

WELCOME!

WEEK 5

1ST HOUR

Welcome
& Agenda Review

Mindfulness Observations (Optional)

Lecture:

AHIMSA...

**Assumptions & Biases:
Self & in the Yoga Community**

Breakout Room

Group Discussion

2ND HOUR

Lecture:

**8 Week Intro. Yoga &
Mindfulness Program**

Group Discussion

3RD HOUR

Breakout Room:
Sequence Lab

Group Discussion



LECTURE

AHIMSA: Assumptions & Biases: Self & in the Yoga Community





Content Note*

Today's discussion will speak to the Yama of Ahimsa(Non-Harm). The discussion will explore philosophies of human suffering and will invite personal reflection on this topic.

Please proceed with care to self and pause as needed.

The Cause of Suffering: The Great Mistake

We need suffering in order to see the path. The origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the path leading to the end of suffering are all found in the heart of suffering. If we are afraid to touch our suffering, we will not be able to realize the path of peace, joy and liberation. Don't run away. Make peace with it. The Buddha said: "The moment you know how your suffering came to be, you are already on the path of release from it."

—Thich Nhat Hanh



Wrong
Knowledge



Obsessive
Desire



Anger

...the Buddha's
insight to the
sources of
unhappiness.

The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism

are Embodied within the Yoga Sutras

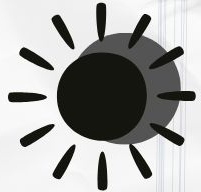


The **First Noble Truth** is the inevitability of suffering; suffering is baked into the human condition.



The **Second Noble Truth** is the origin of suffering. The direct causes of suffering are attachment, aversion, and ignorance. These are often referred to as the three poisons of the mind. In the Yoga Sutras, the root causes of suffering are the kleshas (obstacles).

Yoga Sutra 2.3: *"Ignorance, egoism, attachment, hatred(aversion) and clinging to bodily life(fear) are the five obstacles."*



The **Third Noble Truth** is the cessation of suffering by refraining from doing things that make us suffer. In Yoga Sutra 2.16, Patanjali says: *"Pain that has not yet come is avoidable."* There is a way out of suffering.



The **Fourth Noble Truth** is the path that leads us out of suffering. The Noble Eightfold Path is Right Views, Thinking, Speech, Action, Livelihood, Diligence, Mindfulness, and Concentration. This is similar to the eight limbs of Yoga.

A Shared Human Invitation

Many Traditions. Similar Values

At the heart of many spiritual and wisdom traditions is a shared question:

“HOW CAN WE REDUCE SUFFERING AND CULTIVATE GREATER COMPASSION?”



TRADITION	SHARED ETHICAL PRINCIPLE
 Yoga / Hinduism	Ahimsa — Non-harming
 Buddhism	Reduce suffering through awareness & compassion
 Judaism	Repair harm and care for one another
 Christianity	Love your neighbor
 Islam	Mercy, justice, and protection of life
 Sikhism	Sarbat da Bhala — Well-being of all
 Confucianism	Reciprocity and respectful relationship



Trauma-Informed Yoga Honors Many Paths

Yoga can support a person's spiritual life... without asking anyone to adopt a particular belief system.

PARTICIPANTS MAY ARRIVE WITH:



Religious Faith



Spiritual Curiosity



Religious Trauma



No Spiritual Beliefs



Uncertainty

Our Role is not to...



TEACH THEOLOGY



INTERPRET SOMEONE'S
EXPERIENCE



TELL PARTICIPANTS WHAT
HEALING SHOULD MEAN

Our Role is to...



Offer Choice



Offer Awareness



Offer Breath



Offer Movement



Offer Reflection



Hold Compassionate Space



**Trauma-informed yoga is
not about changing what
people believe.**

It is about creating conditions
where **healing can become
possible**... in whatever language,
tradition, or worldview feels
authentic to them.

Identifying Harm vs Ahimsa

Self, Generationally, & in Community



What are your experiences?

ACES+



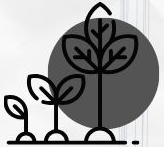
What remained from prior generations?

What no longer has impact?

How/Why are experiences different for you?

How/Why are they similar?

HOW DO THESE EXPERIENCE IMPACT YOU AND YOUR HUMANNESS?



Do you feel/think healing has occurred through any generations?

Do you feel/think harms have evolved/increased/changed through any generations?

ARE THERE DIFFERENCES PERSPECTIVE?



Empathy & Compassion- What have others experienced? What Perspectives, Assumptions, Judgments, & Biases are possibilities in how human interact with one another?



Harm vs (Ahimsa) Non-Harm

Relationship(s)



- self
 - knowledge
 - humans
 - living beings
 - nature/environment

- transactional



- electronics/technology

- information



- interests

- survival

- shelter- nourishment - livelihood



Ahimsa & Perception

The Mirror Consideration

Consider Topic of Suffering:

What perspective are
decisions made from?

Choice by reflection or by
embodied connection?

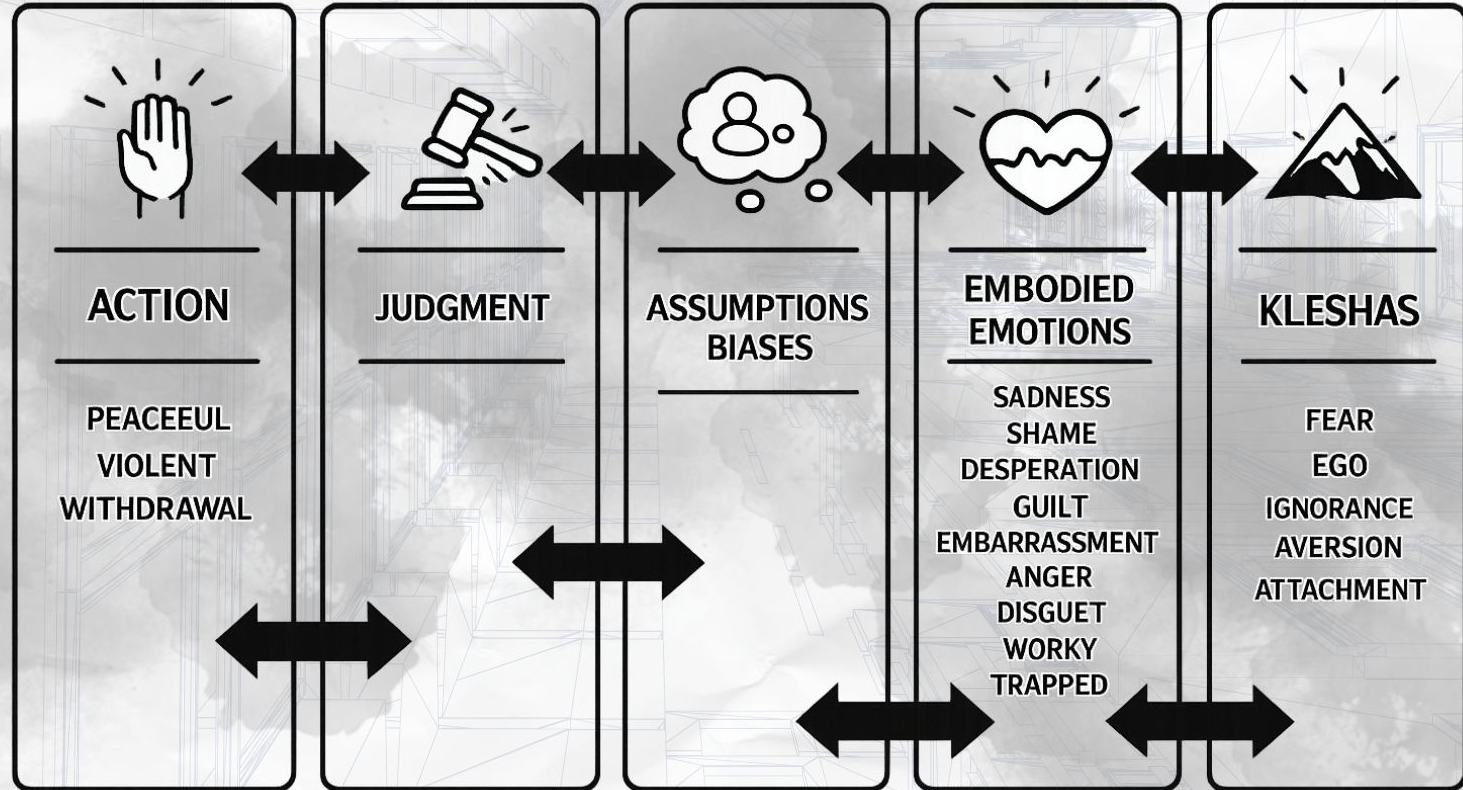


Ahimsa & Healing Centered Yoga

- There is a lack of Ahimsa when our own energy is disrupted by external influence
 - causing discomfort, detachment, and distrust within our minds, bodies, and connection to our contented selves.
- Yoga offers opportunities to identify what these influences are, how they are causing harm, and how to relieve the embodied residue that harm leaves behind. Ahimsa=Non-Harm
- Harm; past, present and future, sits within the body as a barrier to union.
 - Setting a foundation of Ahimsa provides a beneficial support to work through the barriers.
- Starting where you are, on the mat or off, Ahimsa begins with a consideration.
 - **Where does Harm exist within my thoughts, words, and actions?**
 - **What can I do to contribute to minimizing harm in my own life & in my community?**



Where does **Harm/Ahimsa** exist within my thoughts, words, and actions?



Where does **Harm/Ahimsa** exist within my thoughts, words, and actions?



How can this support exploration of societal assumptions, biases, and judgments? What can I do to contribute to minimizing harm in my own life & in my community?



Race



Ability



Appearance



Sexuality



Speech



Religion



Body Design



Socioeconomic Status



Personality/Demeanor



Cultural Traditions



Age



Gender Identity



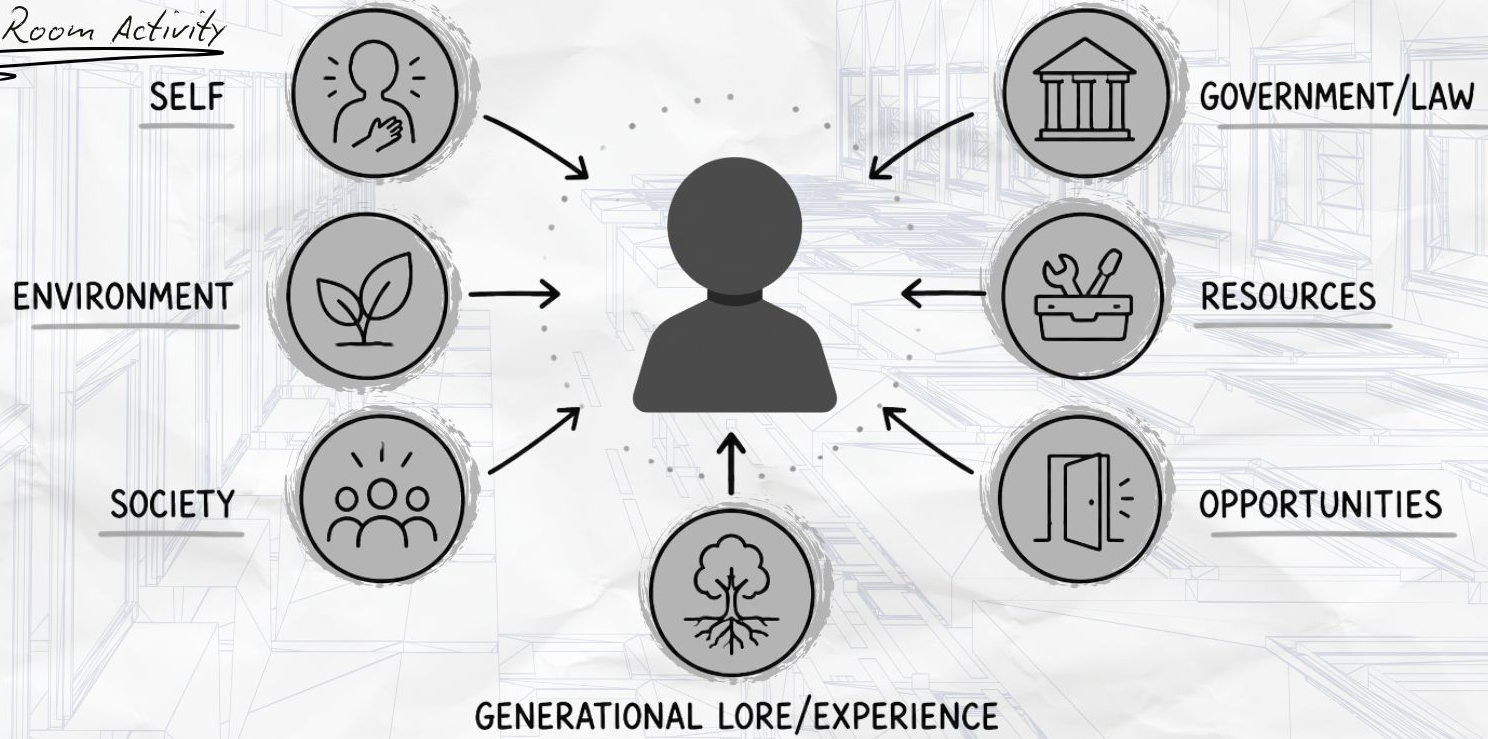
Community



Humans and the Barriers to and Opportunities for Practicing Ahimsa



Breakout Room Activity



Breakout Room Sessions



1. Preparation & Reflection

- Pause to collect your thoughts about the discussion.
- Take 5 minutes to write down new thoughts/reactions & review notes.
- Choose one resonating thought, reaction or question to share.



2. During the Session (Timeline)

- **1st 5 Minutes:**
Reintroduce yourself! Share your name, preferred pronouns & a few hopes you have for sharing this practice.
- **Next 10 Minutes:**
Take in turn to share the topics. Pause again to reflect on offers. Ask clarifying questions.
- **Final 10 Minutes:**
Explore where the conversation may go. Honor the contributions. Note your own emotional and embodied reactions.



3. Closing & Group Sharing

- Prior to close, select one aspect of your discussion to share with the larger group.
- Volunteer or nominate a representative.
- Plan to share your contribution in turns if needed.



4. Continue the Conversation

- Stay engaged, listen actively, and build on each other's insights.

TIME FOR A PAUSE

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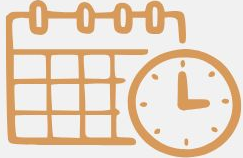


MOVEMENT LECTURE

8 Week Intro. Yoga & Mindfulness Program

8 Week Introductory Yoga & Mindfulness Program

Program Length



8 Weeks

Session Length



60 minutes

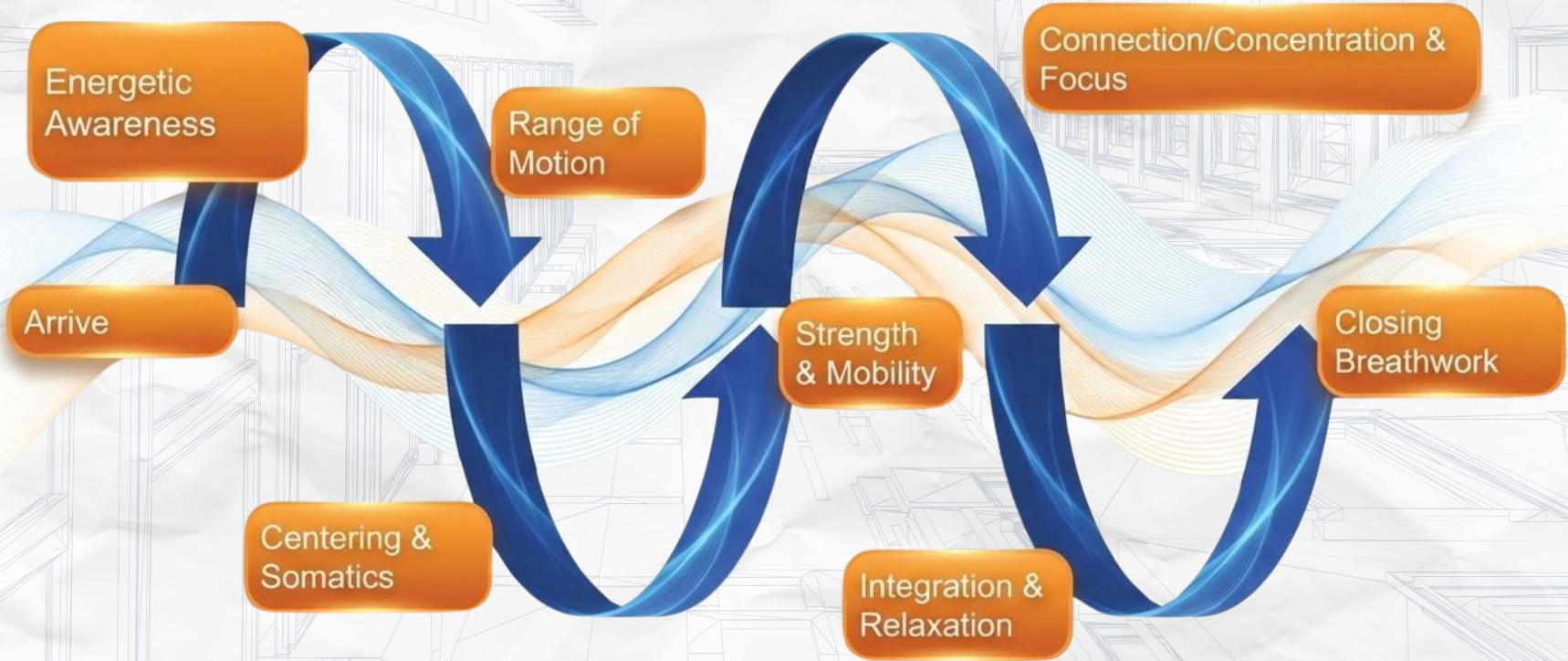
20 min discussion
30 min movement practice
10 min closing share

Approach



Trauma-informed,
accessible, secular, and
participant-centered.

Energetic Movement Trauma-Informed Sequencing



Week 1: WHAT IS YOGA?

Connection, Regulation, & Rest



Discussion Points:

- What do you already know or have heard about yoga?
- How do you notice stress or tension in your body? *Discuss nervous system dysregulation / “On/Off” (full accelerator/brakes)*
- What helps you feel calm or connected? *Discuss power of the exhale*
- Introduce: *Notice / Pause, Respond, Rest / Recover*



Chair-Supported Movement Practice (25–30 min):

- Grounding & arrival: Seated breath and embodied energy awareness, tense & release, bounce, shoulder/neck rolls, exertive exhales
- Seated spinal movements (flexion/extension, lateral stretch, rotation)
- Seated stomping and leg engagement → standing dynamic lunges (W1)
- Seated pause with breath awareness → explore energetic levels
- Guided tense & release body scan for rest



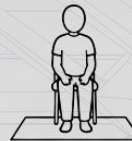
Closing Reflection:

- What felt different in your body after movement?
- What surprised you about slowing down or breathing intentionally?

Week1 Practice

ENERGETIC AWARENESS:

Pause and Notice
Respond with Movement Supportive to
energy level. (Shrug/March/Stillness)



RANGE OF MOTION:

Dynamic Spinal Movements
Lateral, Flexion & Extension, Twist



CENTERING & SOMATICS:

Pause and Notice
Respond with Movement Supportive to
energy level. (Shrug/March/Stillness)



STRENGTH & RESILIENCE:

Pause & Notice
Chair Supported Postures
Warrior 2 Variation to Side Angle
Warrior 1 Variation
• Bend & straighten front leg
Lift and lower back heel



CONNECTION & FOCUS:

Supported Forward Fold
Emphasize spinal stretch
Pause & Notice
Chair Supported Postures
Tree Variation



INTEGRATION & RELAXATION:

Neck, Arm, Shoulder Stretches
Guided Breathing
• Observe Natural Breath
• Introduce Box Breath
Relaxation



TIME FOR A PAUSE

05 : 00





SEQUENCE LAB

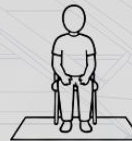
Experience the sequence through the lens of both participant and **facilitator**. In small groups, you'll analyze the movement, language, pacing, and participant choices, then discuss or adapt the sequence using trauma-informed principles.



Week1 Practice

ENERGETIC AWARENESS:

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RANGE OF MOTION:

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CONNECTION & FOCUS:

Supported Forward Fold
Emphasize spinal stretch
Pause & Notice
Chair Supported Postures
Tree Variation



INTEGRATION & RELAXATION:

Neck, Arm, Shoulder Stretches
Guided Breathing
• Observe Natural Breath
• Introduce Box Breath
Relaxation





Noticing Your Inner Monologue

Weekly Mindfulness Practice

Consider:

- What kind of voice is speaking in your mind right now?
- Is it kind, neutral, critical, or demanding?
- What are the common stories or beliefs it repeats?
- Does this inner voice support you or drain you?
- How does this inner dialogue influence how you feel and how you show up?
- What would it sound like to speak to yourself with compassion?

Reflection (optional):

- What did I notice about my inner voice today?
- When was I most critical, kind, or neutral?
- What inner dialogue do I want to encourage more of?
- What helps me shift toward a more supportive inner voice?

