

Module 5 Giving & Taking

Methodology:

Modern Western Yoga & Social Media

- Examines how yoga is represented and its impact on accessibility and diversity.
- Encourages self-reflection on biases that may affect inclusivity.
- **Exploring Asteya (Non-Stealing) & Yoga as Service**
 - Reflects on personal intentions in sharing yoga.
 - Stresses respect, integrity, and ethics in facilitation.
- **Creating a Welcoming & Ethical Space**
 - Discusses the facilitator’s role in establishing inclusivity and safety.
 - Highlights the importance of agency and empowerment in practice.
- **Addressing Harm in Yoga Communities**
 - Recognizes issues of abuse, power imbalance, and ethical misconduct.
 - Encourages trauma-informed facilitation to ensure a safe, supportive space.

Teaching for the Participants’ Needs

- **Core Values in Facilitation**
 - Empathy, compassion, and non-judgment are essential for trauma-informed teaching.
 - Facilitators must guide without assuming a participant’s ability, mobility, or engagement level.
- **Recognizing & Addressing Personal Biases**
 - Self-reflection helps uncover and dismantle judgments that may impact teaching.
 - Awareness of personal experiences informs, but should not dictate, how we perceive participants.
- **Understanding Emotional Responses in Facilitation**
 - **Pity** creates distance, focusing on feeling sorry for others rather than supporting them.
 - **Sympathy** acknowledges another’s struggle but can lack depth in connection.
 - **Empathy** fosters true understanding by seeing and feeling from the participant’s perspective.
 - **Compassion** moves beyond empathy, offering genuine support while maintaining healthy boundaries.
- **Practical Application in a Yoga Class**
 - Observe participants without labeling or assuming their experience.
 - Offer invitational and accessible cueing rather than directive instructions.
 - Create a space where participants feel seen, supported, and empowered in their practice.

Qualities	Pity	Sympathy	Empathy	Compassion
Thoughts while feeling the emotion	"That's sad."	"I'm sorry you are sad and going through a difficult time."	"I can feel your sadness and understand why you feel that way."	"I can feel your sadness, understand it, and want to help you fix it."
How sadness is experienced	Includes condescension and contempt	Shifts to reflecting on life	Simply understood	Understood and a motivation to find a solution emerges
Connection between Person A and Person B	None. Don't see anything shared in common.	Little shared in common. Limited connection.	Shared experiences.	Shared experiences. Know a solution is possible.
How Person A views Person B	Objectify them	There is a detached perspective	There is a connection	Humanize others
How Person A feels about the Person B	Feel subtle contempt for them	Respect them	Respect them	Love them
The Person A believe that Person B got into his/her situation...	It was self-inflicted (consciously or sub-consciously)	A situation happened and the result was this current experience.	Decisions were made – they are where they are now.	It doesn't really matter how; we need to fix it.
Does the Person A believe Person B can solve his/her problems?	Nope. Not really.	Sure, they will. They will find a way.	They will find a way to solve their problem.	Yes – let's collaborate to solve the problem.



Gearmark

Qualities	Pity	Sympathy	Empathy	Compassion
<i>Scenario: Facilitator observes a Participant in class with limited range of motion</i>				
Facilitator Thoughts	"This poor person can hardly move"	"I feel badly for this person's lack of mobility"	"I understand how this person feels"	"I understand how this person may feel and I can offer movement that may be beneficial"
Facilitator Experience	Annoyance and/or Frustration	Reflects about personal mobility and compares participant to themselves	Understands participant's experience	Understands and motivated to offer support
Connection between Facilitator and Participant	None	Limited	Shared Experience	Shared Experience and plan for support
How Facilitator Views Participant	As a Barrier to Class Flow	Somewhat detached	Feels connected	Sees participant as they are without judgement or assumption
How Facilitator feels about Participant	Subtle Contempt	Respect	Respect	Caring
How facilitator Interprets Participant's Mobility	Limited and Stagnant	Limited and in need of external support (props/hands on adjustments)	A work in progress	Unique to the Individual, will benefit from support and ongoing communication
How Facilitator Guides Participant	Little to no specific attention or support	Offers props and manual adjustments to "Help" mobility	Offers props and demonstrates posture variations	Discusses goals, offers progressive variations to allow participant to discover posture variations best suited to their body
Participant's Experience	Frustrated and excluded	Self-conscious and overwhelmed	Acknowledged	Confident and Supported

Facilitating with Awareness and Accessibility

• Practice as Demonstration, Not Performance

- Practicing alongside participants offers a visual reference, not a personal showcase.
- Demonstrating variations that align with participants' needs fosters a sense of community (sanga).

• Accessibility Through Empathy & Observation

- Offering posture variations ensures all participants feel acknowledged and supported.
- Listening, observing, and communicating reduces intimidation and increases confidence.

• Keeping the Focus on Participants

- Avoid demonstrating advanced variations unless they align with participants' needs.
- Save personal exploration for your own practice outside of facilitating.

• Adapting to Diverse Participants

- Participants will have different abilities and experiences... meet them where they are.
- Use clear anatomical cues and invitational language to encourage exploration.
- Show multiple variations of postures, with and without props, to make the practice inclusive.



Yoga Philosophy:

Asteya and Giving

• Asteya Goes Beyond Material Theft

- Stealing isn't just physical—it's taking opportunities, experiences, and time from ourselves and others.
- Fear, insecurity, and control can lead us to steal from our own potential.

• Mindfulness in Communication

- Notice if conversations have balance—are you listening or just waiting to speak?
- Interrupting, dominating, or assuming steals from others' voices and learning opportunities.

• Letting Go of Control

- Trying to control others' decisions takes away their right to follow their own path.
- When we avoid risks out of fear, we steal opportunities from ourselves.

• Giving Beyond Money

- Time, education, and presence are valuable gifts.
- Supporting incarcerated individuals through yoga may not always be financially compensated, but the impact is profound.
- Advocating for funding and resources ensures sustainability for these programs.

The Gifts of Knowledge in Yoga and Life

• Asteya is More Than Physical Theft

- It includes stealing experiences, opportunities, and personal agency—from others and ourselves.
- Rushing ahead before learning or pushing others to do what we think is best can be a form of theft.

• Learning, Teaching, and Collaborating

- True knowledge requires patience—jumping to teaching before fully learning steals from the depth of understanding.
- Collaboration, rather than control, allows others to follow their path instead of imposing our expectations on them.

• Empowering, Not Controlling in Yoga

- Hands-on adjustments can sometimes be beneficial, but often they take away a student's ability to explore their own body's wisdom.
- Invitational cueing helps participants reconnect with themselves and build confidence in their movement.

• Rebuilding Self-Connection After Trauma

- Many who have experienced trauma may be disconnected from parts of their body.
- Facilitators should guide rather than impose, allowing individuals to reclaim their autonomy and practice at their own pace.

• The Gift of Self-Knowledge

- Yoga is not about perfecting a pose but understanding how the body moves and honoring its needs.
- Giving participants the space to explore and grow builds long-term self-trust and healing.

Confronting the Thieves in Our Heads

• We Steal from Ourselves Through Self-Doubt

- Many times, we don't pursue opportunities because we question our abilities or our right to take up space.

• Samskara: The Conditioning of the Mind

- Repeated actions, thoughts, and reactions—especially those shaped by trauma—become ingrained patterns.
- Over time, we accept these conditioned responses as “normal,” even when they no longer serve us.

• Vidya vs. Avidya: Truth vs. Misperception

- Vidya (correct understanding) allows us to see things as they are.
- Avidya (misperception) distorts our view, reinforcing self-doubt and limiting beliefs.

• Breaking the Cycle

- Like Pavlov's dog reacting to a bell without food, we often respond to past experiences, not present reality.
- Recognizing these patterns gives us the power to rewrite them and reclaim our choices.

• Yoga as a Tool for Reconditioning

- Through mindfulness and movement, we can shift from conditioned reactions to intentional, self-affirming responses.

Patriarchy & The Fear of Empowering the Oppressed

• Oppression as a Form of Theft

- Throughout history, those in power have taken what they desired (land, wealth, resources) rather than earning or sharing it.
- This mindset has fueled mass oppression, from systemic inequalities to genocide.

• The Role of Patriarchy

- Patriarchy is a system that privileges dominant masculinity and enforces rigid gender norms.

- It not only oppresses women and girls but also anyone who doesn't conform to traditional gender roles (LGBTQ+ individuals, certain groups of men and boys).

• Gender Equality vs. Patriarchy

- True gender equality challenges the systems that enforce inequality.
- It includes all people, regardless of gender identity, sexuality, or societal expectations.

• Yoga & Trauma-Informed Support

- Many individuals in trauma-informed yoga spaces have experienced harm related to gender and sexuality.
- Facilitators must create an inclusive, judgment-free environment for all identities.

• Oppression as a Product of Fear & Ignorance

- The Kleshas (fear, ignorance, pride, attachment, aversion) are at the root of oppression.
- Those who fear losing power create systems of control to maintain dominance (patriarchy, government control, white supremacy).
- Recognizing these patterns allows us to challenge and dismantle them through awareness and action.

Embodied Anatomy:

This section explores the shoulders, wrists, and elbows... key joints that provide strength, flexibility, and stability in yoga practice. The shoulder joint, highly mobile yet vulnerable, connects the arms to the body and relies on muscles, tendons, and bones for support. You'll engage with video tutorials and personal movement exploration to better understand its range of motion and areas of tension. Wrists and elbows, often weight-bearing in yoga, require proper alignment and mindful transitions to prevent strain. This section emphasizes joint protection through props, alignment cues, and counter-relief techniques. With anatomical insights and movement practices, you'll gain tools to create safe, supportive yoga experiences for yourself and those you guide.

Shoulder Joints & Structure

• Complexity of the Shoulder Joint

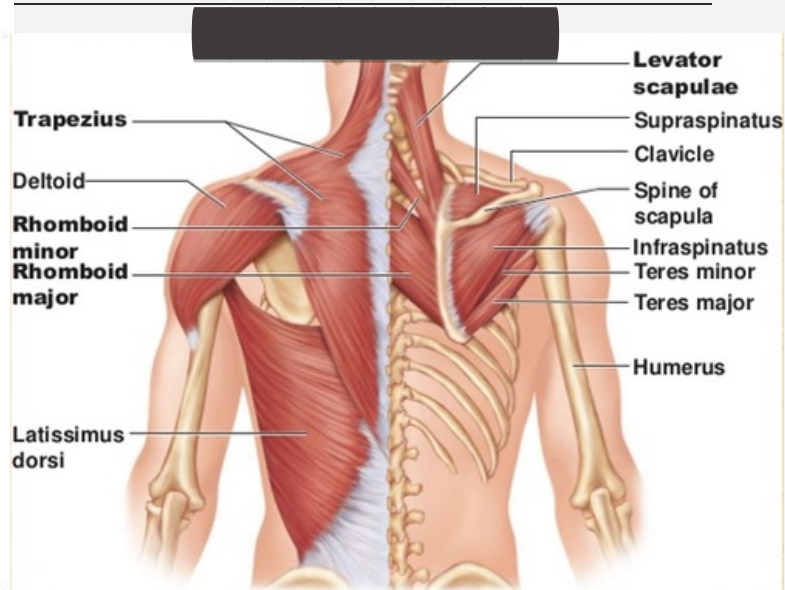
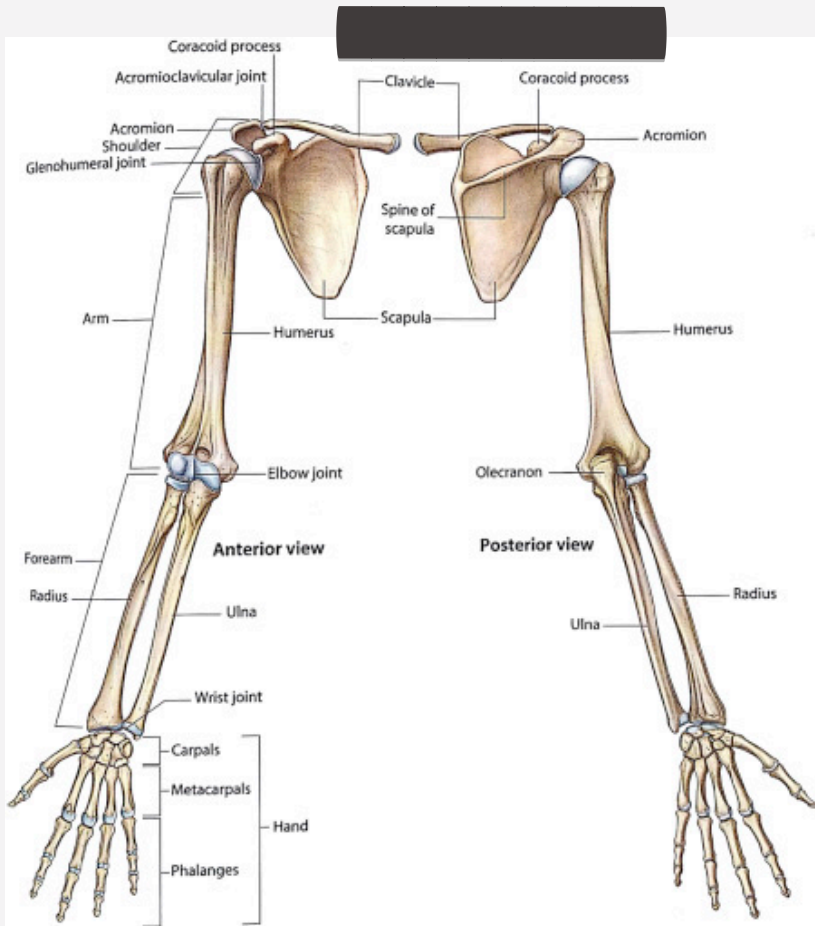
- Supports the arms and connects upper appendages to the axial skeleton.
- Highly mobile due to its intricate layering of muscles, tendons, and bones.

• Functions & Importance

- Allows for a wide range of motion.
- Provides strength and flexibility but is vulnerable to strain and injury.

• Key Considerations for Yoga Practice

- Awareness of alignment and mobility to prevent overuse injuries.
- Importance of warming up and engaging supporting muscles for stability.
- Use of props and modifications to reduce strain and enhance support.



Exploring Shoulder Mobility

• Engage in Personal Exploration

- Seated or standing, move through the illustrated shoulder motions.
- Identify areas of mobility, restriction, or tension.

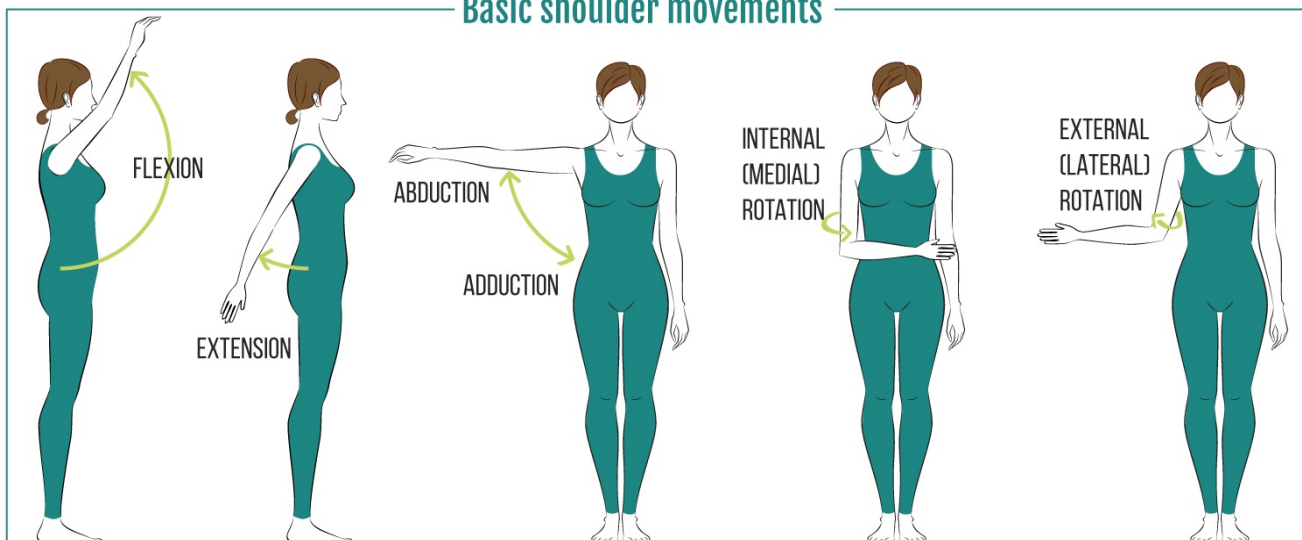
• Incorporate Breath Awareness

- Inhale as you lift the arms or shoulders.
- Exhale as you lower them, allowing for fluid movement and relaxation.

• Building Awareness for Teaching

- Recognize variations in range of motion.
- Consider how movement and breath integration can enhance participant experience.

Basic shoulder movements



Wrists & Elbows: Supportive Joint Awareness

• Understanding Wrist & Elbow Complexity

- These joints are strong yet vulnerable to injury and strain.
- Sensitivity can arise due to prolonged weight-bearing or repetitive movement.

• Considering Participant Experience & History

- Some individuals may have pre-existing injuries or inflammation.
- Extended time on hands and knees may cause discomfort or aggravate conditions.

• Supporting Movement & Transitions

- Recognize when rest, counter-relief movements, and props are needed.
- Encourage mindful transitions to reduce joint stress.

• Exploring Hand & Wrist Placement

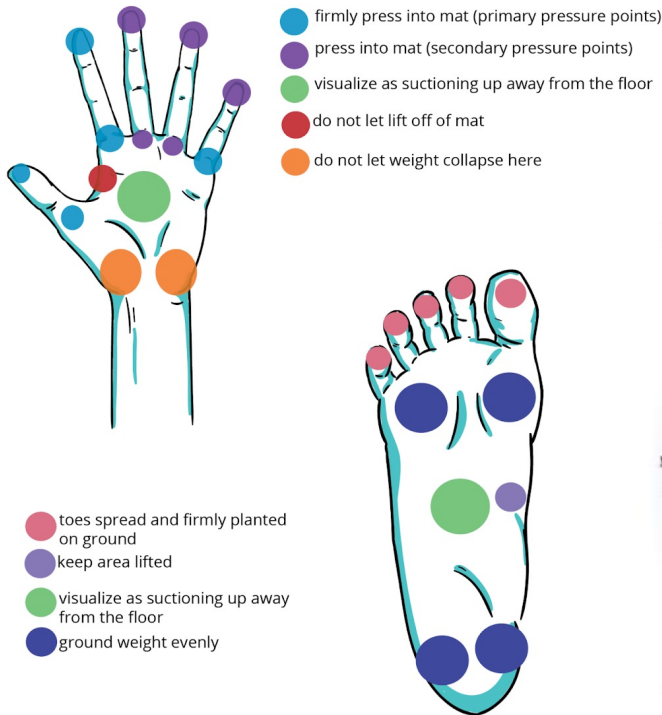
- Many yoga poses require weight-bearing in the hands and wrists.
- Proper hand placement can prevent strain and enhance stability.
- Guide participants to develop awareness of hand alignment and engagement.

• Building Confidence & Comfort

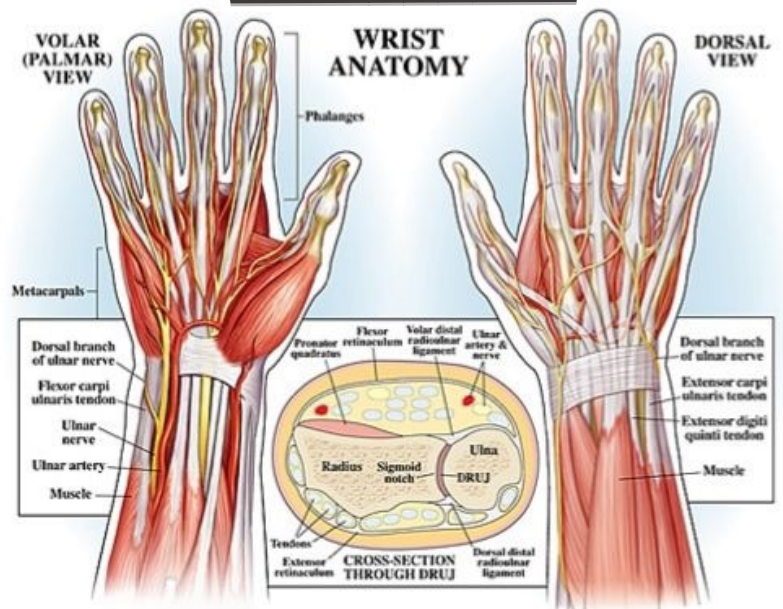
- Allow time for students to acclimate to weight-bearing positions.
- Offer modifications such as fists, forearms, or props for added support.
- Reinforce the importance of listening to their bodies and adjusting as needed.

HANDS + FEET PLACEMENT

Yoga poses start from the ground up. Having proper hand and foot placement is so important for developing a strong base for stability, and avoiding wrist, hip and knee pain. Below are two simple diagrams for you to refer to when practicing your poses.



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Elbows: Alignment & Support

• Elbow Vulnerability & Care

- Prone to strain and injury, especially in weight-bearing postures.
- Proper alignment and engagement help maintain elbow health.

• Connection to Hands, Wrists, & Shoulders

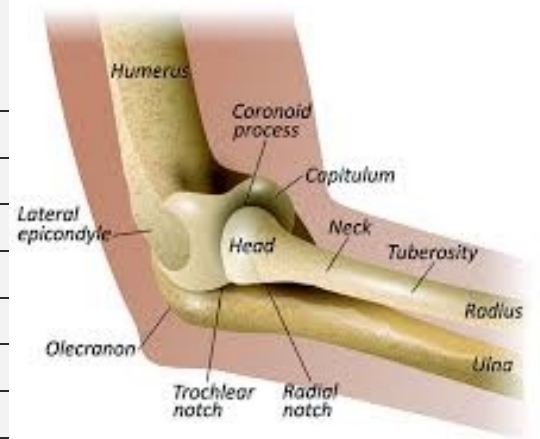
- The elbows rely on surrounding joints for support and stability.
- Proper wrist positioning and shoulder engagement protect the elbows.

• Weight-Bearing Considerations

- Hand placement: Even distribution of weight through palms and fingers.
- Shoulder activation: Engaging muscles to support the arms and reduce strain.

• Guiding Participants for Elbow Safety

- Encourage active engagement in the upper body to relieve pressure.
- Offer modifications like forearm-based poses or props for added support.
- Remind students to listen to their bodies and adjust as needed.



Posture & Sequencing:

Postures & Sequencing: Centering

• The Gift of Centering

- Creates space for mind-body connection and clarity.
- Develops with patience and consistent practice.

• Asteya & Honoring the Process

- Rushing through warm-ups can “steal” from the full potential of practice.
- Trauma-informed sequencing supports an effective centering practice.

• Preparation for Centering

- Balance energy through movement and breath.
- Tune into physical and mental cues for self-awareness.

• The Power of the Pause

- Encourages self-regulation and mindful response vs. reactive habits.
- Helps break patterns of conditioned behaviors and survival responses.

• Real-Life Applications

- Recognizing when to pause, breathe, and respond with intention.
- Builds resilience and presence on and off the mat.

• Integration Throughout Practice

- Stillness and reflection should be woven throughout a session.
- Supports self-soothing and deepens personal connection.

Centering & Somatics Practice Sequencing

• The Role of Centering

- Supports mind-body connection and self-awareness.

- Helps individuals observe and process experiences.

• **Incorporating Centering in Your Own Practice**

- Enhances personal well-being and informs teaching approach.
- Builds authenticity and insight when guiding others.

• **Somatic Techniques for Regulation**

- Movement-based practices like shaking, tapping, or tense-and-release.
- Grounding techniques such as space orientation and self-compression.

• **The Power of the Pause**

- Encourages intentional responses over automatic reactions.
- Supports nervous system regulation and heart rate variability (HRV).

• **Sequencing & Integration**

- Follows Energetic Awareness & Range of Motion Exploration.
- Prepares the body for Strength & Resilience practices.

• **Philosophical Foundations**

- Informed by Ahimsa (non-harm), Satya (truth), and Asteya (non-stealing).
- Encourages self-compassion, patience, and curiosity.

• **Practical Benefits On & Off the Mat**

- Fosters a sense of safety, agency, and empowerment.
- Equips individuals with tools for emotional regulation and resilience.