



# Kripalu<sup>®</sup>

Spring Impact Newsletter 2025

## LEADING WITH LOVE

Gratitude Report

# STATEMENT FROM OUR CEO



## DEAR FRIENDS,

We are in the midst of a great turning in the history of this planet, and with this we often feel flooded by anxiety and fear. Very quickly we can lose all connection to the vast wells of wisdom, love and power that exist in our inner being, in the earth we come from and in the Presence that births and permeates all of life. When we lose this connection, we lose hope. We must not lose hope. We must be with what is true right now, not bypassing it but instead holding onto what is possible. What is possible is a collective remembering and embodying of our great wisdom, love and power.

This year at Kripalu, as we have witnessed the growing voice of division, we have heard the call to create spaces for a different kind of dialogue. Not one that demands immediate understanding or agreement, but one that begins with the simple, profound act of listening. In our meditation halls and across our grounds, people who might never have crossed paths are finding common ground in their shared humanity.

What we're witnessing in our work is both humbling and hopeful. When people feel truly held in a space of non-judgment, something shifts. The armor we've built around our hearts begins to soften. The stories we tell about "the other" begin to dissolve. In their place, we find something grounded in wisdom and love: our shared yearning for peace, for connection, for healing.

Through your support, Kripalu has become more than a retreat center – it's a beacon of possibility. Here, in this sacred space, we're discovering that the path to healing our collective wounds begins with the courage to sit together, to breathe together, to listen with our whole hearts, to forgive and to be willing to see each other in our sacredness. This is the work our world is calling for, and together, we're answering that call.

Grá Mór (Big Love),

Robert Mulhall, President and CEO

*We want to extend our deepest appreciation to Carol and Jack O'Neil for their friendship and unwavering commitment to Kripalu. Their extraordinarily generous financial contributions have been transformative, enabling us to expand our reach and ensuring we stay true to our lineage. Their support extends far beyond monetary gifts—Carol, a devoted Kripalu yoga teacher who spreads her love of our practice to countless students, has shared her brilliant insights and thoughtful guidance, proving invaluable to our Board, CEO, and the entire Gifts & Gratitude team for decades. Her personal dedication to our mission shines through in every interaction, offering not only her professional expertise but also her heartfelt passion for our work. Together, Carol and Jack exemplify the spirit of service that sustains Kripalu. Their belief in our mission empowers our entire team as we move forward with purpose and gratitude.*



**ON THE COVER:** Jess Frey is a 1000-hour Kripalu yoga educator, artist, creatrix, and steward of Love. She has been connected to Kripalu for more than a decade, serving a variety of positions, including R&R, Kripalu Schools, and Lead Faculty.

## GUIDED BY LOVE

### The Power of Access for ALL



**Rolf Gates**

Director of the Kripalu  
School of Yoga

While on active duty in the military, Rolf Gates entered rehab for alcohol addiction and left with a spiritual practice he describes as "people helping people," a practice that continues to guide him today. "In rehab, surrounded by fellow soldiers who volunteered to help others heal, I found my purpose," Rolf explains. "Ordinary people performed extraordinary acts of kindness daily, creating a healing community that renewed my spirit. Experiencing their compassion showed me how we heal one another through kindness."

Five years into his recovery, Rold enrolled in yoga teacher training at Kripalu. Here, he discovered a way to integrate what he had learned in rehab into his relationship with his body, breath, and the present moment. "At Kripalu, I learned to infuse my values into how I stood, walked, and breathed. I discovered that the way I paid attention to life could be an art."

This experience shaped Rolf's future. Decades later, as Director of the Kripalu School of Yoga, Rolf's personal journey informs his leadership. Since 2018, as the founder of "Communities Rising," Rolf has been leading Yoga Teacher Trainings for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

In 2023 and 2024, Kripalu has offered full scholarships to 55 students in affinity-based 200-hour Yoga Teacher Trainings for members of the Global Majority. Kripalu is creating a space where participants learn technical skills and Kripalu's empathic approach within an environment of familiarity and safety. Another training with full scholarships will be available through a 300-hour Global Majority Yoga Teacher Training (GMYTT) in 2025.

"To offer that safety and familiarity; it's so a part of what we are meant to do," Rolf emphasizes. "It takes courage to advocate for people whose voices are not traditionally heard in the mainstream," he explains. "It defines Kripalu as a thought leader and an organization of compassion and courage."

### The Art of Transformation



**Eset Rose**

Chief Programming  
and Innovation Officer

When Eset Rose first visited Kripalu in 2003, she was a 22-year-old music industry professional searching for purpose. As Kripalu's Chief Programming and Innovation Officer, she created something revolutionary: a sanctuary where artists can reconnect with and honor their creative gifts.

"I came to Kripalu for a 'Find Your Purpose' workshop," Eset recalls. "What I remembered from that was that I was here to bring light. I was here to be a presence of light in the world." This early insight would prove prophetic—today, her work centers on illumination, helping others shine in their brilliance.

Drawing from her profound experience managing Alicia Keys and witnessing both the heights of artistic achievement and the toll of an extractive industry that often treats people like commodities, Eset recognized a critical need.

**"We've forgotten that artists create culture, that artists help us make meaning, that art is the universal language."**

The Sacred Artists program she developed at Kripalu offers something rare in the creative world: true sanctuary and soul-deep support. Through a transformational process rooted in nature's intelligence, artists reconnect to their truest selves. They cultivate daily practice, dissolve limiting beliefs, and reclaim their creative power. Many say they have never felt so seen, safe and loved. The power of love transforms—and ignites art that can heal and reimagine the future.

Many artists have found a spiritual home at Kripalu, connecting deeply with its lineage through Swami Kripalu, himself once a musician and songwriter.

At a time when the world needs visionaries, the Sacred Artists program ensures that artists are resourced not just to create—but to lead humanity forward through beauty, connection, and love.

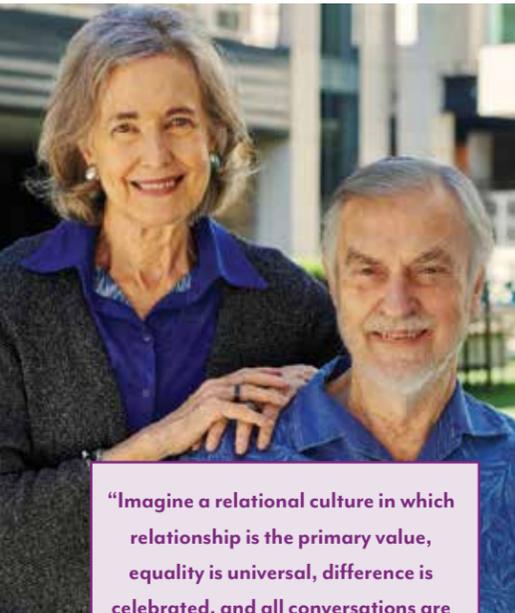
# GRATITUDE IN ACTION

## Donors and Their Many Gifts

### Bridging Worlds Through Words

Helen LaKelly Hunt, PhD and Dr. Harville Hendrix

**Husband and wife team, Helen and Harville** are the New York Times bestselling co-authors of "Getting the Love You Want." Together, they co-founded Imago Relationship Therapy, positively impacting countless couples worldwide. They are among Kripalu's most beloved luminaries, consistently selling out retreats for decades.



"Imagine a relational culture in which relationship is the primary value, equality is universal, difference is celebrated, and all conversations are safe and collaborative."

Their Safe Conversations® methodology teaches people to talk without criticism, listen without judgment, and connect beyond differences. This approach forms the foundation of their philanthropic vision.

Helen and Harville have made an investment in Kripalu's programming that extends healing from individual transformation to societal transformation.

**Because of their generosity, Kripalu will expand our initiative bringing mindfulness training to law enforcement in New York State and beyond.** The program provides officers evidence-based stress reduction techniques, emotional regulation skills, and communication strategies that support both their wellbeing and the wellbeing of their communities.

Our pilot program in 2024 has shown remarkable outcomes:

- 100% of participants described the training as "life-changing."
- 100% reported positive changes observed by colleagues and family members.
- All agreed the training offered unique tools for professional and personal growth.

We are deeply grateful to Helen and Harville for making this work possible and sharing our bold vision of societal change. In the words of Nelson Mandela—"It always seems impossible until it's done."



### Dance Into the Light

Leslie Salmon Jones and Jeff W. Jones

**Leslie and Jeff are fierce advocates for women's leadership and individual empowerment.** "My source of inspiration is my late mother, Bernice Noel Salmon. Her lifelong commitment to service, advocacy, and love for the underrepresented has paved the way for my journey in identity, inclusion, women's rights, human rights, and a sense of belonging," Leslie explains.

"Born amidst the echoes of the civil rights era, my journey commenced with fists raised, standing alongside my mother and my father, Dr. John Douglas Salmon Sr., both trailblazers in the movement. Those formative years were molded by their fiery spirits."

Leslie co-founded Afro Flow Yoga® with her husband Jeff W. Jones, a multi-instrumental recording artist, musical director, and composer. Together, they create sacred spaces where marginalized voices rise, and bodies reclaim their power.

At Kripalu, their dynamic presence challenges systems of oppression while nurturing self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Leslie and Jeff's teachings remind us that liberation begins in the body and the power of the people is within.

# SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE OTHERS

## Mindfulness Retreats for Veterans

The week of Veterans Day we were privileged to be in community with a group of veterans from the nonprofit Mission Flexible, led by Kripalu alumni and Schwartz Service Practicum Grant recipient Lisa Jakub. The group immersed themselves on the grounds, sharing healthy nourishing meals, exploring yoga & meditation, journaling, learning breathwork and archery.

Lisa notes, "Many veterans felt uncertain about visiting a yoga retreat center. They worried about fitting in, but found themselves embraced by the Kripalu community." Within days, they were saying, "I've never felt more comfortable or more at home." "The staff showed extraordinary kindness, ensuring we were supported," a participant shared. "Conversations with other guests were deeply meaningful—many asked questions and exchanged healing stories of their own," said another. Surveys reported highlights for the group include yoga dance, peaceful trail hikes, and many were surprised how much they loved the silent breakfasts.



"Healing is the process, often lifelong, of restoring and reawakening the capacities for safety, belonging, and dignity on the other side of trauma."  
~ Prentis Hemphill

Veterans often find themselves distanced from mindfulness spaces, leading to isolation. Kripalu's outreach to advocates like Lisa expands our community to ALL seeking refuge and healing. Our donors make sharing Kripalu's transformative environment possible for the heroes who've served our country. This reflects Kripalu's commitment to providing vital programs to the everyday heroes who take care of their communities: first responders, frontline workers, activists, nonprofit leaders, teachers, nurses—and all those whose mission is to serve.

# Kripalu®

## BY THE NUMBERS

\*Our Regenerative Community Model builds and sustains authentic relationships while aspiring to recenter those historically pushed to the margins and/or appropriated and reduce the barriers that prevent access to yoga.

These numbers reflect 2022–2024

## REGENERATIVE COMMUNITY\*

22,682  
scholarships for students

2,923  
people served with community supported pricing

277  
nonprofit leaders served through Kripalu's Transformational Leadership Program

13,558  
people served through programming for or led by BIPOC

5,193  
people served through programming for or led by LGBTQIA+

## SACRED EDUCATION

2,105  
programs

5,106  
Berkshire County residents served

7,081  
people served through collective transformation programs

2,180  
students trained in our schools

## SACRED HOSPITALITY

145,049  
people served

97%  
of guests surveyed had a positive experience

77%  
of guests said Kripalu inspired them to share what they have learned with their community

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