Session One Part One Transcript

The 8 limbs of yoga, yoga sutra study   
  
"Start now. Start where you are. Start with fear. Start with pain. Start with doubt. Start with hands shaking. Start with the voice trembling, but start. Start and don't stop. Start where you are, with what you have. Just...start." -author unknown   
  
Welcome to Journey Om Yoga 208 Hour Yoga Teacher Training! A beginners mind is a must! Show up for all of it like it's all brand new. Look at it all like it's fascinating. Absorb it and let it absorb you.   
  
8 Limbs of Yoga of Patanjali recommended book "The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali; translation and commentary by Sri Swami Satchidananda   
  
The 8 limbs of yoga combine all aspects of yoga practice, they are as follows.   
  
Yama   
  
Niyama   
  
Asana   
  
Pranayama   
  
Pratyahara   
  
Dharana   
  
Dhyana   
  
Samadhi   
  
Book two; sutra 28. yoganganusthanad asuddhi ksaye jnanadiptir a vivekakhyateh yoga = union; anga = limbs; anushthanat = by the practice; asuddhi = impurity; kshaye = destruction or dwindling; jnanadiptih = light of wisdom; a = leads to; vivekakhyateh = discriminative discernment.   
  
"union by practice of the 8 limbs of yoga dwindles or destroys impurities, lights wisdom and discernment" - Jennifer Williams   
  
Yama Ahimsa = non-violence   
  
Satya = truthfulness   
  
Asteya = non-stealing   
  
Brahmacharya = continence   
  
Aparigraha = non-greed   
  
AHIMSA; not to cause pain even by your thoughts and words "In the presence of one firmly established in non-violence, all hostilities cease." Book 2; Sutra 35   
  
When establishing Ahimsa or non violence where can you begin? You can begin with yourself. Begin to notice how you talk to yourself. Is it kind? Is it non-violent. Let's break down violence... Violence to the self and others clearly includes intentional physical harm. How about cruelty to the self and others through words and thoughts?   
Since we are all interconnected through energy and matter that means our thoughts and words affect everything and everyone as well on a more subtle level. Sharon Salzburg gave a talk about sympathetic compassion and part of the talk was about the Dalai Lama and how he is always peaceful and has compassion for everyone.   
  
Someone asked her why we should send loving kindness to someone that is already so loving and kind, and her reply was, how do we know he is not that way because he receives so much loving kindness.   
  
We hold each other up based on our thoughts, words, and actions.   
  
SATYA; not lying To one established in truthfulness, actions and their results become subservient. Please do some research and explain what SATYA means in 5 sentences and how can you incorporate this meaning into your life.   
  
ASTEYA; non stealing To one established in non stealing, all wealth comes. give and receive freely, do not be greedy, practice keeping a calm, serene mind let it come and go and it will surely come back to you   
  
BRAHMACHARYA   
Bramacarya pratisthayam virya labhah   
By one established in continence vigor is gained. The traditional yogi may have been celibate to increase vitality (virya) but the house holder yogi used moderation. They did not give their energies away. When energy is not conserved be it sexual or even the energy of talking to much we have little light to shine. When we learn to conserve our energies and reabsorb them into our body, mind, and spirit we shine brighter from the inside, out.   
  
APARIGRAHA When non-greed is confirmed, a thorough illumination of the how and why of one's birth comes. Please research Aparigraha and decribe the meaning in your own words and how you can relate it to modern life in 5-10 sentences. Take time to become familiar with Yama. Study and research ancient and modern definitions and relate them reasonably to your own life. Revisit them often and see and observe how the meaning change for you over time and with your personal practice.   
  
Niyama Saucha - purity   
  
Santosha - contentment   
  
Svadiyaya - study of spiritual books   
  
Ishvara Pranidhana - worship of God or self-surrender Tapas - accepting pain and not causing pain   
  
Sri Swami Satchidananda states about Yama and Niyama "They are the foundation stones without which we can never build anything lasting." How do you feel about Niyama at first glance? Write about this in your journal.   
  
Let's take ISHVARA PRANIDHANA as a focus. This subject typically makes people very uncomfortable. This aspect of the Niyama limb is worship of God or self-surrender.   
  
Personally faith has been everything for me and not in a religious sense. My observance is with self-discipline, faith, practice, strong mind and will, and patience all things are possible. If you take faith out of the equation you have anxiety. Maybe faith is not your strong suite or maybe it is for whatever reason but in this moment I ask you to reflect on the energy you have turned toward during tough times? You don't even have to name it. Journal it. Pretty strong topic for session I!   
  
There is no sugar coating traditional yoga teachings. It has been watered down by too many people. All I ask is that you take it all in with a beginners mind, no judgement and find what resonates with you this time around. Most likely you will return to these teachings in one way many times. When I first began learning about yoga not much made sense to me. I understood the physical postures but even then I felt I had to recreate the wheel. That was until I learned that there was something very profound in these teachings. Even the postures held a sacred vibe. They began to heal my mind, body, and spirit first without asking for anything in return except an open willing mind.   
Over time I was introduced and re-introduced to the teachings until the sound of the names and words became familiar and then at my own pace I began to dive into the topics that most interested me. There is lifetimes of information to learn about yoga and all of its aspects. As you build your intuition and faith you will develop a living, breathing relationship with it and delve into the areas that will most awaken your life, your mind, body, and spirit. So what does Ishvara Pranidhana - worship of God or self-surrender mean to you right now at this point in your life. Journal it.   
  
SAUCHA - Purity B.K.S. Iyengar recognizes Saucha as "The observance of purity ranges from practices of physiological cleanliness to refinement of speech and actions." Purity of mind and body. I like to think of the practice as purifying mind and body. Simplifying this even more; choosing the purest food and drinks. Keeping our thoughts, words, and actions as pure as possible, and our body clean. Do we as humans fall off this wagon ALL THE TIME? Of course we do but when we begin to practice with intention we recognize this much more. Stay awake. The practice of yoga and all of its aspects are a practice of a lifetime. Most will not be perfected. Be kind to yourself, forgive yourself, and move on. Start again.   
  
SANTOSHA - Contentment "Samtosad anuttamah sukha labhah "Samtoshat = by contentmet; anuttamah = supreme; sukha = joy; labhah = gained By contentment, supreme joy is gained. As a result of contentment, one gains supreme joy.   
  
Here we should understand the difference between contentment and satisfaction. Contentment means just to be as we are without going to outside things for our happiness. Is something comes, we let it come. If not, it doesn't matter. Contentment means neither to like nor dislike." -Book two, sutra 42, Swami Satchidananda SVADIYAYA - study of spiritual books The yoga sutras, The Upanishads, The bible, A course in miracles Books written by well known yogis and spiritual teachers (B.K.S Iyengar, Sri Swami Satchidananda, Ram Dass, Marianne Williamson, Deepak Chopra, etc)   
  
TAPAS - accepting pain and not causing pain "the direct meaning of tapas is to burn. By the physical tapas of fasting, we burn our excess fat away along with toxins our bodies have accumulated. By mental tapas, we burn all our old impressions. By verbal tapas, observing silence, we control speech. When we burn, we feel some heat or pain. We undergo suffering. So , tapas also means to accept suffering. If someone suffers, he or she is blessed, because by that suffering some impurities are purged out...and at the same time bring happiness to others." -Sri Swami Satchidananda, book two sutra 43 page 147   
  
PRANAYAMA Breath control, or control of the movement of the prana which is the vital life force. The force that moves upward in the body is prana; the force that moves downward is apana. Hatha yoga is based on balancing these two forces. "ha-tha" means sun and moon. The two opposites must be blended together in a gentle way. Patanjali says that to bring peace to the mind, watch and regulate the breath.   
Book one sutra 34 ASANA sthira sukham asanam sthira = steady; sukahm = comfortable; asanam = posture Asana is a steady, comfortable posture Book two sutra 46 Asana is also known as "seat" I love the meaning of asana; steady and comfortable This is a beautiful things because it makes asana approachable. I feel as if asana has been made unapproachable in studios and gyms especially with the big emphasis on hot yoga, and power yoga. The Journey Om Yoga approach is about making asana approachable.   
Getting people through the door that wouldn't have imagined themselves yoga and then showing them how to fall in love with it through encouragement and mirroring their true potential back to them.   
You are there as a yoga teacher to be a mirror to the students highest potential. I see gold in all of my students. I don't even like the word student because as soon as anyone enters through the studio doors they become my family (give or take a few;). Honestly though, this practice of being a yoga teacher does not in any way put you on up on a pedestal. If you ever begin to feel that way be sure to check your ego at the door. Yoga is a gift and you have been guided down this teaching path for a reason. Even if you never teach a yoga class if you reflect the qualities of an authentic teacher you will mirror the light that shines from each persons heart. As you deepen your own personal practice the light within yourself grows and it becomes easier for you to recognize this light in other. Be patient with yourself. You are still human and you will still have your regular moods and emotions. It is a process. Chip away little by little.   
  
Coming back to asana. You can practice the most challenging postures and eventually find yourself steady and comfortable. That is the still point of the pose. That is where the real work begins in each and every posture. It begins from that steady comfortable place. Does that mean it will all be steady and comfortable? Of course not. Patience, Consistency, Diligence makes a practice a practice.   
  
PRATYAHARA "In the Bhagavad Gita the battle with the senses is explained, in an esoteric way, as a battlefield. The battlefield is the world, the turbulent life which distracts us. Pratyahara means sense control, withdrawal of the senses from from their objects. Using pranayama we begin to withdraw the senses. Meaning we don't react to every noise, every thought, or every sensation that arises. We continue to focus on the breath and breathing. This means with practice we can sit anywhere and meditate because outside noise becomes an invitation to go deeper. This absolutely takes practice but I encourage you now to sit. Set a timer for 10 minutes and notice all the distractions without focusing on your breath for the first 5 minutes and then for the last 5 minutes focus on your breath with a kind of ease recognizing the distractions as reminders to return to your breath and begin again. Journal your experience.   
  
DHARANA "Dharana is the binding of the mind to one place, object, or idea." "When the chittam, or sum-total of the mind, is being bound by one thing or bound in one place, it is dharana. In other words, in dharana you are training the mind." Book 3 Sutra 1 This object can be anything including a rock or a word.   
  
DHYANA "Dhyana is the continuous flow of cognition toward that object." "They say it like pouring oil from one pot to another. It is a continuous string; it doesn't break. The mind is fixed. Communication between meditator and object of meditation is steady. That's what is called dhyana."   
  
​Book 3 Sutra 2 SAMADHI Tad evarthamatra nirbhasam svarupa sunyam iva samadhih "'Samadhi is the same meditation when there is the shining of the object alone, as if devoid of form." "You will easily understand when you have a little experience. Meditation culminates in the state of samadhi. It's not that you practice samadhi. Nobody can consciously practice samadhi. Our effort is there only up to meditation. You put all your effort in dharana. It becomes effortless in dhyana, and you are just there, knowing that you are in meditation. But in Samadhi, you don't even know that...in samadhi there is neither the object or the meditator." -Book 3 Sutra 3 Samadhi is a state of consciousness. You can't practice samadhi. You may catch a glimpse of samadhi with a regular meditation practice but the more you try to grasp it the more elusive it becomes.