



Living Your Yoga

Happy March, wonderful humans! Another day, another month gone by. We hope you enjoyed all the body love things we wrote about last week and throughout last month. It's so important, especially in this consumer and social media driven age we live in today. With that said, we wanted to shift gears a little bit, well sort of, as we start to introduce some yoga related things back into these newsletters this month. Yoga philosophy runs deep, and there is so much to learn and share and unpack and understand. We've talked about the different paths of yoga, and now we wanted to talk a little bit more specifically about one of the paths in particular- Raja Yoga (or the yoga of the mind and meditation). It's the yoga of silencing the monkey mind that we talked about a few weeks ago, the yoga of letting go of different mental thought patterns and internalized beliefs as we move towards deeper connection with ourself, others, the world around us, and even perhaps a higher power. This specific path, it's said, also guides us towards a strong foundation for good in our day-to-day lives. Good deeds, good thoughts, goodness all around!

Eight Limbs of Yoga

The eight limbs of yoga (and no we don't mean body parts!) are described in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, as a guideline on how to live a more meaningful life. These limbs are essentially steps in which we can physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, live with more purpose. The eight limbs of yoga are yama (abstinences), niyama (observances), asana (yoga postures), pranayama (breath control), pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses), dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (absorption). The first four limbs (yama, niyama, asana, and pranayama) focus on the more external and physical sense of being human, whereas the last four limbs (pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi) focus on moving more towards the spiritual path. Over the next several weeks we will focus on the different limbs in the newsletter. This week it will be the Yamas and Niyamas. Each of these first two paths has five important practices.

The Yamas and Niyamas

The first two limbs, the Yamas and Niyamas, are essentially ethical guidelines. The Yamas focus on things that, according to yoga philosophy, we should avoid (abstinences), while the Niyamas focus on things that we are advised to do (observances). You could think of the two like this- the Yamas are more outwardly focused in terms of how we conduct ourselves throughout this life, whereas the Niyamas are more individually and internally focused.



The Five Yamas are:

1. Ahimsa: nonviolence
2. Satya: truthfulness
3. Asetya: nonstealing
4. Brahmacharya: non-excess, sometimes celibacy
5. Aparigraha: non-greed

The Five Niyamas are:

1. Saucha: cleanliness
2. Santosha: contentment
3. Tapas: self-discipline
4. Svadhyaya: self-study, inner contemplation
5. Ishvara Pranidhana: surrender

Perhaps some of these practices are familiar to you; many of these show up in so many of the various spiritual and religious traditions throughout the world. It's interesting to think about the similarities among different



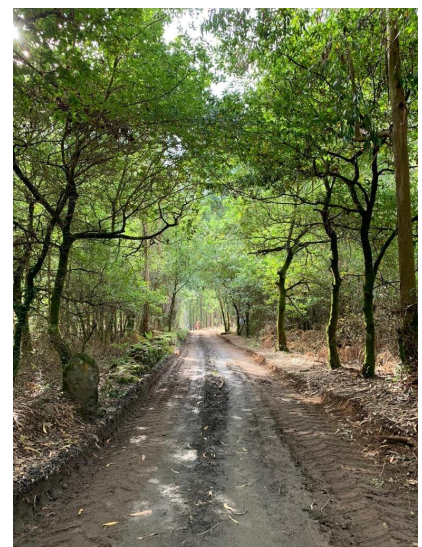
traditions. Think the 10 Commandments or the Five Pillars of Islam.

While Yoga is not a religion, yoga philosophy touches upon a lot of important aspects of how we can show up in this world in ways that bring more meaning and purpose into our lives, whether it's a simple act of taking a shower to clean the physical dirt and sweat off our bodies, sharing when we have more than we need, or just sitting in contemplation with our thoughts in silence. The interpretation of these Yamas and Niyamas varies from person to person; as with everything, finding what works for you is most important. What we do find crucial, though, is that respect and allowing space for others on their journey is incredibly important. We're not all perfect, and sometimes we'll make mistakes. That is the journey. No judgement, no criticizing necessary. This week, if it feels good, choose one or two of the Yamas and Niyamas and see how they play out in your daily life.

EndorphinGirl® News

If you're in the Levi, Finland area in March, come join EndorphinGirl® Barbara and EndorphinDaughter™ Mia for an Intro to Essential Oils Workshop. Click [here](#) for more information, and if anyone you know might be interested, share away! We are so looking forward to hosting this together! And of course, that means EndorphinGirl® Barbara will be heading to Finland in a few short weeks to visit Mia in Levi, the winter wonderland.

The EndorphinFam certainly loves living the yogi life. Yoga is very peaceful and calming and allows us to go deeper into understanding ourselves and the world around us, as we so often talk about. But a big part of this journey is also not taking things so seriously. While there is a touch of seriousness in the blog EndorphinGirl® Barbara recently wrote called **Watch Your Language Yoga Teachers!** 😊, we hope you will enjoy the read, perhaps get a laugh, and feel some of our yoga silliness. Perhaps you can even relate? 😊 Namaste!



EGFam Updates

A quick EGFam update! EndorphinGirl® Barbara is back East after a nice and sunny trip to visit EndorphinSon™ Erik in Arizona. They had some fun, celebrated another birthday, and spent time doing yoga and hiking. EndorphinSon™ Erik is looking forward to going snowboarding in a few weeks for spring break, a nice change of scenery and vacation, before finishing out his final semester of college. Wowza! EndorphinDaughter™ Mia is getting excited for EGMomma to come and visit. It's always nice to have some familiar faces come and say hi when living far away in a different country! She's also been thoroughly enjoying the rapid increase in sunlight these days. What a difference it makes to have the sun around after so much winter darkness!

Stay tuned for more adventures with EndorphinGirl®!