features, including escutcheons over doorways, keystones, large original domed skylights in the rear of the building and decorative brickwork patterns

**Additional Recommended by Staff**

- None



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

---

## Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No. XXX

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 7, 2018

*Case No.:* 2018-001174LBR  
*Business Name:* The Mindful Body  
*Business Address:* 2876 California Street  
*Zoning:* NC-2 (Neighborhood Commercial, Small Scale)  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 1025/018  
*Applicant:* Maile Sivert, Owner  
2876 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Mark Farrell, District 2  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org  
*Reviewed By:* Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822  
tim.frye@sfgov.org

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR THE MINDFUL BODY, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2876 CALIFORNIA STREET, (BLOCK/LOT 1025/018).**

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 20 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, the business is significant to San Francisco history, and the business would face significant risk of displacement if not included in the Registry; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the Marina District's and City's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

**WHEREAS**, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 7, 2018, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** that The Mindful Body qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for The Mindful Body.

*Location (if applicable)*

- 2876 California Street

*Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business*

- Health and healing services – including yoga, massage, acupuncture and meditation
- Annual 200-hour yoga teacher training program
- A warm and “lived-in” feeling maintained in the style establish in 1994
- The original curtains that divide some of the rooms
- Exterior features, including escutcheons over doorways, keystones, large original domed skylights in the rear of the building and decorative brickwork patterns

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission’s findings and recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business’s eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs** its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2018-001173LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on February 7, 2018.

Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: