

Consider how we can integrate these concepts into our teaching:-

- Is there a simple, relevant way of describing this concept?
- How could you incorporate this concept within your teaching?

1) Yama: Ahimsa (Non-Harming)

| Translation | 2.35 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "The more considerate one is, the more one stimulates friendly feelings among all in one's presence." |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "Around one who is solidly established in non-violence, hostility disappears" |
| Alistair Shearer | "When we are firmly established in non-violence, all beings around us cease to feel hostility" |
| Swami Satchidananda | "In the presence of one firmly established in non-violence, all hostilities cease" |
| BKS Iyengar | "When non-violence in speech, thought and action is established, one's aggressive nature is relinquished and others abandon hostility in one's presence." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "By abiding in non-violence, one's presence creates an atmosphere in which hostility ceases." |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "On being firmly established in ahimsa, there is abandonment of hostility in his vicinity." |

Ahimsa or Non-violence is often translated as Non-Harming or Respect in word, thought and deed for all beings and things. We have to ask ourselves if there is a reason why this is the first Yama? Is it because it underpins all of the other yamas and niyamas, so that we must ensure at root we do not consciously bring harm to ourselves or others. It is concerned with our fundamental approach to the world around us so that we can bring more peacefulness to ourselves and all others.

2) Yama: Satya (Truthfulness)

| Translation | 2.36 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "One who shows a high degree of right communication will not fail in his actions." |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "For one established in truth, the result fits the action" |
| Alistair Shearer | "When we are established in truthfulness, action accomplishes its desired end." |
| Swami Satchidananda | "To one established in truthfulness, actions and their results become subservient." |
| BKS Iyengar | "When the sadhaka is firmly established in the practice of truth, his words become so potent that whatever he says comes to realization." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "By abiding in truthfulness, one's words and actions are subservient to truth and thus whatever is said or done bears the fruit of that sincerity" |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "On being firmly established in truthfulness, the actions result in fruits, entirely depending on it." |

Satya or Truthfulness is often translated as the expression of truth within all types of communication including words, gestures, writing etc. where we can create an effect within

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the world that is balanced and harmonious if we act from our own sincerity and integrity. If we are established in truth then any outcome will be the right one.

Yet what do we do when it seems better to lie, when if we tell the truth we believe it will cause pain or harm? Here we must act from the point of ahimsa and simply not tell a lie but at the same time avoid lying to cause pleasure. It is a delicate matter but one where we are perhaps drawn to saying less, where each communication is a heart felt expression.

Also if we can speak and act with our truth, where heart and mind are aligned, then we can possess a more peaceful mind one that is not wrapping itself in a complex web of chaos!

3) Yamas: Asteya (non-stealing)

| Translation | 2.37 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "One who is trustworthy, because he does not covert what belongs to others, naturally has everyone's confidence and everything is shared with him, however precious it may be." |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "All the jewels appear for one who is firmly set in honesty" |
| Alistair Shearer | "When we are firmly established in integrity, all riches present themselves freely" |
| Swami Satchidananda | "To one established in non-stealing, all wealth comes" |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "On being firmly established in honesty, all gems present themselves." |
| BKS Iyengar | "When abstention from stealing is firmly established, precious jewels come." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "By abiding in freedom from the desire for other's possessions, that which is precious is revealed, and all that is beneficial is freely given." |

Asteya translates as 'non-stealing' or 'honesty'. It relates to how our thoughts, words and actions will inform the universe of what may easily come to us, if we live from a point of integrity we will receive integrity, from sharing we receive our share, from honesty we receive honesty. This will be true in all aspects of life whether physical, mental/emotional or spiritual – 'riches in every form!

4) Yama: Brahmacharya (continence or moderation)

| Translation | 2.38 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "At its best, moderation produces the highest individual vitality." |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "Vitality appears in one who is firmly set in moderation." |
| Alistair Shearer | "When we are firmly established in chastity, subtle potency is generated" |
| Swami Satchidananda | "By one established in continence, vigor is gained" |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "On being firmly established in brahmacharya, veerya is gained." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "By abiding in behaviour that respects the Divine as omnipresent, one acquires an inspired passion for life." |
| BKS Iyengar | "When the sadhaka is firmly established in continence, knowledge, vigour, valour and energy flow to him." |

Brahmacharya or Moderation is a yama that is often connected to our sexual life but this only one aspect of it. It is concerned with how we utilise our energies whether there is good or poor energy management, this is true of all of our different forms of energy, our emotional,

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sensual, sexual, physical and intellectual. It asks for moderation in all things. When it is related specifically to sex then we could say that psychologically it is asking us not to seek contentment through releasing dissatisfaction. Also physically when we orgasm the sexual fluids, which contain great potency, will mean potential energy will be lost to us.

Ojas, which is contained within our reproductive fluids, is the most refined and potent material in our body. It is formed from our food and is the final substance produced as our food is digested and nutrients are absorbed by the different layers of tissues of muscle, fat, bone etc. It is responsible for our inner strength and immunity and is capable of creating new life. When we lose excessive reproductive fluids, hence ojas, we lose potential energy which can be directed towards spiritual endeavour.

We are being advised to be mindful of how we expend our energies so we may refine our desires and channel our vital forces towards our inner transformation.

5) Yama: Aparighara (non-greed)

| Translation | 2.39 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "One who is not greedy is secure. He has the time to think deeply. His understanding of himself is complete." |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "One who perseveres on the path of noncovetousness gains deep understanding of the meaning of life" |
| Alistair Shearer | "When we are established in nonattachment the nature and purpose of existence is understood." |
| Swami Satchidananda | "When non-greed is confirmed, a thorough illumination of the how and why of one's birth comes." |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "On becoming steady in non-possessiveness, there arises the knowledge of how and from where birth (comes)." |
| BKS Iyengar | "Knowledge of past and future lives unfolds when one is free from greed from possessions." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "Upon the foundation of freedom from greed, one gains insight into the reasons for the cycles of birth and death." |

Aparigraha or Non-greed refers to our desires and how our consciousness is 'clouded' by our need to accumulate possessions, the right friends, status etc. it refers to attachment or grasping of all types, even of spiritual knowledge and mystical states. Yet if we can look inwardly as our reference point for meaning then as we lose the need for the outer world to bolster our ego we can begin to really understand what our life is all about and begin to understand how Kama or desire keeps us within the cycle of death & rebirth. It refers to self-referral rather than object-referral, it is realising we are already everything we need to be!

1) Niyama: Saucha (purity)

| Translation | 2.40 | 2.41 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "When cleanliness is developed it reveals what needs to be constantly maintained and what is eternally clean. What decays is the external. What does not is deep within us." | "In addition one becomes able to reflect on the very deep nature of our individual selves, including the source of perception, without being distracted by the senses and with the freedom from misapprehension accumulated from the past" |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "Purity protects one's body and brings non-physical relationships with others." | "Then purity, clarity, and well-being of the spirit come to flower, as well as concentration, mastery of the eleven |

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| | | sense organs, and perception of the inner being.” |
| Alistair Shearer | “Simplicity destroys identification with the body, and brings freedom from contact with other bodies” | “Purity of mind, cheerfulness, mastery of the senses, one-pointedness, and readiness for Self-Realization follow. |
| Swami Satchidananda | “By purification arises disgust for one’s own body and for contact with other bodies” | “Moreover, one gains purity of sattva, cheerfulness of mind, one-pointedness, mastery over the senses, and fitness for Self-Realization.” |
| BKS Iyengar | “Cleanliness of body and mind develops disinterest in contact with others for self-gratification.” | ‘When the body is cleansed. The mind purified and the senses controlled, joyful awareness needed to realize the inner self, also comes.” |
| Mukunda Stiles | “From purity arises a desire to protect one’s body and a cessation of adverse contact with others.” | “From the purification of one’s essence cheerfulness arises, and with it, one pointed concentration, mastery of the senses, and the capacity for sustaining the vision of True Self.” |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | “From cleanliness there comes an indifference towards body and non-attachment to others.” | “By the practice of mental purity one acquires fitness for cheerfulness, one-pointedness, sense control and vision of the self.” |

Here the two sutras refer to purity within firstly our physical body and secondly within our mind.

2) Niyama: Samtosha (Contentment)

| Translation | 2.42 |
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| TKV Desikachar | “The result of contentment is total happiness.” |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | “Contentment brings supreme happiness” |
| Alistair Shearer | “From contentment, unsurpassed happiness is gained” |
| Swami Satchidananda | “By contentment, supreme joy is gained.” |
| BKS Iyengar | “From contentment and benevolence of consciousness comes supreme happiness.” |
| Mukunda Stiles | “From contentment one gains supreme happiness.” |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | “Unexcelled happiness comes from the practice of contentment.” |

Samtosha or Contentment is a way of looking at all life from a position of equanimity, where we can greet all events and circumstances alike. We have to be able to release our expectations, needs and fears and be willingly be present to everything each moment brings to us. It is a fullness that requires nothing else.

3) Niyama: Tapas (discipline or enthusiasm)

| Translation | 2.43 |
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| TKV Desikachar | “The removal of impurities allows the body to function more efficiently.” |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | “By eliminating impurity, a disciplined life brings perfection and mastery to the body and the eleven sense organs.” |
| Alistair Shearer | “By purification, the body and the senses are perfected.” |

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| Swami Satchidananda | "By austerity, impurities of body and senses are destroyed and occult powers gained." |
| BKS Iyengar | "Self discipline burns away impurities and kindles the sparks of divinity." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "Through the intensity of self-discipline and purification comes the dwindling of all impurities and the perfection of the body and senses." |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "By practising austerities, impurities are destroyed and there comes perfection in the body and sense organs." |

Tapas or Discipline makes the body strong and healthy, and more than this helps bring clarity to the mind and senses.

Tapas can be translated as heat, brilliance or fire where we are reminded that for transformation there must be some friction or burning desire; also we can extend this to the very process of transformation in yoga which requires the burning away of what covers our true nature to show the brilliance beneath. It is a process of uncovering or releasing, a surrendering of all that is not our true nature, rather than adding to. More specifically we can see impurities as being the physical, mental and emotional 'blockages', which we experience and are always registered energetically, that must gradually be removed.

One interesting Ayurvedic translation is that just as all fruit require the sun to ripen, a student of yoga needs to practice, to purify their being on all levels so creating the fire of transformation.

Indeed we can also see tapas as simply the need to practice or exert concentrated energy, because ultimately it is through practice that transformation is made more possible.

4) Niyama: Svadhyaya (Self or Spiritual Study)

| Translation | Bk 2 v44 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "Study, when it is developed to the highest degree, brings one close to higher forces that promote understanding of the most complex." |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "Union with the chosen divinity comes from the study of self through the sacred texts" |
| Alistair Shearer | "Refinement brings communion with the desired celestial being.." |
| Swami Satchidananda | "By study of spiritual books comes communion with one's chosen deity." |
| BKS Iyengar | "Self-study leads towards the realization of God or communion with one's desired deity." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "From self-study comes communion with one's personal chosen deity" |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "By self-observation, union with the desired deity is brought about." |

Svadhyaya or Spiritual Study is more particularly translated as study leading to self-knowledge with special reference to spiritual texts. We can learn a great deal about ourselves through studying the words of those who previously trodden the path we follow as this will inspire us bringing us into a new relationship with the ourselves and the world. We must also remember that within the Yogic tradition many texts were considered to be Sruti or divinely revealed within deep contemplation and so by reading these sacred words we are brought closer to our concept of the Divine.

We can also devote time to being more self-aware, lovingly noticing our own patterns, although generally speaking in the Sutras we are asked to focus more upon creating more expansive, inclusive patterns through practice rather than spending time in psychological enquiry where we can be caught up in the mind's stories.

Another important facet of svadhyaya is coming to know what tendencies we have and choosing the practices that suit us best.

5) Niyama: Isvara Pranidhanam (highest ideal or surrender to God)

| Translation | Bk 2 v45 |
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| TKV Desikachar | "Reverence to God promotes the ability to completely understand any object of choice." |
| Bernard Bouanchaud | "Contemplation and its powers are attained through worship of God" |
| Alistair Shearer | "From surrender to the Lord, the state of samadhi is perfected." |
| Swami Satchidananda | "By total surrender to God, samadhi is attained." |
| BKS Iyengar | "Surrender to God brings perfection in Samadhi." |
| Mukunda Stiles | "From devotion to the Lord one is given perfect absorption into Spirit." |
| Swami Satyananda Saraswati | "Success in trance comes by complete surrender to God." |

Ishvara Pranidhana is often translated as 'Devotion to that which we consider higher than ourselves'. Here we are being asked to utilise our emotional energies by directing them to a higher force so we may be held within its hands as an act of surrendering. By doing this we are loosening the ties of our ego led desires and can therefore move into a state beyond the mind where we surrender to 'thy will'. Significantly it will help create faith or trust which will motivate us and allow us to more deeply let go.

For many of us it may seem difficult to act with devotion or surrender since these concepts seem very alien within a secular society but within the Sutras we are always given the freedom to choose our own most appropriate focus, we are simply asked to expend and direct the energy of the heart.

Indeed it may be more helpful to think in terms of establishing a personal 'ishta' or ideal which can help channel our energies towards our goal. This can be quite simple such as 'wanting to know what more there is' or 'fulfilling your potential' or can be more expansive such as 'to serve all' or 'become self-realised'. It must be heartfelt so our emotions can help us to channel our energies and give us the focus and motivation to practice. And we must be flexible because over time our ishta will always change, becoming increasingly expansive.

Indeed we can note that all practitioners of yoga will eventually come to this niyama because as our consciousness clears more love and unity is experienced and a sense of a greater intelligence is encountered.

