Brief Statement of Therapeutic Orientation
By Louis Carlino, MA

My orientation can best be defined as a combination of Client-Centered Therapy and Experiential Psychotherapy. As a Client-Centered therapist, my emphasis is placed on creating a safe, caring, non-judgmental relationship with my clients. When clients feel listened to, and, through an empathic encounter, begin to relax and feel understood, clients are more likely to re-experience issues in a more positive and hopeful light. Clients then become more curious and may begin to notice that a big part of what has brought them into therapy is not fixed and the realization dawns that positive change is possible.

As an Experiential therapist sessions are present moment focused. Creating a trusting relationship supports experiencing the moment in therapy since trust encourages clients to actually feel and express their feelings as they arise in sessions. Bringing attention over and over again back to the present maintains an experiential focus as contrasted to an exclusively ‘talking about the problem’ approach.

Where does Yoga fit in? Yoga principles and practices are body-centered interventions that expand the awareness of what is arising in the present moment. Yoga is used as a mindfulness tool that offers clients the possibility to attune to feelings expressed through the body in a non-judgmental and caring way. Clients then realize that by establishing a more aware relationship to their bodies, they have an increased capacity to regulate their emotions and maintain a calm and open response to tense and challenging feelings that may arise both in sessions and in their lives. An interesting outcome of learning to regulate emotions is the experience of a calm and abiding sense of Self. Through the regular and consistent practice of Yoga informed techniques in sessions and at home the awareness of a resilient Self able to face challenges with increasing calmness grows stronger and stronger.

The goal of therapy therefore is to re-condition the body and mind to re-habituate to experiencing calmness. By practicing the art of abiding in calmness in sessions, and in their daily lives through practice, clients learn to integrate relaxation in situations likely to trigger tension. The result is a gradual change of thoughts, feelings, and behavior within the very situations that brought a client into therapy to begin with.