

# Teaching Hatha Yoga - Lead Your Classes With Integrity

Contributed by Webmaster

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What is integrity? Simply put: Integrity is doing the right thing. Why should a Yoga instructor be an example of integrity? Yoga teachers have a responsibility to demonstrate a balanced lifestyle. If someone is not up to the task, why choose to teach classes?

Most Yoga teachers work exclusively with adults, but some work with children, too. Either way, you demonstrate integrity by "walking the walk." Teaching integrity is a responsibility that is much more than role playing. Let's look at an example of a way where Yoga teachers should be examples of integrity.

Within every ashram, and Yoga studio, is a culture. The culture of every Yoga class determines the success of the collective group. If you lead with integrity, you can never go wrong. Honesty, ethics, and discipline are admirable standards for any organization.

On the other hand, if you preach that you are the only source of reliable information, you have crossed the line. Some Yoga teachers will claim their style is the only true style. Their Guru is the "Big Kahuna" of Yoga.

Some of the more interesting claims are: "Everyone else teaches phony Yoga, because my path is right, pure, and the only path that is real." Looking down a tunnel will keep you and your students focused, but intolerance usually follows "tunnel vision."

Instead of dividing into smaller groups at every turn, Yoga schools and styles, should be networking with each other. Luckily, this is a rarity for schools to operate on the fundamentalist fringe, but the fact that some Yoga students gravitate in this direction is scary.

A lack of integrity is a mental weakness. For an adult to be influenced by a crowd taking the wrong action is an example of a lack of integrity. A positive self-image goes hand-in-hand with integrity, because a person who has strong personal values can think for himself or herself.

Some will say: "Define right action and make rules for us to follow." For those who need to have a rule for everything, there are three words that define right action. To say it simply: "Do no harm." We also know this as Ahimsa (the first Yama).

If you follow this one guideline, there is no need for a thousand rules. Yet, history has shown us that rules are made for most of us, because a rare few need to push the boundaries of common sense to get their way. As a result of these infractions - religions, governments, and organizations, must institute rules.

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