



Teachers of Iyengar Yoga

Professional Development

Program Booklet

Record of attendance and completion of units

Attendance year				Weekend program				Midweek program			
TAPAS			Terms								
2013	2016	2019		1	2	3	4	1a – 1d	2	3	4
			1								
			2								
			3								
			4								
SVADHYAYA			Terms								
2014	2017	2020		1	2	3	4	1a – 1d	2	3	4
			1								
			2								
			3								
			4								
ISVARA PRANIDHANA			Terms								
2015	2018	2021		1	2	3	4	1a – 1d	2	3	4
			1								
			2								
			3								
			4								

Shade the table to identify the year and term that you are studying. At interview, Alan will initial each study unit completed.



Alan Goode: Certified Iyengar Yoga Teacher

Professional Development

Introductory II and Intermediate Junior

Programs for Teachers of Iyengar Yoga

Conducted by Alan Goode

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The Iyengar Certification Mark on the previous page is an international symbol of the highest standard in training and continuing education in the Iyengar method of yoga. Only those teachers certificated by the BKSIIYAA or by Mr Iyengar himself are permitted to use the mark.

Modification history

Date	Version	Responsible	Action
Nov 06	1	Alan Goode	Creation of first version
Nov 07	2	Alan Goode	Addition of framework for critique
Dec 12	3	Alan Goode	Update to Institute and online material. Teacher trainer apprentice references removed from booklet.
June 13	4	Caroline Plunkett	Update to reflect use of Yoga Vidya to deliver material, administrative updates, addition of Online Study – Certified Teacher section

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Preface

The Professional Development Programs support the *evolutionary* intent of our practice — encouraging Tapas: a strong emphasis on Asana and Pranayama during Midweek Programs, and Svadhyaya in the Weekend Program where class sequences are developed, delivered and reviewed in relation to the distinguishing features of Iyengar Yoga.

The theory components are formulated with close reference to Gururji's commentary on the Yoga Sutras and BKS Iyengar's *Light on Life*. I frequently hold his work alongside the work of his daughter Geeta Iyengar and his son Prashant Iyengar in an attempt to shift an emphasis or reflect a new aspect to the work to bring further depth in understanding. Theory links sutra study to classroom experience. The aim is to encourage a commitment to letting go of any preconceptions we have about our practice and teaching such that our intent within practice is *involution*.

I offer this program to support us all to work with openness of heart and mind in such ways that Isvara-pranidhana is a real and meaningful aspect of our practice and teaching.



Alan Goode

Introduction

Yoga, being a perceptual practice, places tremendous emphasis on the teacher's judgement when handling students and the choices made within the classroom.

Guruji comments on the challenges of being a teacher that...

It is relatively easy to be a teacher of an academic subject, but to be a teacher in art is very difficult, and to be a yoga teacher is the hardest of all, because yoga teachers have to be their own critics and correct their own practice. The art of yoga is entirely subjective and practical. Yoga teachers have to know the entire functioning of the body; they have to know the behaviour of the people who come to them and how to react and be ready to help, protect and safeguard their pupils.

BKS Iyengar, *The Tree of Yoga*, 'On teachers and teaching'

After Introductory-level assessment, many teachers work on their own, developing their teaching, and in many cases run schools, without access to ongoing supervision. We all develop techniques and habits that remain untested outside our own Yoga room. It's often not until we come up for assessment that we have anyone scrutinise our work. The years of training and preparation to qualify as a certified teacher are at an end, and yet confidence in our teaching methods and our own judgement is often lacking.

As a study of the individual, Yoga requires the refinement of one's perception within practice. The teacher of yoga must have discipline and clarity in observation to move the student from a focus on the intricacies of practice to an awareness of their own character and patterns. Teaching aims to instruct, coordinate and develop the student's attention, while cultivating an awareness of the internal world of experience. Teaching Yoga is both science and art and the training of teachers involves much more than the communication of techniques. It requires an ability to communicate your practice-based experience of *The Subject* (Yoga), and at the same time sustain and nourish a confidence in our ability to share the experience of Yoga.

A training teacher while offering openly their experience must also surrender to the knowledge that the journey of a trainee is ultimately to embrace the art of teaching as their own.

Yoga gives firmness of body, clarity of intelligence, cleanness of heart.

BKS Iyengar, *The Tree of Yoga*, 'On teachers and teaching'

Dedication to Guruji

I wish to acknowledge BKS Iyengar as the source of this material and to dedicate this program to him in the knowledge that his influence upon me, my practice and the direction of this work is immeasurable.

All aspects of this program can be traced back to him and so what is presented here is merely the organisation of his work into a form which will present the subject in the most accessible manner.

Alan Goode October 2006

Welcome

Welcome to Alan Goode's Introductory II and Intermediate Junior Teachers of Iyengar Yoga Professional Development Program.

The programs are administered and conducted from Yoga Mandir, in Canberra, Australia.

Registration

This booklet provides subject descriptions and timetables so that participants can identify and plan to attend sessions of key interest to them. Some subjects have pre-reading material, which if not found within recommended texts, is uploaded to Yoga Vidya and accessible prior to attendance. Post attendance, participants pursue self-directed learning goals.

The programs are structured around 10-week terms of study, which correlate to the 10-week terms used within the Yoga Mandir School and which accord with Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate school terms.

The attendance period for the Professional Development Program is always within Week 6 of term and the weekend prior. These details are noted on the Institute website.

Attendance is on a per-term basis; with registration and payment due by Week 1 of the Yoga Mandir term. Register and pay Course fees via the Institute website.

Interviews with Alan are conducted for 4 and 7 day participants of the Professional Development Program. On confirmation of your registration the course administrator will book your interview time and you will be advised when you are to meet with Alan. Interviews take 30 minutes.

For any administration queries please email office@yogamandir.com.au

The Yoga Mandir website www.yogamandir.com.au contains useful information to participants of these programs.

Program description

Professional development

The Professional Development Program is directed to certified teachers intent on deepening the link between their practice and teaching within the framework of *The Subject* (Yoga).

In the program, theory is not isolated from practice. Methods of practice are selected to support examination of theory such that a deepening of one's relationship to the subject occurs via *experience*. Subjects can be attended more than once, as each term is unique. Knowledge that has been integrated via practice-based methods provides for a maturing of confidence in the subject, which in turn deepens our practice.

The contents of the program make it suitable for teachers certified up to the level of Intermediate Junior III.

Delivery format

While registration is undertaken term-by-term, each program is delivered within a three-year span. A program year is divided into four terms. Program delivery time spans are:

- Program delivery 3 — 2013, 2014, 2015
- Program delivery 1 — 2016, 2017, 2018
- Program delivery 2 — 2019, 2020, 2021

The table on the inside front cover of this booklet identifies the program years and terms under the headings Tapas, Svadhyaya, and Isvara-pranidhana. The headings indicate that while subject content is determined, each tier of Kriya Yoga will set a *general theme* for the delivery of subjects within that year.

A number of subjects are timetabled more than once in a three-year span. For example see Pages 22 - 23, where 'Technique and Timings: Standing poses' is delivered in Tapas Term 2, and Svadhyaya Term 3.

The programs will run until 2015, with reviews of content undertaken yearly.

Integration within Yoga Mandir

Yoga Mandir was established in January 2005 to provide an environment for:

- the development of Iyengar Yoga practitioners
- the training of Iyengar Yoga teachers
- the professional development of certified teachers.

The Professional Development and Teacher Trainers Apprenticeship programs are delivered within Yoga Mandir to ensure participants have evidence of practical application for theoretical principles.

The two aspects of Yoga Mandir that make it a distinct environment for Iyengar Yoga practitioners, teachers, trainee teachers, and those undertaking professional development are:

- 1 Asana and philosophy syllabus across three student levels
- 2 The integration of syllabus into 10-week courses.

The culture of the school aims to reflect a strong respect for the qualification attained by teachers, including their competency in delivery of both Asana and philosophy. The school culture evidences that teachers 'teach from their practice' such that difference in both point-based instruction and sequencing within classes and courses is not merely accepted, but is supported and encouraged.

Visiting teachers within the professional development program and trainee teachers assist and observe within Alan's classes.

Assisting/Observing

Yoga is not an intellectual activity but an experiential process for both the students and the teacher. Ultimately we teach from our own practice experience. In the process of assisting a senior teacher, teachers learn to discriminate about both the methods applied in teaching and the knowledge base informing those methods.

The outcome intended is that teachers do not 'mimic' the actions or instructions they have seen or heard but rather are able to interpret actions and instructions within the broad subject of Yoga, and from that can begin to formulate a rationale for 'why' a certain action or instruction is relevant. Locating or referencing teaching and learning experiences with an understanding of the significance of 'time and place' to the teaching experience, becomes an attribute of a skilled teacher.

The program makes a distinction between assisting and observing in the classroom.

When observing, the participant remains at the back or side of the room and has no engagement with students. The skills gathered during this period relate to organising a classroom, presenting Asana, observation of students, and knowledge of sequence and teaching methods.

In assisting, the participant moves around the classroom and observes individual students and adjustments made by Alan with individual students. Participants will adjust students only at Alan's direction.

Teaching skills development

The programs provide opportunity for:

- teaching under 'assessment conditions'
- teaching students from Yoga Mandir
- or in the Apprenticeship Program, critiquing the teaching of trainee teachers participating in these sessions.

Theory sessions

Participants attend two theory sessions each term, conducted by Alan. These sessions aim to isolate and clarify points within the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and to examine them within the arena of Iyengar Yoga practices. These sessions require some set reading beforehand and in some instances a follow-up assignment is recommended.

In the program there are also a number of 'core' theory subjects — essential to deepening our understanding of Iyengar Yoga. These subjects are categorised as 'Yogasana' subjects and are also integrated within Alan's Preliminary Teacher Training Program.

A learning environment where certified and training teachers come together to examine practices and concepts central to our method, aims to both motivate us and to encourage

reflection upon our intentions in practice and teaching. These sessions are conducted in a workshop format, facilitated by Alan, and outcomes include Asana and or class sequence studies that are applied in real teaching situations within Yoga Mandir Weekend classes.

Asana and Pranayama

Attendance provides an opportunity to be taught Asana and Pranayama from the Intermediate Junior syllabus, and to then participate in workshop sessions that aim to refine one's understanding of the Asana and Pranayama taught in classes. Asana and Pranayama from the Intermediate Junior Syllabus have been scheduled across four terms so participants can attend a term when Asana or Pranayama of most significance to them is scheduled.

A number of Asana and Pranayama from the Senior Intermediate syllabus have been included in the subject lists. These will be taught during the attendance period as Alan is qualified to teach from that syllabus.

There is also a syllabus-led practice session, where participants in the program who are preparing for assessment can practice their sequence under 'assessment conditions'. These sessions are not critiqued, but rather create an opportunity for participants to engage themselves in an experience and thus clarify obstacles in their practice.

Online resources and study

As part of term enrolment in Professional Development students have access to a range of online resources. This material covers audio and video extracts from conventions and written material pertinent to subject areas of focus. The selection of material is designed to provide students with access to the Iyengar family's teaching in their own words, wherever possible. The aim of this material is to provide a firm foundation in basic techniques that underpin and support one's own practice.

Throughout his practice life BKS Iyengar has focussed himself on the need to develop a practice that cultivates knowledge from experience, and yet the need for a balance between **objective knowledge and subjective experience** remains a valid way of verifying one's own experience. In the article 'With Yogic Eyes' Iyengar writes:

'Though I am rational, I am also a man of sentiment and tradition-bound. I trust the statements of others, follow their lines of explanation, and experiment with them to gain experience. If my experience tallies with their expressions, I accept their statements. Otherwise I discard them, live by my own experiments and experiences, and make my pupils feel the same as I felt in my experiments. If many agree, then I take it as a proven fact and impart it to others'.

The sadhana of BKS Iyengar has delivered a range of practice that has been tested over time. For us, as students in the Iyengar lineage, this **objective knowledge** can be used to guide our own enquiry and to clarify the **subjective experience** within our practice.

Organisation of the program

Prerequisites

Introductory certificate II	Your certification at Introductory level II is essential to participation in this program. It provides recognition of training and competence as a teacher of Iyengar Yoga.
BKSIYAA membership	Membership of the BKS Iyengar Yoga Association of Australia (BKSIYAA) is essential to participation in this program, as it provides access to the most up-to-date advice on matters of insurance and changes to association decisions affecting the BKSIYAA qualifications framework.
Insurance	The insurance Alan holds acts in support of the insurance that individual program participants must hold. Alan's insurance encompasses Practice Teaching sessions within Yoga Mandir and <i>not</i> teaching that participants conduct outside Yoga Mandir

Periods of attendance

Professional Development Program participants attend Yoga Mandir in Week 6 and/or the weekend prior to that in the term in which they register.

Participants must attend each session time allocated on the Midweek and/or Weekend Program timetables as outlined on pages following. If attendance is not viable for a given term, participants may wish to consider Online Study – Certified Teacher (see page 16).

Midweek Program timetable (sample)

Below is a sample of the midweek program. Participants should be aware that the timetable is reviewed and updated each term. These timetables are posted on the **Yoga Vidya** site.

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday	
6:30	Session 1a		Session 1b		Session 1c		Session 1d	
7:00								
7:30	Asana		Asana		Asana		Asana	
8:00	Pranayama		Pranayama		Pranayama		Pranayama	
8:30	class		class		class		class	
9:00								
9:30								
10:00	Session 2		Session 3 Review Monday classes Case studies 10.00 – 12.30		Assist/ Observe remedial	Teaching exercises	Session 4 Review Wednesday Classes Case studies 10.00 – 1.00	
10:30	Theory							
11:00								
11:30								
12:00		Lunch Time Asana Class Teach/observe participate						
12:30								
1:00			Lunch Time Asana Class Teach/observe/participate					
1:30								
2:00								
2:30								
3:00								
3:30								
4:00								
4:30	Pranayama practice						Teaching segments 4.00 – 5.15	
5:00								
5:30								
6:00	Assist/Observe Participate	Teach/ observe/ Participate open class	Assist/Observe/ Participate	Teach/observe/ Participate open class	Assist/Observe/ Participate Pranayama Establishing	Teach/observe / & Participate open class	Assist/Observe/ Participate Developing	Teach/ Observe/ Participate open class
6:30	Developing		Establishing					
7:00								
7:30								
8:00	Assist/Observe Foundation classes		Teaching segments		Assist Observe Established		Teaching segments	
8:30								
9:00								

Weekend Program timetable (sample)

The Weekend Program is also open to participants in Alan's Preliminary Teacher Training course. This arrangement provides teacher trainer apprentices with an opportunity to critique the teaching of Introductory I and II teachers or trainee teachers or both. Trainee teachers also attend classes conducted by Junior Intermediate teachers participating in the professional development program and provide feedback to teachers in study group sessions. Participants should be aware that the timetable is reviewed and updated each term. These timetables are posted on the *Yoga Vidya* site.

Weekend Program Timetable				
	Friday		Saturday	Sunday
6:30				
7:00		Led practice		
7:30				Session 4
8:00			Teaching/observing/participating	
8:30		Session 1		
9:00			Yoga Mandir classes	
9:30				
10:00				
10:30		Session 2		
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				Group Practice
12:30			Group Practice	
1:00		Lunch time asana		
1:30		Teach/observe/participate		
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				Teaching/ attending/
5:30		Syllabus led		Yoga Mandir classes
6:00		Practice		
6:30		5 – 7 pm	Session 3	
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				

Record of participation

The table on the inside front cover of this booklet is your record of participation in the Professional Development Program. If you are a teacher trainer apprentice, your participation in Preliminary Teacher Training course sessions is recorded in a similar way in that course booklet.

Feedback mechanisms

The course is designed to assist participants in engaging with the subject of Yoga with respect to both the complexity of the subject and human nature. In light of this, it is important to note the arrangements that exist within the course for feedback.

Feedback is integrated within the Midweek and Weekend programs as follows:

- Midweek sessions 1a – 1d Asana classes
- Midweek sessions 3 and 4 case studies
- Written feedback on Teaching Practice sessions
- Weekend interviews

Textbooks

- BKS Iyengar and Geeta S Iyengar, *Basic Guidelines for Teachers of Yoga*
- Geeta S. Iyengar, *Preliminary Course Booklet*
- BKS Iyengar, *Light on Yoga*
- BKS Iyengar, *Light on Pranayama*
- BKS Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*
- BKS Iyengar, *Light on Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*
- BKS Iyengar, *Light on Astanga Yoga*
- BKS Iyengar, *Light on Life*
- BKS Iyengar, *Astadala Yoga Mala Volumes 1-8*
- Geeta Iyengar, *Yoga: A Gem for Women*
- Prashant Iyengar, *Alpha and Omega of Trikonasana*

Additional texts may become available and be recommended during your course.

Online Study – Certified Teacher

The Online Study-Certified Teacher program is aligned with Yoga Mandir's Professional Development program and is available to certified teachers of Introductory Level 2 and upward. The Online Study Program contains a term based enrolment of 10 weeks per term and is aligned with Yoga Mandir's term enrolment. Participants may wish to enrol in this program during the terms they are not able to travel to Canberra.

Participants access 4-6 subjects per term which contain a range of audio, video and written study material developed into online study units.

The Online Study – Certified Teacher program does not count as credit hours to the 20 hours yearly required by the BKSIIYAA of certified teachers for ongoing teacher education (Certification handbook page 25)

The pre-requisite for enrolment, as well as currently holding at least an Introductory Level 2 Certificate, is that the student has an established relationship with Yoga Mandir, ie has:

- participated 2 or more Professional Development terms at Yoga Mandir; or
- participated in 2 or more Interstate Professional Development enrolments conducted by Alan Goode.

Subjects

Asana

Note: Plate numbers are drawn from *Light on Yoga* unless otherwise specified.

Code	Asana	Terms			
	Standing poses	1	2	3	4
A-SP09	Parivrtta Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana <i>Yoga: A Gem for Women, Plate 124</i> Utthita Parasva Hasta Padangusthasana I <i>Yoga: A Gem for Women, Plate 123</i> Prasarita Padottanasana II Plates 35–36				
	Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana <i>Yoga: A Gem for Women, Plate 120</i> Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana Plates 21–23				
A-SP10	Urdhva Prasarita Ardha Baddha Padmottanasana Plate 55 Ekapadasana Plate 49 Ardha Baddha Padmottanasana classical Plates 50–53				
	Sitting	1	2	3	4
A-S02	Sukhasana; Siddhasana Svastikasana & Supta Svastikasana <i>Light on Pranayama, Plate 5</i>	Padmasana Plate 104 Parvatasana in Padmasana Plate 107	Tolasana Plate 108 Matsyasana Plates 113–114		
A-S03	Paryankasana Plate 97 Gomukasana Plates 80–81	Akarna Dhanurasana I Plate 173 Akarna Dhanurasana II Plate 175			
	Forward bends	1	2	3	4
A-FB02	Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimottasana Plates 133–135	Krounchasana Kurmasana Stage 1 Plates 361–364			
A-FB03	Maha Mudra Plate 125 Marichyasana II Plate 145	Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimottasana Plates 136–137 Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimottasana <i>Yoga: A Gem for Women, Plate 127</i>			
A-FB04	Upavisthakonasana Plate 151 Parsva Upavisthakonasana Plate 152 Parivrtta Upavisthakonasana	Kurmasana Stage I Kurmasana II Plate 365			
A-FB05	Malasana II Plate 322 Malasana I Plates 319–320	Parivrtta Janu Sirsasana Plates 130–132 Parivrtta Paschimottasana Plates 163–166 Ubhaya Padangusthasana Plate 167			
	Twists	1	2	3	4
A-T02	Pasasana	Ardha Matsyendrasana II	Bharadvajasana II		
A-T03	Marichyasana IV	Paripurna Matsyendrasana			
	Twists (continued)	1	2	3	4
A-T04	Ardha Matsyendrasana I (arms straight, hold foot in Matsyendra shape, other arm on back) Marichyasana III final Plates 303–304	Ardha Matsyendrasana I Plates 313–314			



Code	Asana	Terms	1	2	3	4
Abdominals			1	2	3	4
A-Ab01	Urdhva Prasrita Padasana Plates 276–279 Jathara Parivartanasana (legs bent) Jathara Parivartanasana Plates 273–275	Ardha Navasana Paripurna Navasana				
A-Ab02	Jathara Parivartanasana (bent legs) Jathara Parivartanasana (straight legs)	Urdhva Prasrita Padasana Lolasana Plate 83				
Miscellaneous			1	2	3	4
A-Mc02	Bhekasana Plate 100	Purvottasana Plate 171	Adho Mukha Svanasana Plate 75			
A-Mc03	Supta Padangusthasana I; Supta Padangusthasana II; Supta Padangusthasana III Plates 284–287					
Backbends			1	2	3	4
A-BB03	Parsva Dhanurasana Plates 64 Urdhva Dhanurasana—from chair	Urdhva Dhanurasana—from bolsters Urdhva Dhanurasana I—from ground Plates 479–482				
A-BB04	Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana—supported with fingers interlocked behind head Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana—legs on floor with bent elbows hold from chair legs Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana—elbows supported Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana—independently; bent knees, feet on the floor Plate 519					
A-BB05	Ekapada Viparita Dandasana I Eka Pada Urdhva Dhanurasana	Kapotasana Eka Pada Raja Kapotasana I				
Inversions			1	2	3	4
A-I07	Sirsasana I Plates 184–185, 190 Parsva Sirsasana <i>Yoga: A Gem for Women, Plate 124</i> Eka Pada Sirsasana Plates 208–209	Parivrttaikapada Sirsasana Plates 204–206 Parsvaikapada Sirsasana Plate 210				
A-I08	Urdhva Padmasana in Sirsasana Plate 261	Pindasana in Sirsasana Salambha Sirsasana II Plate 192				
A-I09	Salamba Sarvangasana I Plates 223–224, 234 Salamba Sarvangasana II Plates 235 Halasana Plate 240	Eka Pada Sarvangasana Plate 250 Eka Pada Sarvangasana Parsva Halasana Plate 249				
A-I10	Urdhva Padmasana in Sarvangasana	Pindasana in Sarvangasana Plate 268				
Inversions (continued)			1	2	3	4
A-I11	Setu Bandha Sarvangasana coming up to Sarvangasana Plates 256–259 Setubandha Sarvangasana final dropping back from Sarvangasana Plates 256–259					
A-I12	Pincha Mayurasana—wall Plate 357 Pincha Mayurasana—palms down/ up	Adho Mukha Vrksasana—wall (side palms) Adho Mukha Vrksasana—wall (palms front) Adho Mukha Vrksasana—wall (palms back)				

Code	Asana	Terms			
	Balancing	1	2	3	4
A-Bal01	Eka Hasta Bhujasana Plate 344	Dwi Hasta Bhujasana Plate 345 Bhujapidasana Plates 346–350			

Pranayama

Pranayama subjects in the Professional Development Program retain a central focus on practices listed in the Intermediate Junior course syllabus. However the program aims to cover practice and therefore additional Pranayama are included.

Code	Pranayama	Terms			
	Subjects	1	2	3	4
P-05	Bramari and Sanmuki Mudra				
P-09	Kumbhaka				
P-10	Kapalabati/Bhrastrika				
P-11	Digital Pranayama				
P-12	Anuloma/Pratiloma				
P-13	Surya/Chandra Bhedana				
P-14	Nadi Sodana				
P-15	Ujjayi V–XII				
P-16	Viloma IV–VIII				

Theory subject descriptions

Code	Subject	Description
T-Ph1	BKS Iyengar and Patanjali's Yoga	How does BKS Iyengar interpret Patanjali's eight-limbed practice?
T-Ph2	What distinguishes Iyengar Yoga?	This subject identifies the specifics that define an Iyengar practice and looks into the way they inform and shape our understanding of Yoga.
T-Ph3	Kriya Yoga	Kriya yoga is the term Patanjali gives to describe the path of action. This subject examines the three tiers of practice from Tapas, to Svadhyaya to Isvara-pranidhana.
T-Ph4	Twin Pillars	Abhyasa and Vairagya describe the dual pathways of action and renunciation. This subject examines the important role they play within practice.
T-Ph6	Evolution and Involution	According to Yoga, nature (Prakrti) undergoes a process of evolution and involution. The four stages of evolution also provide the pathway of involution.
T-Ph7	Integrating layers of experience	What is the importance of the Karmandriyas and the Jnandriyas? Why are they essential to practice?
T-Ph8	Stages of integration and understanding of paradigms of practice	Seven stages of integration. The ways of understanding our practice inform our choices as teachers and the emphasis we give at each level, whether to beginners, general or experienced students.
T-Ph9	Vrttis and Klesas	Use of focal points or 'referentials' in asana practice to refine observation.



Code	Subject	Description
T-Ph10	Teaching from and to the body, mind and breath	Yoga is a practice that one does on one's own. This subject considers how to learn from one's self and how to teach one's self.
T-Ph11	Considering Sequence, the Sheaths and Sariras	Experience is multi-faceted. Asana, for example, is physical, mental and emotional. In this session we explore the five Kosas, the three bodies and sequential methods within practice.
T-Ph12	Conjunction and dissociation	This subject defines the yogic understanding of the cause of pain and considers hierarchies in asana practice as a method of overcoming it.
T-Ph19	Remedial assessment: A framework	What observations inform the decisions a teacher makes when handling injuries? The remedial assessment framework provides a guide for handling problems. Prerequisite subjects are — Yama in Yogasana and Niyama in Yogasana.
T-Ph20	What is Yoga?	If Yoga is a stilling of the fluctuations of the consciousness then how do we understand practice?
T-Ph21	The link between Asana and Pranayama	How does Asana practice relate to Pranayama and why does Iyengar Yoga relate differently to teaching Pranayama than to teaching Asana?
T-Ph22	Yogic Imprinting	Imprinting is the laying down of a body of experience within practice. What are the effects of residual impressions (Samskara) and how do we make use of memory?
T-Ph23	The Conscious Pause	Practice is not merely the development of concentration, but the breaking down of psychological time. Why is this important and where is it seen in teaching?
T-Ph24	Restraining Citta	This subject identifies the Vrttis, Klesas and obstacles. Those things that cause the consciousness to oscillate.
T-Ph25	Considering Samyama within our practice	The last three limbs of Yoga are woven together to form a single thread. Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi, as understood in Iyengar Yoga.
T-Ph26	What is Prana and why do we practice Pranayama?	In this subject we define Prana and the locations of and functions of the five Pranas within the body and look at the relationship between Prana and Citta.
T-T08	Pregnancy	An outline of how to manage pregnant students within our classes. Includes theoretical information about the stages of pregnancy and the development of the fetus. Prerequisite subjects to attending are — Remedial assessment: A framework, Yama in Yogasana, and Niyama in Yogasana.

Theory

Year	Term	Subject code	Midweek Session 2	Program	Prerequisite subjects	Subject code	Weekend Session 3	Program
TAPAS	1	T-Ph19	Remedial assessment: A framework		Y-01 Y-02	T-Ph3	Kriya Yoga	
	2	T-Ph8	Stages of integration and understanding paradigms of practice			T-Ph20	What is Yoga?	
	3	T-T08	Pregnancy		T-Ph19	T-Ph4	Twin Pillars	
	4	T-Ph9	Vrttis and Klesas			T-Ph21	The link between Asana and Pranayama	

SVADHYAYA	1	T-Ph11	Considering Sequence, the Sheaths and Sariras		T-Ph6	Evolution and Involution
	2	T-Ph19	Remedial assessment: A framework	Y-01 Y-02	T-Ph22	Yogic Imprinting
	3	T-T08	Pregnancy	T-Ph19	T-Ph2	Distinguishing features of Iyengar Yoga
	4	T-Ph10	Teaching from and to the body, mind and breath		T-Ph23	The Conscious Pause
ISVARA-PRANIDHANA	1	T-Ph12	Conjunction and dissociation		T-Ph1	BKS Iyengar and Patanjali's Yoga
	2	T-Ph26	What is Prana and why do we practice Pranayama?		T-Ph24	Restraining Citta
	3	T-Ph19	Remedial assessment: A framework	Y-01 Y-02	T-Ph7	Integrating layers of experience
	4	T-T08	Pregnancy	T-Ph19	T-Ph25	Considering Samyama within our practice

Yogasana subject description

The term *Yogasana* refers to the internal state contained within an *Asana*. These subjects examine the *Asanas* through the distinguishing features of Iyengar Yoga, namely the use of technique, timings, sequence, and repetition. *Yogasana* subjects form the lenses through which *Sadhakas* (students) examine themselves (*Svadyaya*) and are therefore essential to a teacher of Yoga.

As our understanding of Yoga is informed through the practices of *Asana* and *Pranayama*, it is essential to explore the use of Gururji's method as a vehicle to clarify experience. Practice must become known and methodical in order to move into the subject. Some quotes from *Tree of Yoga* helps place Gururji's emphasis on practice:

Mahatma Gandhi did not practise all the aspects of Yoga. He only followed two of its principles — non-violence and truth, yet through these two aspects of Yoga, he mastered his own nature and gained independence for India. If a part of *Yama* could make Mahatma Gandhi so great, so pure, so honest and so divine, should it not be possible to take another limb of Yoga — *Asana* — and through it reach the highest goal of spiritual development?

In a note in 1959, cited in an article by Karl Baier, Iyengar said, 'In each posture, in each action, you should be able to find yoga in its integrity according to Patanjali's explanations' — at which time Iyengar undertook a first attempt to rediscover the whole eightfold path in *Asana*. Later, in 1970, in Iyengar's words...

Patanjali has not said: 'Eight steps;' all these put together are Yoga. But unfortunately people who have not practised at all say: 'This is physical'. *Yama* and *Niyama*: when you are doing the posture, the ethics of the right foot, the ethics of the left foot, are they even or not? If you let loose, that is untruth. If the palms are not joining (*Parivrtta Uttanasana*), that is *Himsa*: you are showing violence on that palm which is not working at all. Because your intelligence has not touched there, so the truth is unknown. [...] So please learn that these poses have been given to know whether in any posture whatever we do, whether you can follow the eight steps or not. [...] All the postures contain all the eight steps.

In this range of subjects poses are dealt with according to their groups, which include:

- standing poses
- sitting poses
- forward bends
- twists
- backbends
- other.

Each group of poses is then viewed through the lenses of:

- Technique and timings—which for technique contains a study of alignment, precision in performance and use of props, while timings examines these Asanas by altering the duration and holdings in order to examine the psychology of the Asanas.
- Sequence and repetition—where sequence involves the study of stringing Asana threads and linking Asanas, while repetition examines these Asanas through the hierarchies of practice to explore the Asana from beginner through to experienced practice.

Two further subjects apply the lenses of technique, timings sequence and repetition to setting material for beginners and advanced practitioners.

Separate subjects have been developed to address:

- Niyama in Yogasana—which is a look at the influence of the Niyamas in the performance of an Asana
- Yama in Yogasana—which examines Yama in our practice and teaching.

All of the Yogasana Subjects are conducted within the Weekend Program, which is dedicated to the refinement and review of teaching within real class situations. The morning study group sessions generate class plans that apply subject material to teaching scenarios. These class plans are then delivered within real class settings and reviewed.

Yogasana

Year	Term	Subject code	Weekend Session 2	Program	Subject code	Weekend Session 4	Program
TAPAS	1	Y-01	Niyama in Yogasana		Y-02	Yama in Yogasana	
	2	Y-03	Technique and timings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • standing poses 		Y-07	Sequence and repetition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • standing poses 	
	3	Y-04	Technique and timings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sitting poses • forward bends 		Y-08	Sequence and repetition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sitting poses • forward bends 	
	4	Y-05	Technique and timings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • twists • other 		Y-09	Sequence and repetition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • twists • other 	

SVADHYAYA	1
	2
	3
	4

Y-06	Technique and timings • backbends
Y-01	Niyama in Yogasana
Y-03	Technique and timings • standing poses
Y-04	Technique and timings • sitting poses • forward bends

Y-10	Sequence and repetition • backbends
Y-02	Yama in Yogasana
Y-07	Sequence and repetition • standing poses
Y-08	Sequence and repetition • sitting poses • forward bends

ISVARA-PRANIDHANA	1
	2
	3
	4

Y-05	Technique and timings • twists • other
Y-06	Technique and timings • backbends
Y-01	Niyama in Yogasana
Y-12	Technique and timings, sequencing and repetition for beginners

Y-09	Sequence and repetition • twists • other
Y-10	Sequence and repetition • backbends
Y-02	Yama in Yogasana
Y-11	Technique and timings, sequencing and repetition for advanced practitioners

Learning to critique a piece of Iyengar Yoga teaching

The following section aims to equip us for critical evaluation of this activity we call “teaching Yoga in the Iyengar method”. The section provides a context in which questions about teaching can be discussed without the risk of reducing the complex subject of Yoga into questions about asana technique.

The table below clarifies how key Yoga terms are used in this program.

Program Use	Yoga Terminology
The Yoga Practices	Twin Pillars – Abhyasa / Vairagya Kriya Yoga – tapas / svadhyaya / isvara pranidhana
The disciplines	Astanga Yoga – yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi
Our practice	Asana and pranayama

This program differentiates between the *skills and activities* of delivering instruction, adjusting, setting up of a classroom etc and *the teaching* of the Yoga Practices.

Patanjali tells us that the Yoga Practices are assured, they are proven. The Yoga Practices, in effect, are the teachers – but how are we teaching these Yoga Practices? This question becomes extremely important in the context of Iyengar Yoga where our daily practices “appear” to be merely the performance of the disciplines of asana and pranayama.

It is interesting to consider that Sri Krishnamacharya, who is BKS Iyengar’s guru, also trained TKV Desikachar and Pattabhi Jois and that each of these great teachers has applied themselves to the Yoga Practices as detailed by Patanjali. Whilst each had the same teacher, each evolved their own way of teaching the practices: Desikachar, the Viniyoga method; Pattabhi Jois, the Ashtanga Vinyasa method; and BKS Iyengar, the Iyengar Yoga method.

BKS Iyengar himself has never presented his teaching as other than traditional Yoga and has fully aligned his work with Patanjali’s sutras. How he has chosen to teach the Yoga Practices has over the years been described and explained. In the article “Exploring Iyengar Yoga through technique, timings, sequence and repetition”, I have attempted to define more clearly the approach that BKS has taken to teaching the Yoga Practices. Specifically, I have identified technique, timings, sequence and repetition as *methods* of teaching Yoga as applied by Iyengar teachers.

The identification or classification of the *methods*, as distinct from the *skills and activities* of teaching, is important as it is the *methods* themselves that define our teaching as the teaching of Iyengar Yoga. On the final page, technique, timings, sequence and repetition, as the *methods* of teaching Iyengar Yoga, are detailed. Included are two columns headed “The teacher’s actions” and “The teacher’s observations of the student”. These two columns are a starting point for reflection upon questions about our teaching – questions

such as: “What are the students learning when I apply repetition?” and “What is the underlying reason for this sequencing of asana?”

As teachers of Iyengar Yoga we apply these *methods* in teaching such that our students become competent in the Yoga Practices and in doing so are equipped to begin their study of Yoga.

The journey to become a teacher of the Yoga Practices includes a number of steps that may or may not be cognisable whilst on the journey. In the wake of 15 years of training teachers I have summarised these steps as:

- Step 1. Skill and knowledge development. We learn the activities of teaching, such as mirroring, demonstration and delivery of instruction and also develop knowledge of points, directions of movement, asana groupings and so on.
- Step 2. This step is where the dynamic between the student and teacher becomes evident. At this stage the teaching becomes “relational” – what a teacher does at any given time is held in relation to how the students conduct themselves.
- Step 3. The teacher has skill in pacing of instruction: they may change the time in which instruction is delivered to make it appropriate to the stage of development of their student. The teacher is also skilled in delivering coordinating points in poses and the teacher/student dynamic is conducted in “real time”.
- Step 4. At this step a link is formed with the subject of Yoga, and the choices a teacher makes in the classroom are in the light of their commitment to teaching the Yoga Practices. The teacher consciously applies the *methods* of technique, timings, sequence and repetition. The teacher’s capacity to work with the *methods* is supported by sound knowledge and understanding of Abhyasa and Vairagya and the tiers of Kriya Yoga.
- Step 5. At this step a teacher develops a way to judge the effectiveness of their teaching. The judgements require the teacher to have a clear perception of “What is Yoga” and a set of measures to gauge the progress their students are making with respect to the Yoga Practices.

This program is primarily concerned with supporting the move from step 4 into step 5, though there is considerable avenue where those finding themselves in step 3 are able to participate.

The challenges on the journey

If never questioned, we may settle into our role as teachers, and teaching becomes yet another layer of dust on the lens of our perception. Without a way to cleanse the lens and view with greater discernment, our habits and prejudices may be played out in our classroom.

We may review the effectiveness of our teaching in relation to how well we are performing our habitual *activities and skills* of teaching: how well did we adjust; could that demonstration have been more effective; do I need to clarify that instruction; etc. We come to see ourselves as being good at certain activities and as having refined certain skills, and we judge our and others’ teaching according to this list of *skills and activities*.

Teaching and review or critique of a piece of teaching will involve assessment of the *skills and activities* of teaching – however that is not the complete picture. How do we move

from this level of critique of teaching *activities and skills* to the review and evaluation of teaching the Yoga Practices?

To make this journey into the world of critique of our teaching, it is necessary to develop a strong understanding of the afflictions – the klesas – and how they manifest in actions and prejudices along our path. This requires that we study ourselves – svadhyaya.

The klesas and margas

A teacher's relationship to their students can be understood as a reflection of where the teacher and the students are along the great paths: karma, bhakti, jnana and Yoga margas. The paths we follow are determined by our response to the klesas.

If we are held by the emotional afflictions, we are predominantly on the bhakti marga; if the mental afflictions are dominant in our character, we are on the jnana marga; and if we are held by the instinctive affliction – fear of death or clinging to life – we are on the karma marga.

If unaware of the filters to our perception, teachers on the bhakti marga are often committed to their student, and yet being held by strong likes and dislikes the teacher's emotions about the student often get in the way of them seeing clearly the most effective response to the student. Those on the jnana marga, misplacing their interpretations of experience as fact, may minimise the capacity of the asana to affect mind and will be reluctant to use physical adjustment of asana. Those on the karma marga may be overly anxious about their students doing well in the asana. To them, having evidence of the students' progress is important; the students' progress in the asana becomes the confirmation to the teacher that they are a good teacher.

Through our filters we see our students: what we perceive is a reflection of our prejudices. Yet, for the student, their interpretation of the class, the teaching and thus their capacity to learn is also coloured by the margas: their experience is not what we see or would like it to be.

A student held by the emotional afflictions – full of likes and dislikes – may read the physical contact of a hands-on adjustment as either a like or a dislike by the teacher and conducts themselves accordingly. If they read it as the teacher liking them, they try harder and, if the teacher does not continue to adjust them, they become despondent and their practice may decline. Or, if they read it as the teacher not liking them, they may not return. A student full of pride and held in their ideas of who they are may either be crushed mentally when given a strong physical adjustment, as it is too challenging of their self perception, or resist more and be unable to let the adjustment penetrate, as they are busy protecting their ideas about themselves. A karma marga student will work at their asana and often, when they have accomplished what they feel is good asana, they leave as this is the end of their understanding of what they are doing. This is often perplexing to teachers, as they have often had relationships with these students where they “reward” the students' practice by helping them refine their asana and see the students as doing very well, and then when these students leave it does not make sense to the teacher.

The following tables provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each marga with reference to how their influence may manifest in relation to asana, to practice, to the subject and to our students.

Bhakti marga

	Asana	Practice	Subject	Student	Generally
Strength	"Body is the temple, asanas are the prayers."	When going well, very devoted. Intense commitment leads to discernment (pramana).	Devoted and life experience is dominated by Yoga.	Committed and is of service to students.	"Heart is full of emotion."
Weakness	Strong likes and dislikes. Sensations trigger emotional reactions.	Easily distracted when not going well. May not learn from difficult experiences.	May become a disbeliever if emotional experience is challenged.	Emotions about student get in the way. Strong likes and dislikes of students.	Emotional afflictions. Attachment and aversion.

Jnana marga

	Asana	Practice	Subject	Student	Generally
Strength	Knowledge of effects, benefits, mechanics, how to adjust, points and details.	Practice experience is svadhyaya.	Study of scriptures. Understands concepts and ideas.	Discerning of students' experience.	Intellectual, mental knowledge.
Weakness	Minimises capacity of asana to affect the mind – relates to it only at the physical level.	Dominated by knowledge rather than experience. Held in manas and memory.	Mistakes manas for buddhi (impressions and interpretation for fact and reason).	Unable to respond to evidence as interpreting what is seen through own filters.	Mental afflictions. Ignorance and pride.

Karma marga

	Asana	Practice	Subject	Student	Generally
Strength	Work at it. Instinctive. Able to be present in the experience.	Methodical and disciplined. Routine.	Will act upon understanding. Strong sense of service to share and give Yoga to others.	Adjusts and responds to students' asana. Of service to student learning.	Tendency to serve others through work and duty.
Weakness	Confuses doing with study of Yoga. Becomes mechanical and focuses on perfection.	Invested in rewards from doing. Forms habits that dominate.	Gets lost in the doing and forgets why they are doing.	Wants the students to be good at "doing" asana.	Instinctive afflictions. Fear of death and clinging to life.

Cause and effect: reflection upon the actions of teaching

A stage of development in our journey, of critique of our work, must also involve us in reflection upon the cause and effect of our actions, both upon ourselves and our students, as we teach.

Actions are of four types. They are black, white, grey or without these attributes. The last is beyond the gunas of rajas, tamas and sattva, free from intention, motivation and desire, pure and sourceless, and outside the law of cause and effect that governs all other actions. Motivated action leads eventually to pride, affliction and unhappiness; the genuine yogi performs only actions which are motiveless: free of desire, pride and effect.

The chain of cause and effect is like a ball endlessly rebounding from the walls and floor of a squash court. Memory, conscious or sublimated, links this chain, even across many lives. This is because every action of the first three types leaves behind a residual impression, encoded in our deepest memory, which thereafter continues to turn the karmic wheel, provoking reaction and further action. The consequences of action may take effect instantaneously, or lie in abeyance for years, even through several lives. Tamasic action is considered to give rise to pain and sorrow, rajasic to mixed results, and sattvic to more agreeable ones. Depending on their provenance, the fruits of actions may either tie us to lust, anger and greed, or turn us towards the spiritual quest.¹

Moment and movement: perception in the teaching/learning encounter

Closely linked to reflection upon the outcome of our actions must also be consideration of the experience of students in the moment of their learning.

Past and future are woven into the present, though they appear different due to the movement of moments.

Desire nourishes action aimed at its gratification. The intermission between desire, action and fulfilment involves time, which manifests as past, present and future. True understanding of motivation and the movement of moments releases a yogi from the knot of bondage.

Moment is changeless and eternal. Moments flow into movements eternally and are measurable as past, present and future. This measurable time is finite, when contrasted with eternity.

The negative effects of time are intellectual (lack of spiritual knowledge, avidya, and pride, asmita); emotional (attachment to pleasure, raga, and aversion to pain, dvesa); and instinctive (the desire to cling to life, abhinivesa). Time's positive effect is the acquisition of knowledge. The experience of the past supports the present, and progress in the present builds a sound foundation for the future. One uses the past as a guide to develop discriminative power, alertness and awareness which smooth the path for Self-Realization. The yogi who studies in depth this unique rotation of time keeps aloof from the movement of moments; he rests in the present, at which crucial point desires are kept in abeyance. Thus he becomes clear of head, clean of heart, and free from time which binds consciousness. When the conjunction between movements of moments and consciousness terminates, freedom and beatitude, kaivalya, are experienced.²

The subject of Yoga is universal, it does not change. Interpretation of experience does change however. What is possible in an encounter with one student is not equally possible, even with that same student, in another time or place, let alone with a different student. Ours is a method that applies repetition by which we acknowledge that the learning is conducted in the student's perception. For this reason teaching and learning are not synchronous.

The following quote on asana highlights the degree to which our practices, and the learning environment, are dynamic and held in time.

The conjunction of effort, concentration and balance in asana forces us to live intensely in the present moment, a rare experience in modern life. This actuality, or being in the present, has both a strengthening and a cleansing effect: physically in the rejection of disease, mentally by ridding our mind of stagnated thoughts or prejudices; and, on a very high level where perception and action become one, by teaching us instantaneous correct action; that is to say, action which does not produce reaction. On that level we may also expunge the residual effects of past actions.

The three origins of pain are eradicated by asana as we progress from clear vision through right thinking to correct action.³

For the student, the learning experience exists in the sheaths of experience (kosas), including their memory and perception. It is the perception that a student has that determines their capacity to learn. The student's integration of the sheaths involves their

¹ BKS Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Thorsons 2002, p. 40

² BKS Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Thorsons 2002, p. 260

³ BKS Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Thorsons 2002 p. 31

understanding or perception of what is happening. If a student creates a space in which to reside, how a teacher enters this space is central to the effectiveness of the teaching encounter.

The quality and integrity of the teacher/student relationship is formed around how the teacher understands and engages with the space (perception) that a student inhabits: their “moment in time”. This is what I believe Iyengar is calling the “creativity” of the relationship.

There are two types of teaching. One is explaining according to your intelligence. The other is knowing the weakness of your pupils, and how you have to explain in order for them to understand your meaning. That demands creativity. I have developed both kinds of teaching: I can give from my brain, and I can also receive the weakness of their brains and bodies and introduce a new style in order to make them understand and do well. That is the secret of my teaching.⁴

As teachers it is important to understand that we are unable to control the students’ learning experience. We must apply our teaching skills with clarity if our students are to progress and derive knowledge from experience (pramana).

A conceptual framework for the critique of teaching Yoga

A critical step in learning to critique our teaching is to clarify a set of markers or ways to understand if students are working with the Yoga Practices. This step is totally dependent upon our practice of asana and pranayama *being* the Yoga Practices of Abhyasa and Vairagya and tapas, svadhyaya and isvara pranidhana. The Yoga Practices, recognised and engaged with through our practice, provide the means through which we identify these markers. When we are involved with the Yoga Practices, when we are on the Yoga marga, our lens of perception and our capacity to act without reaction becomes possible.

Below is a detailed framework to be used to critique pieces of teaching in this program. In this framework the integration of the sheaths (our capacity to *resolve* the asana) has become a measure or lens through which I view a student’s involvement with the Yoga Practices. BKS Iyengar in his commentary of sutra II.18 notes:

The organs of actions and senses of perception aid the sadhaka in purifying the anatomical and physiological sheaths through yama and niyama. Asana, pranayama and pratyahara divest the seer of the mental sheath; dharana and dhyana cleans the intellectual sheath. Samadhi brings the seer out through the prison-gates of all the sheaths to experience freedom and beatitude.⁵

The resolving of asana (integrating the kosas) in the moment is a quest and, as outlined in the sutra, a changing one. External, internal and inner most – the quest changes from asana to asana, from class to class, from month to month, from practice to practice. Therefore, what is understood or perceived by me regarding a student’s level of integration of the sheaths is held in my relationship to/with them as they journey along their path. It is my role to guide them on their quest of “resolving” their asana and to learn to integrate into the moment – this integration process requires application of Abhyasa and Vairagya, tapas, svadhyaya and isvara pranidhana. It is my responsibility to provide the means through which they can learn the Yoga disciplines and Yoga Practices such that, in time, these Yoga Practices become their teacher.

The critique framework is an overarching one that applies the concepts inherent within the Twin Pillars of Abhyasa (practice) and Vairagya (renunciation). Abhyasa and Vairagya are referenced in the first chapter of the Yoga sutras and are described as the two general means of practice. This framework is used to evaluate pieces of teaching within the context of the subject of Yoga. In selecting the Twin Pillars as the key aspects of our conceptual framework, the link between theory and practice is forged.

⁴ BKS Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*, Shambhala, 2002. p. 166

⁵ BKS Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Thorsons, 2002, p. 126

The framework is a set of axis. The Abhyasa axis represents the spectrum of actions undertaken by teachers in an effort to teach the Yoga Practices and disciplines, and as BKS Iyengar notes Abhyasa “involves long, zealous, calm and persevering effort”⁶. Therefore, in using this axis, direction is given to teachers to apply themselves in long, zealous, calm and persevering effort to learn and refine the methods of teaching.

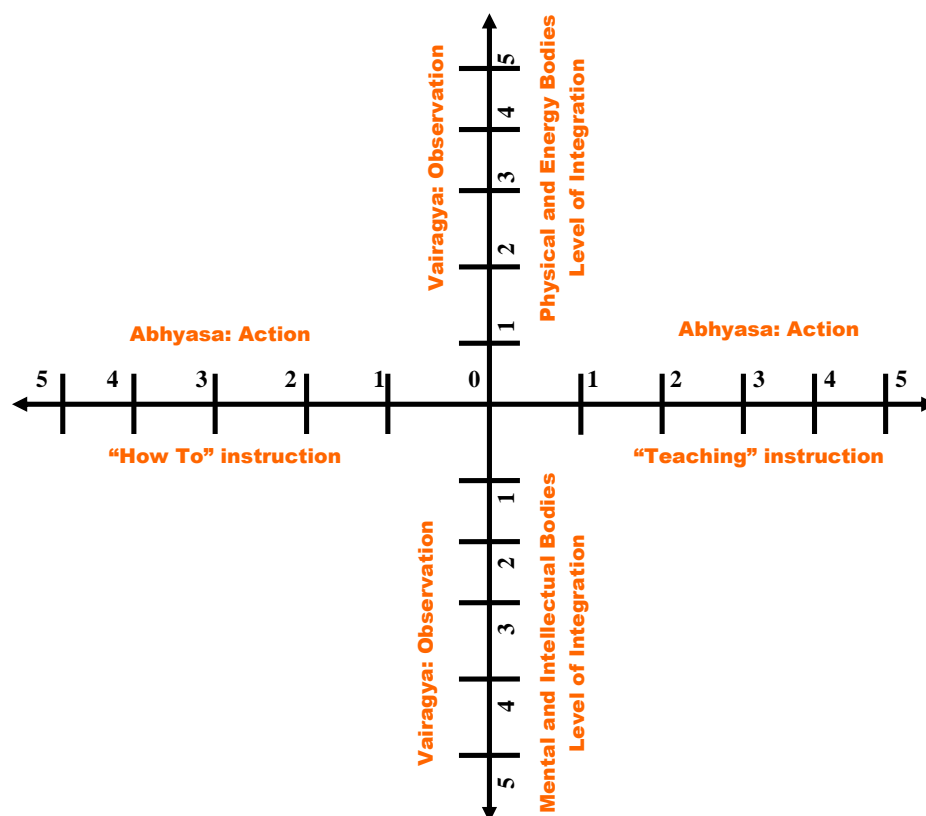
The concepts inherent in the Yoga practice of Vairagya, applied as an axis on the framework, bring focus to a teacher’s capacity for observation of their students. This requires the teacher renounce their own self-interest to become more aligned with the students’ experience.

A number of examples are provided to assist teachers become familiar with the use of the axis. It will be possible to combine the use of the axis and the table that details our methods of teaching (on the final page of this document). Both become potent tools useful in the critique of teaching Yoga in the Iyengar method.

⁶ BKS Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Thorsons, 2002, p. 6

The Abhyasa and Vairagya axis

In applying the Abhyasa and Vairagya teaching axis, we have a way to consider and review decisions made by teachers, be they small encounters with an individual student in a particular asana, or bigger situations, such as the way a teacher works with a group of students through a 10-week course. We can consider the actions and activities involved in the teaching encounter within the broad and complex subject of Yoga.



On the axis the link between Abhyasa and Action and the link between Vairagya and Observation are significant. Action and Observation are two ways to describe these practices at their most basic level.

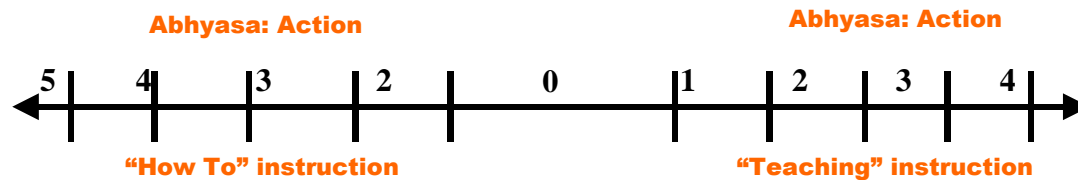
The left side of the Abhyasa axis represents “How To” instruction – that is, instruction that emphasises getting people into poses and instructing how to work in a pose. The other end of the axis represents “Teaching” instruction – that is, instruction which works more with the relational aspects of the asana, the student and the subject.

The top of the Vairagya axis notes the level of integration of physical and energy bodies, which represents the teacher’s observation of change in the structures and systems of the body. The bottom of the Vairagya axis notes the level of integration of mental and intellectual bodies, indicating that the teacher is working with the “thinking brain, memory, ego and sensory perception”⁷ and intelligence, discernment and wisdom.

⁷ BKS Iyengar, *Light on Life*, Rodale International, 2005, p. 108

Abhyasa axis

Abhyasa emphasises action. The focus is predominantly on what teachers are delivering, including their demonstrations, verbal and non-verbal instructions and adjustments.



“How To” instruction (examples)

- Demonstration prior to doing. Use clear observable actions.
- Delivery of information to produce the shape of the pose (describe the pose).
- Consistent use of key phrases, points and Iyengarisms.
- Instruct (act/observe/adjust).

The further along the axis towards 5, the more “How To” type instruction is evident.

Distinguishing features may include

- Techniques that focus on alignment.
- Use of props to access the pose and increase range of motion.
- Repetition to learn the shape and points.
- Use of shorter timings in poses but a number of repetitions. The teacher's focus is tapas.

“Teaching” instruction (examples)

- Coordinations (more than one point) in instructions.
- Pacing and timing of instruction changes.
- Correcting and adjusting – verbal and non verbal that bring students into the moment.

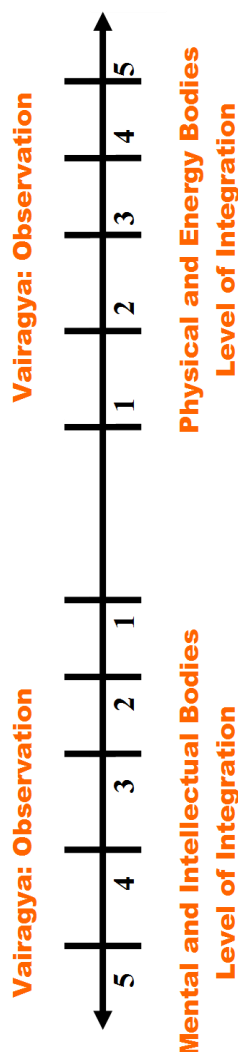
The further along the axis towards 5, the more “Teaching” type instruction is evident.

Distinguishing features may include

- Techniques that focus on precision – to bring continuity of attention; to bring students into the moment.
- Holdings/timings – responsive to student condition. Teacher cultivates svadhyaya in the students.
- Sequence that leads students to broaden their experience of an asana.

Vairagya axis

Vairagya emphasises teachers working with observation. The focus is predominantly on the students' learning of Yoga and how the students are integrating the experience across the sheaths. Only four of the five sheaths are represented on the axis: annamaya kosa (anatomical body), pranamaya kosa (physiological body), manomaya kosa (mental body) and vijñanamaya kosa (intellectual body). Teachers must let go of their obsession with how well they, as teachers, are doing in their activity of teaching and focus on the students' progress.



Physical and Energy Bodies Level of Integration

The teacher's observations of the student

- Alignment
- Range of movement
- Effort in application
- Breath
- Color of skin / circulation
- Use of props

The closer to 5 you are on the axis, the greater the emphasis on external, physical structures of the body. For example, 5 would be an emphasis on arms and legs, 3 might be an emphasis on chest and shoulder rotation, and 1 would be an emphasis on the physiological systems, such as respiration and circulation changes.

Distinguishing features may include

The use of timings to alter physical conditions such that students learn to listen and to read the sensations (feedback systems).

The use of props to broaden the experience of an asana.

Mental and Intellectual Bodies Level of Integration

The teacher's observations of the students

- Stability versus movement in adjustments within the asana (not dominated by memory or ideas: able to engage sensory intelligence and can make choices and time adjustment to bring stability).
- Capacity to move beyond likes and dislikes and make choices appropriate to evidence made available in the current experience: use of props to bring equanimity; contentment with how things are.
- Clarity of intuition. ("Instinct is the unconscious intelligence of the cells surfacing. Intuition is supra-conscious knowing in which you know before you know *how* you know⁸.")

The closer you are to 1 on the axis, the more thinking brain, memory, ego and sense perception (Mental Sheath) is being addressed in the teaching and the closer to 5 on the axis the more intelligence, discernment and wisdom.

Distinguishing features may include

Repetitions of the asana; sequence and props may be used to deepen the experience firstly of the asana and then of the students' experience of themselves.

Timings will support students to adapt in relation to the challenge set by the asana so that the energetics of the asana can be explored.

⁸ BKS Iyengar, *Light on Life*, Rodale International, 2005 p. 163, 164

Practise using the axis

Blank copies of the axis are provided. Use the axis to consider examples of teaching. Below are a number of examples that can get you started in working with the axis.

Example 1

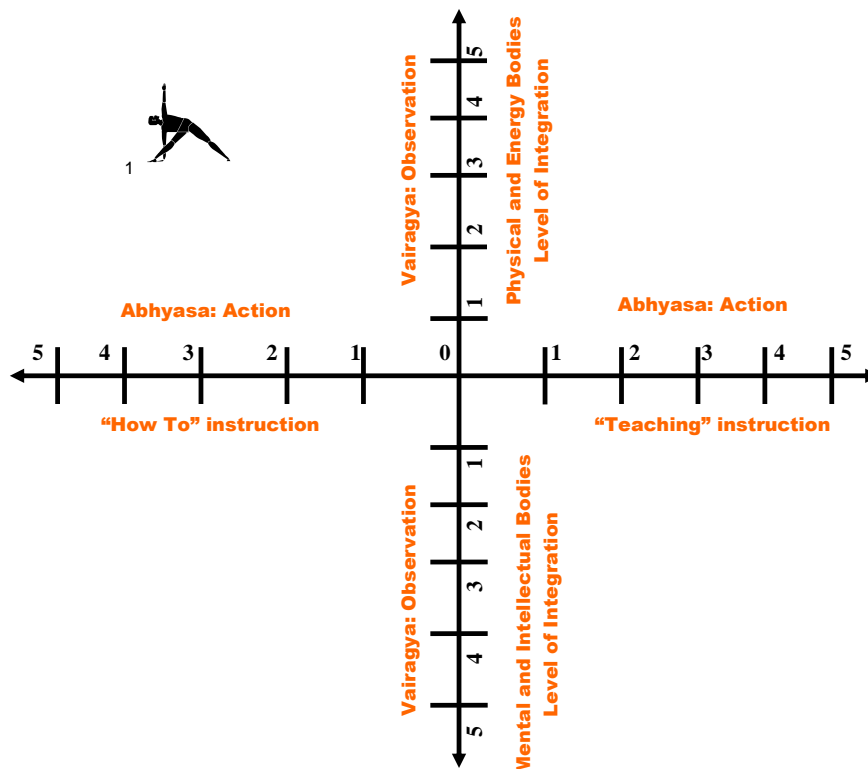
An example of a developing teacher (inexperienced) teaching a beginners class.

Abhyasa axis = $3\frac{1}{2}$ "How To" instruction:

- emphasis is on getting students into the pose.

Vairagya axis = $3\frac{1}{2}$ Physical and Energy Bodies Level of Integration:

- emphasis is on the students' experience of the limbs and extremities.



Teaching example:

Teach in mirror, doing the asana with the student. (If at point 5 on the Abhyasa axis, there would be demonstration prior to going to the asana). At $3\frac{1}{2}$ it is likely students have done the asana before (possibly week 3 of a course). The teacher instructs as they go to the pose. In the asana, for example, trikonasana, instructions might be: press the right big toe mound (BTM); turn the right thigh out in the hip socket; press the left outer heel; stretch the top arm. Points reference the extremities and the structural body with detail of parts; for example, BTM, hip socket.

Example 2

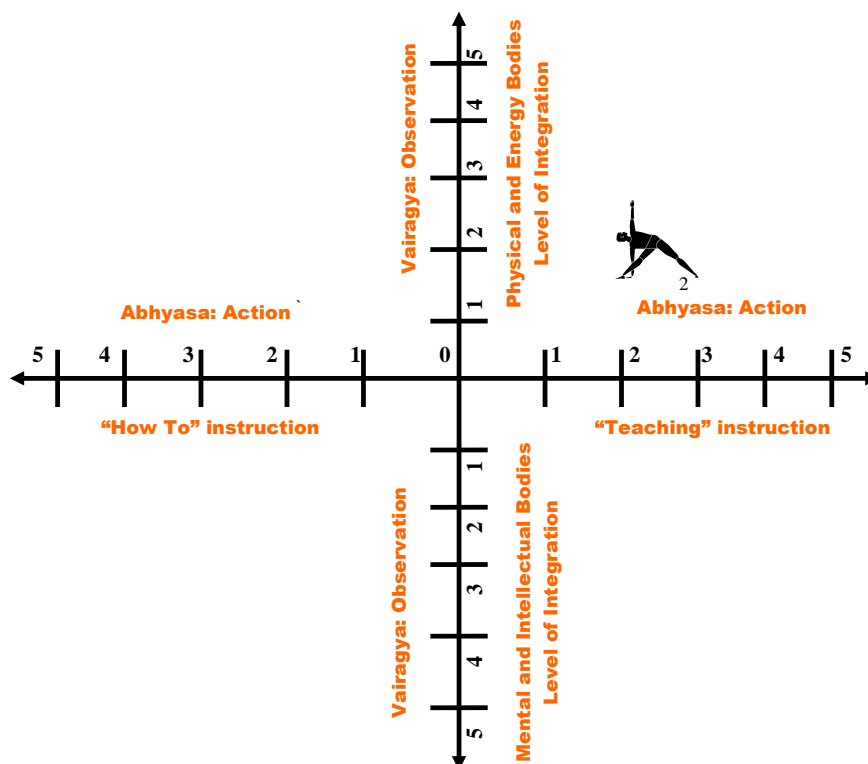
An example of a developing teacher (inexperienced) with depth in their practice of the asana. Teaching students with some experience (Level 1) who are developing their attention span.

Abhyasa axis = 2½ “Teaching instruction”:

- more complex instructions; fewer points in asana;
- pacing and timing of instruction in pose changes.

Vairagya axis = 2 Physical and Energy Bodies Level of Integration:

- longer timings in poses to change physiological experience.



Teaching example:

In trikonasana, turn the right thigh out. Tuck the right buttock, press the outer left heel and lengthen through into the crown of the head (three point coordination). Repetition of the asana using heel to the wall (prop) may be used to deepen the experience. 30-45 seconds timing in the pose will impact upon the physiological systems and students will need to adjust and deepen their observation of these changes. With so few points of instruction in this pose, emphasis may be achieved through repetition of the points and use of pauses. It may be an asana that prepares students to go deeper into the next asana in the sequence, for example, ardha chandrasana. The place within sequence determines how it is taught.

Example 3

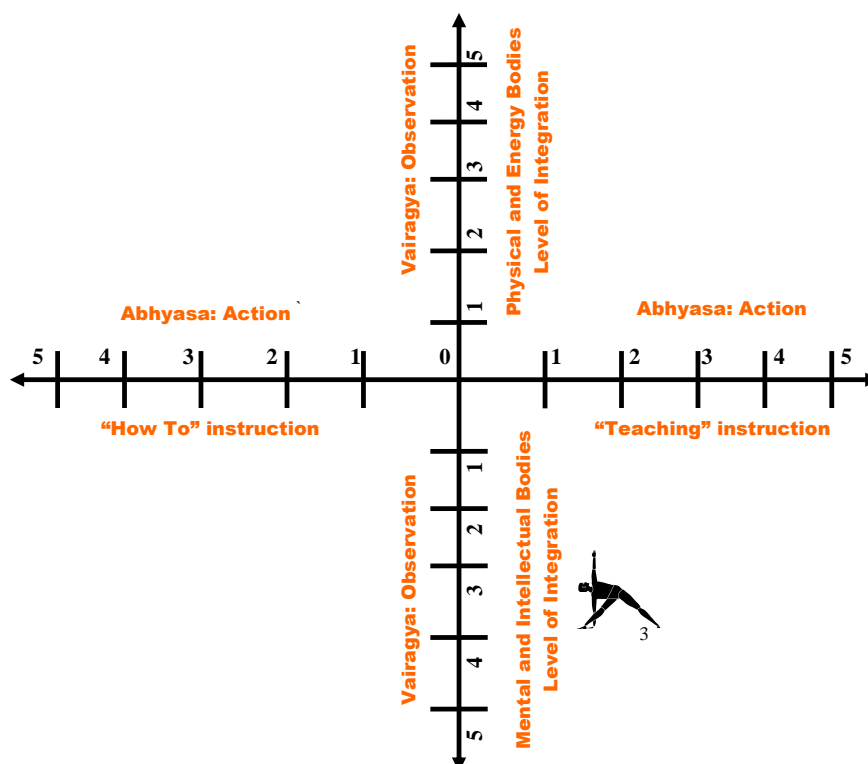
An example of teaching where students are working with known asanas. The teacher's own experience of the asanas will be essential to support the depth of teaching – to be able to hold the student in the experience, trusting and knowing the practice. The teaching will rely on the asanas informing the quality of experience.

Abhyasa axis = 2 “Teaching” instruction:

- holdings and timings assist students integrate;
- coordinations; precision in alignment.

Vairagya axis = 3½ Mental and Intellectual Bodies Level of Integration:

- teacher will be noting quality of eyes, lips (pratyahara) and the energetic expression of the asana.



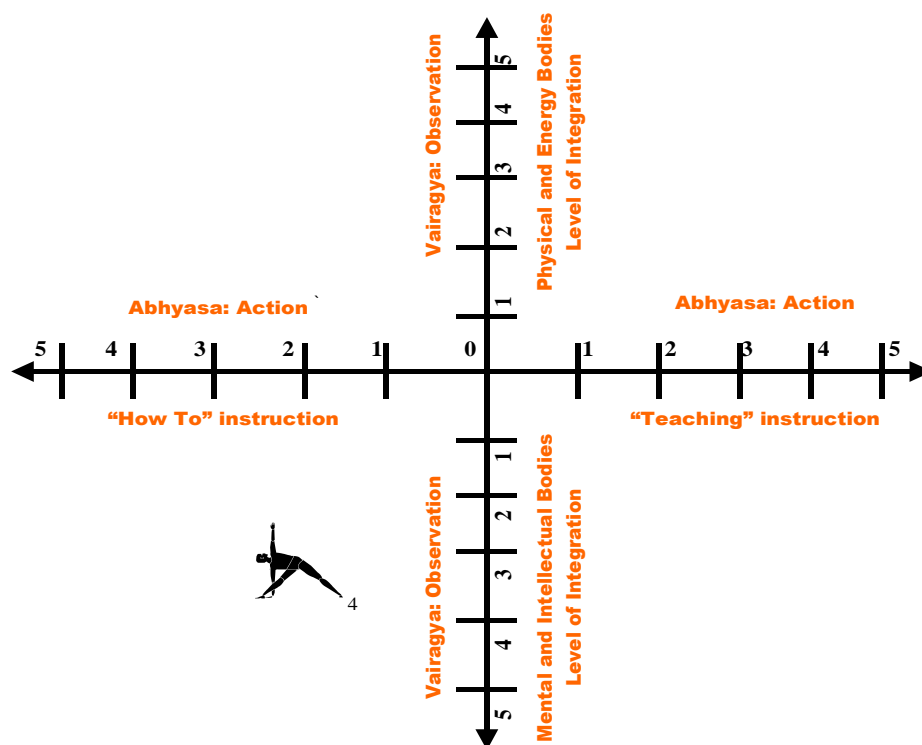
Teaching example:

In trikonasana, squeeze the outer right calf to take more weight to the right inner heel. Lift the kneecap and draw the body of the thigh muscle deep into the right thigh crease. Activate the spine. The teacher may say nothing else for the duration of the timing, which may be more than a minute. The more precision and refinement in the detail of the asana the greater emphasis on students letting go of the ego brain such that there is opportunity for the discerning quality of mind to develop. Reference (Buddhi) may be made to the senses – emphasis on pratyahara as a practice (soften lips, release the jaw, quieten the breath) as it is a pathway to concentration. A teacher may note an observation – confirm when they see a shift in perception of students as they surrender (isvara pranidhana) to the asana. There is a meditative quality to the practice of the asana. The students may have been working on this asana for a number of weeks so that a term like “activate the spine” and the ability to create that sensation have been learnt.

Example 4

An example of teaching where a teacher is confident of their experience of the asana and in their teaching. The students know the structure of the pose and are now learning that there is a deeper level of experience.

- Abhyasa axis = 2 “How To” instructions:
- emphasis on instruction and repetition of key terms/phrases.
- Vairagya axis = 3½ Mental and Intellectual Bodies Level of Integration:
- observation of how the students apply the points; can they move beyond the dominant experience to create stability in the asana?



Teaching example:

The teacher is likely to introduce the use of props to teach students how to work with more precision in the asana. For example, in trikonasana, right hand on block to outer foot to learn to take weight off front leg so that students can refine the movement – squeeze calf, bring weight to inner right heel. Press the front heel to draw up through the front thigh. The teacher may be working with precision in performance to bring the students to study themselves more deeply. The teacher may be working with the energetics of asana: Precision in performance and timings can be used to challenge the students to change the way they work in an asana. Instructions may be repeated and emphasised to support the students’ capacity to focus in the experience and to override the obstacles of a wandering mind and lack of discipline. The teaching helps students move beyond the obstacles such that they can come into the present moment. Experience of this type, for example, in trikonasana (especially if repeated over a number of weeks), may be the foundational experience so that the teaching example 3 described above is possible.

Developmental - Pathway of Evolution

Svadhyaya - Pathway of Involution

Method	Distinguishing feature	The teacher's actions		The teacher's observations of the student	
Technique	Alignment	Emphasis on detail	"How to" instruction	Awareness of the body	Awareness of senses
	Precision in performance	May use coordinations	Delivered in real time	Continuity of attention	Moment to moment application
	Use of props	Define the asana Define the experience	Define the energy of the asana Bring the asana to the level of the student	Increased range of movement Increased confidence Increased duration	Increased range of asanas possible Development of sensitivity Subjective knowledge
Timings	Feedback systems	Increased timings over repetitions		To listen to and read the body Read tension within the muscle fibres	Appropriate application in the asana
	Kriya Yoga	Tapas – methodical and systematic	Svadhyaya – silence Isvara Pranidhana – holdings	Effort to progress	Study of effort/will – recognition and adjustment of inner state Commitment to a process of change
	Energetics	Energetics and focal points – Changes in pacing and timing of delivery of instruction plus emphasis on fixed asana points or 'states' (remain quite, stabilize, wait and observe). Energetics across asana groups – Dominance or expression of the gunas is changed by choice of asana group and their sequence.		Measures effort appropriate to asana Diverse application including stability, effort, stillness, focus	
Sequence	Access to an asana	Position in a sequence - linking asana shapes to facilitate movement		Capacity to achieve an asana	Stability in asana
	Broaden the experience of an asana	Knowledge through association - uses relationships between asana to change the students view of an asana		Capacity to change the understanding of an asana Ability to remain in the asana	
	Broaden the experience of oneself	The effect of practice - emphasises the qualities of asana within sequence to affect mind (perception)		Capacity to listen and engage with the practice	
Repetition	Observation	Mind becomes a watcher; Dharana – points and co-ordinations with pacing, language demand continuity of attention. Repetition in points/key phrases and asana		Observation increases as familiarity develops	Constancy in application
	Refinement of senses	Mind becomes absorbed in experience; Dhyana – Combines use of timings; less instruction over repetitions		Move beyond the dominant experience	Subtlety in experience
	Confirms or refutes	Knowledge from experience – Incisive instruction to direct students to enter the moment – used with experienced students		Clarity of perception – core to periphery Patience – desire to know	