

The Eight Limbs of Yoga

Yama and Niyama

The yamas and niyamas are the foundations of yoga. Why are they important? What is the difference between applying them from the outside and experiencing them from the inside out? Why some teachers do not mention them? What happens if we over- or underemphasize them?

Asana

Why classical vinyasa yoga is the ideal foundation for Patanjali yoga and why vinyasa-less yoga is not based on scripture. What are Ashtanga Vinyasa's connections to the Yoga Sutra in its sequential and simultaneous applications? Why T. Krishnamacharya taught two distinctly different yogas in his lifetime? Did he or K.P. Jois invent Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga or where did it come from? What is the role of the Yoga Korunta? Why did K.P. Jois say "This is Patanjali yoga and what is the difference between Ashtanga (Patanjali) Yoga and Ashtanga (Vinyasa) Yoga?"

Pranayama

Pranayama is the prime yogic method to achieve radiant health and spiritual fulfilment. It is the link to connect posture practice with meditation and it is the axial limb of yoga. We look at the fundamentals required to establish a successful pranayama practice (asana, mitahara, Bandha and Kriya) and trace pranayama's sources in yogic scripture. The important concepts underlying pranayama are explained and various breath waves (pre-pranayama exercises) to liberate the breathing pattern will be taught. The major pranayama techniques are then introduced together with their therapeutic applications. The many implications of nostril dominance (svara) such as brain hemisphericity will also be explored and methods to balance them will be given.

Pratyahara

How is pratyahara related to the yamas, niyamas? Various techniques of pratyahara based on asana, pranayama and meditation are introduced.

Dharana

We will enquire why Kundalini is not mentioned in the Yoga Sutra? Kundalini is the coiled life force and engine of spiritual evolution. If left resting at the base of the spine we are enslaved by our urges and desires. If, however, it is lifted through the various energy centres (Chakras), we can express ourselves as a successful person, a fully integrated human being, a genius, or recognize the Divine within us, respectively. Once the higher Chakras are reached meditation (Dhyana) will occur effortlessly. In this workshop Gregor introduces us to the Chakras and leads us through guided meditations aimed at raising Kundalini. The meditation techniques include various Bandhas, Mudras and Pranayama techniques, stacked within each other like Russian dolls.

Samadhi

What are the exact differences between dharana, dhyana and Samadhi? What are the various ways of attaining Samadhi (Bhramar, Yoni, Nadasandhana etc) and what are

the main avenues (Jnana, Karma, Bhakti)? What is the precise difference of the various types of samadhi, i.e objective and objectless samadhis and their many subdivisions? What is the importance of devotion to the Divine and its influence on objectless and objective Samadhi?