

Practicing Ahimsa



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One of the main preambles in which yoga sacredly rests on is 'ahimsa' or non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man". It can be said that the best yoga teachers are those whose belief in the practice of non-violence is commonplace and one that is a way of life.

The practice of ahimsa should not only remain in the act of delivering speech or deed, it should also be in the act of grouping together in a commonplace where the practice of yoga is the mutual bond beyond teachers and students. Indeed, should that mutual ground on which you meet your students smell, feel or taste otherwise than love and worship, the whole practice of yoga and ahimsa is defeated.

A yoga studio is not only a place where yoga is practiced; it is a place where students, disciples and the seeking come to renew, recharge and reconnect with the intrinsic values that are asleep within. Hence yoga studios are places where internal reflection and contemplation take effect.

Every single detail carved into the makeup of the studio spells the love of the teacher to his place of abode – his internal self. A yoga studio, unlike any other health centre catering to the wellness of the external self, is a quiet dwelling which enhances the eternal being within us. It is a place where the energies speak in volume of the voices

within, emanating bliss and harmony in every thing we see, touch and feel.

Yet, there are still many studios seen today which cater only for the purpose of venturing into a business, whilst there are still some, who have managed to capture the true essence of ahimsa and bliss in their studios.

Ways to Practice Ahimsa in your Studio

Get rid of clutter: clutter reflects a state of mind that is unorganized. Whether you are going to have magazines in your lounges or notices for your students, be extremely sensitive about arrangement and placement.

Flooring: the best flooring materials are those that would provide comfort and warmth to the touch. The best materials to use in yoga studios are those that are eco-friendly, natural and do not require any form of chemical or toxic polish. Try canvas or carpeting on marble floors or even natural wood.

Incorporate plants in your studios: a living thing usually has many rejuvenative properties on the mind and soul. Healthy and lush greenery will always lend support to any healing practice.

Speak gently and softly: remember that this is your inner abode; the last thing you want to do is to turn your inner peace into a heavy metal concert ground.

in Yoga Studios

Shivanth Roy



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Let there be light: the more natural the better. Always try and infuse your studio with more of nature than the typical stereotyped studios that are more inclined to unnatural lightings and fixtures.

Infuse your studio with soothing aromas and music: a perfect ensemble in making any space alive and reverberating with positive energies, aromas should titillate the senses while the musical display, revitalizing.

Choose colours that are warm and comforting: colours play a key role in making people feel welcomed in a place. The warmer the colours the more at home we feel. Choose colours that are earthy for walls and cushions and other fittings, while natural browns are a seller when it comes to furniture and other fittings.

Use décor that would inspire: be sure to incorporate mandalas and designs that would soothe the eyes rather than cause confusion to the minds. Be mindful that whatever you choose as décor should be a representation of peace and tranquility.

Encourage students to recycle: instead of incorporating a pantry system with all plastic glasses and utensils, encourage your students to carrying their own bottles of water whenever they come for practice and as far as possible, use minimal plastic and paper produce in the studio.

Go organic: organic products must not necessarily mean

buying a produce that is expensive. Be creative with the things that you already have and reuse for longer usage.

Be sensitive as a teacher: always seek ways to provide answers to your students who are always finding ways to find balance in their lives. Be their reservoir of strength and resource.

Do not become part of the competition: there will always be competition in every thing that we do in our lives. Yoga especially does not condone to the concept of competition, immaterial of how bad things turn out to be. So, even though you have competition in the business, remember that you are here to connect with those who have chosen to connect with you and not to become the best yoga studio in town.

Be goal orientated: remember that your students have chosen you to be their teacher and their beacon of hope. Always provide them avenues and methodology that is going to help them inside and out.

Greet with humility: greetings are an expansion of our inner selves to the world at large. When we greet with humility, we bow down to the divine in others. Being an important aspect of yoga, greet with open arms that your warmth and acceptance is felt by all who are receiving.

Choose to be a guru: the path of ‘guru ship’ is a long one but once you become a master, you cannot outshine your students. You live their shadows, wanting only the best for them. And,

Be mindful: the practice of yoga should not only be limited in the classroom or the studio, it should be in every deed that you act out to everyone whom you come in contact with.

The process of non-violence stems from the heart – it is in our speech, in our breath, in our thoughts and in our custom of living. In incorporating ahimsa as the process of life, inculcate vegetarian values and protecting the earth, to every student and person you connect with.

Celebrate the existence of life by being a monument of your non-violent practices – take your practice outdoors that your students get to go back to nature once in a while.

Become an icon or representation of going green and staying green as far as possible that it becomes a visual relation that your students can connect to, every time they see you.

Above all, breath in ahimsa at all levels that you persevere to sustain life and to provide the sustenance that your students require from you and your place of practice. **YL**