

How Will I Facilitate Today?

Class Themes & Intentions
For Trauma-Informed &
Healing Centered Practices

Assessing Participant Readiness & Regulation

Use observation and conversation (when possible) to determine where participants may fall within these broad zones of nervous system engagement.

Participant Presentation	Suggested Focus	Movement Style	Facilitation Qualities
Highly Dysregulated / Disconnected Signs: restlessness, freezing, flat affect, agitation, hypervigilance, dissociation	Grounding & safety	Simple, repetitive somatic-based movements that anchor awareness in direct sensation. Examples: seated or chair-supported movements, gentle joint rotations, hand/foot presses, slow rhythmic breathing.	Steady tone, clear and concise cues, frequent invitations to notice the body. Minimal philosophy; focus on <i>what is felt, not what it means</i> .
Regulating / Reconnecting Signs: increasing ability to track breath, notice sensations, make choices	Building stability & curiosity	Introduce balance postures, gentle transitions, and short holds that develop interoception and confidence. Pair movement with breath (e.g., gentle Warrior flow, supported forward folds).	Co-regulate through pacing; weave in small moments of stillness and mindful noticing. Introduce short reflective themes (self-compassion, patience).
Stable / Engaged Signs: curiosity, sustained focus, verbal reflection	Expanding practice & meaning	Moderate flow practices , coordinated breath/movement, standing postures, and range-of-motion exploration. Introduce philosophical or thematic content (Santosha, Tapas, non-harm).	Encourage autonomy, choice-making, and group dialogue. Facilitate shared discovery rather than instruction alone.
Established / Inquisitive Signs: self-regulation, inquiry, collaboration	Integrating philosophy & play	Exploratory sequences that challenge coordination, strength, and adaptability. Invite co-created sequencing or peer facilitation.	Foster community, laughter, and reflection. Practice becomes a dialogue rather than a delivery.

Adapting a Single Sequence for Different Groups

Using an example from the Trauma-Informed Sequencing Guide, we can explore how the same postures might be adapted to meet different needs.

Sequence Example	Setting & Intention	Adaptation
Chair-Supported Grounding Flow (Seated Mountain → Shoulder Rolls → Seated Cat-Cow → Forward Fold → Seated Twist → Breath Awareness)**	Introductory / Highly Dysregulated Group	Keep movements slow and steady. Encourage noticing sensations (“Feel your feet,” “Notice your breath moving”). Use pauses to reset nervous system. No pressure to “do it right.”
	Mid-Level / Regulating Group	Add standing options for those who want them. Link breath with movement (“Inhale, lengthen; exhale, soften”). Include gentle balance or transition postures with options. Briefly introduce a simple theme—e.g., grounding or patience.
	Advanced / Inquisitive Group	Invite participants to co-create the pace—explore how longer holds or flowing transitions affect mood and focus. Encourage journaling or dialogue about the experience. Integrate philosophical inquiry, e.g., “What does surrender feel like in this posture?”

Teaching Philosophy: Pace, Observation, and Flexibility

- Begin where they are. The success of a class depends less on the poses taught and more on the felt sense of safety and belonging created.
- Pace determines safety. Move at the speed of the nervous system, not the lesson plan.
- Stay responsive. Read the room continuously—if attention drifts or tension rises, return to breath, grounding, or micro-movements.
- Customize with curiosity. The “right” practice is not the one that looks the best, but the one that meets the group’s capacity and supports regulation.

Key Reflection Questions for Facilitators

Use these as an informal rubric when planning or debriefing your session:

- What level of nervous system regulation is present in this group?
- How am I supporting participants' autonomy and choice?
- Is the pace matching the collective capacity?
- What tools (movement, stillness, breath, or rest) will support reconnection most effectively?
- How will I know if participants are moving toward more regulation, safety, or connection by the end of class?

Additional Considerations

The art of facilitation is not in what we teach but in how we listen.*

The same sequence can heal or overwhelm depending on how it is offered.

When we attune to bodies, breaths, and nervous systems rather than postures, we make space for yoga to become what it has always been—a practice of presence, relationship, and humanity.

Setting Intentions

Discuss what an intention is and invite participants to consider their own. Offer one or two examples.

Invite Participants to brainstorm a group intention. (can often be used as a mantra too)

Offer your Intention as a facilitator for the Class or Community as an example. Invite participants to consider a personal intention or to share the one you've offered.

Share a journaling activity or guided centering to inspire an intention

Offer a suggested intention that supports the theme of your class

Remember setting an intention is also invitational!

Dictionary

Definitions from [Oxford Languages](#) · [Learn more](#)



in·ten·tion

/inˈten(t)ʃən/

noun

1. a thing intended; an aim or plan.
"she was full of good intentions"

Similar: [aim](#) [purpose](#) [intent](#) [objective](#) [object](#) [goal](#) [target](#) [end](#) [▼](#)

2. **MEDICINE**
the healing process of a wound.

An intention is idea that you plan (or intend) to carry out. If you mean something, it's an intention. Your goal, purpose, or aim is your intention. It's something you mean to do, whether you pull it off or not.

vocabulary.com

Considering Themes

Yoga Philosophy

Yamas/Niyamas, Chakras

Anatomy / Look to Sequencing

Energetic Release

Dynamic Movement & Range of Motion

Centering

Strength

Mobility

Balance

Integration & Relaxation

Mindfulness & Embodied Awareness

Inspired by a poem or reading

Share what brings you to your mat (or what keeps you from it)



THE MESSAGE