

## Taking Yoga Off the Mat and Into Life™

The guiding principles that make your yoga practice feel so personal, intimate and rewarding can have a similar impact in the rest of your life. *Taking Yoga Off the Mat and Into Life™* will train you how to apply the yoga principles from class (as student and teacher) so that you can empower, motivate, support and encourage individuals outside the yoga studio.

### ~ *Intention of the Yoga Supplement* ~

The intention of this yoga supplement is to draw upon your experience with yoga (as student and teacher) to help you intuitively connect with the coaching lessons that follow in the workbook. To help you understand coaching, we need only expose the parallels of yoga. Initially, you will be using this document as a transition point to bridge what you know about yoga to help you better understand coaching. Over time, this document will serve as a reference point to help you integrate the lessons from the coaching workbook back into your yoga practice.

### ~ *Foundational Similarities* ~

*Taking Yoga Off the Mat and Into Life™* will make it possible to go deeper in your practice because yoga and coaching are rooted in the same foundation, perspective and approach. Think about your experience with yoga. As you enter the studio and take your mat, what do you expect from the experience?

## *Action Challenges*

- ♦ On a piece of paper, describe the environment and attitude in your yoga class. What do you appreciate about the instructor? What is the role of the student? Is the experience self-directed or is someone in charge?
- ♦ On the same piece of paper, write down what it means to empower someone (kids, co-workers or partner) to solve their own challenges vs. telling them what to do. What is the experience like for the “client?”
- ♦ How are these answers similar? What do your answers reveal about your beliefs that drive your behaviors?

Keep these responses with you and reference them throughout the course. There are times when it will be helpful and appropriate for you to share them with the class.

The yoga teacher and yoga client share the same relationship as the coach and coaching client. As you find overlap in the mindset and techniques between yoga and coaching, you will also find new ways to incorporate what you learn in the Core Coaching Workbook back into your yoga practice to create a more powerful experience.

## *~ Taking your Seat as Teacher (Yoga Teacher & Coach) ~*

The role of the yoga instructor is to guide others through their practice. Yoga teachers don't do the work for the client. Instead, they make it possible for them to do the work themselves. Likewise, the role of the coach is to create an environment for the client to work toward success.

We don't take responsibility for the results. Our responsibility is to authentically support the client with a servant's heart.

***When you take your seat as teacher (whether that is a yoga teacher or a coach), you put the client's experience above all else and support them through that experience. You are not performing.***

To be an effective teacher (yoga teacher or coach) you must get out of your head and into the moment. Doing this requires being authentic and staying present. This is easy to say, but difficult to do. Imagine a client who enters a class feeling insecure about their body, posture or ability to fit into class. Until they surrender these thoughts, they will be unable to fully experience the class. Similarly, yoga teachers who are focused on their own performance or adopt a teaching style unnatural for them will be unable to fully engage with their class.

***When our thoughts are on ourselves, we are not being present with others. We are not being authentic and this prevents us from being able to create a space for our clients.***

When we ***Take Yoga Off the Mat***, we choose to adopt the same mentality as the yoga teacher when we interact with others outside the studio. When we are present, we shift our focus to the client. When we are authentic, we connect with our client. And when we have a servant's heart, we are able to hold the space for our client to work through challenges. This is the mentality of a coach. It is easy to understand, but sometimes hard to do.

## ~ *Being Present / Being Authentic* ~

The materials and the exercises in the workbook will help you develop your ability to take your seat as teacher, be authentic, be present and hold space for the client. Naturally, much of what is learned can be applied inside the studio as well.

### *Action Challenges*

- ♦ **On the Mat:** Write down what it means to get out of your head and “be present.” What happens in yoga class when you are not present (as teacher/student)?
- ♦ **Off the Mat:** Describe a situation inside or outside the studio when someone was not authentic. How did that impede your ability to connect with them?
- ♦ **Off the Mat:** What does it mean to have a servant’s heart?

## ~ *Guiding the Client’s Journey* ~

Yoga teachers guide us through our practice. Sometimes, at the beginning of a yoga class, a teacher may ask participants to set an intention. Although the instructor determines the poses and sets the order in which the class is conducted, the client is self-determined. The client is involved on a personal level and is empowered to fulfill that intention. It is the same class for everyone, but everyone has a different experience. When we “Take Yoga Off the Mat and Into Life™,” we see opportunities to be a guide to others.

## ~ *Intentions and Samskaras* ~

Our thoughts are very powerful. Where the mind goes the body goes.

*In yoga we often teach:*

~ *Our thoughts become our words.*

~ *Our words become our actions.*

~ *Our actions become our samskaras / habits & patterns.*

~ *Our habits become our way of being.*

When we set an intention we are flexing our mental muscle, clarifying our focus. In yoga, we may set an intention at the beginning of class because the teacher asked us to do so. Or, we have come to class with an intention (a purpose) already in our mind. When we set an intention, we uncover our true desires and create purpose for our actions. What do I want from this class (quiet my mind, improve flexibility, test my boundaries, treat my body with tenderness, let thoughts drift through my mind like leaves upon a river ...)? How are my actions taking me closer to my purpose? In many ways, every pose within the yoga class is a smaller example of setting an intention. We hold our focus and give purpose to our body and breathe as we move through each pose.

Outside the studio, coaches use the same technique for the same reason. Coaches ask powerful questions to help clients clarify their intention or “set their focus.” Trained coaches use conversation tools to help clients discover their true thoughts, beliefs and what it is they truly want. From there, coaches guide the client to fulfill their intention. The role in both disciplines (yoga and coaching) is to guide clients through their journey.

**On the mat**, we develop our ability to focus the mind as we move through our practice (yoga teachers guiding clients).

**Off the mat**, we develop our ability to help clients clarify intention, determine direction and give purpose to action (coaches guiding clients).

*As a reminder, the role of the teacher is to create an environment for the client to work toward success as defined by the client's intention. Neither yoga teachers nor coaches do the work for the client. They make it possible for them to do the work themselves.*

### *Action Challenges*

- ♦ **On the Mat:** What do you want to get out of this yoga class today?
- ♦ **Off the Mat and Into Life:** What is your intention in taking this course?
- ♦ **Off the Mat and Into Life:** How and when might you use similar questions outside the studio to help others clarify their intentions/agenda?

### *~ Awareness ~*

Intention and Awareness are cornerstones in creating lasting change. In order to grow, we need to let go of old patterns, ways of being, thinking, etc. In order to let go of these blocks, we need to have awareness. Awareness is the first step. Awareness creates the opportunity for change.

And we may also say that awareness is the last step. Awareness makes it possible to acknowledge successful change.

**On the mat**, yoga teachers bring awareness through our breath, balance and body position. Before an adjustment can occur, the client must first become aware of the difference between where they are and where they want to be. Likewise, the client must be able to recognize (be aware) when they are successful. In the yoga studio, as a client works toward a specific pose, the instructor brings awareness if they are in/out of alignment.

As yoga teachers and coaches, we are trained in methods and techniques that help our clients gain awareness. Through this course, you will develop the ability to use *coaching skills* to help others see honestly where they are.

~ *Satya = Truth* ~

Satya teaches us to constantly look for what we are not seeing or expose ourselves to different view points or create a new lense. Like yoga teachers, coaches help clients meet the moment fully and create a willingness to be raw, instead of avoiding the truth by running away or building barriers.

**Off the mat**, coaches help clients gain awareness between their intention and reality (and recognize when there is alignment). Coaches use conversation techniques to figuratively mirror back what they see and hear. You will learn how to present questions and reframe a response to help your client gain awareness between where they are and where they want to be. As before, some of these techniques can be weaved back into your yoga practice.

**On the mat**, yoga teachers help clients recognize when they are out of alignment with their postures.

**Off the mat**, coaches rely on conversation techniques to help clients gain awareness when they have deviated from their path (or are successfully aligned).

### *Action Challenges*

- ♦ **On the Mat:** How do yoga instructors create awareness when a yoga client is out of alignment? What questions can they ask?
- ♦ **Off the Mat and Into Life:** What happens when our beliefs and actions are out of alignment? What questions help us recognize when we are out of alignment in our lives?

### *~ The Client's Role in Alignment ~*

In both yoga and coaching, training develops our ability to help clients clarify their intentions and hold the space that makes a journey possible. As guides, we help clients stay on course by creating awareness.

***When clients realize they are out of alignment (that an adjustment or correction is necessary) it is their responsibility to determine what happens next.***

In both disciplines, the work must be done by the client. In order for that to happen, the teacher must compassionately hold a space where clients feel safe to challenge themselves, move through difficulty, struggle and grow. Nagging and pointing out mistakes have no place here.



~ *Extending Outward from your Core* ~

**On the mat**, when we strive toward physical alignment, we extend out. We first center ourselves and then slowly expand outward (reaching, extending or lifting). Our alignment at the core makes our growth and

expansion possible. When we are out of alignment at our core, we cannot move deeper in our postures. Yoga is an inside out process that affects our energetic bodies, emotional bodies and physical bodies. From the chakra system to correlated poses, we align at our core and expand. As we expand, our yoga teachers help us see opportunities to adjust and make corrections so that we remain in alignment.

When we take yoga **off the mat**, we support others as they work from their core and expand and grow. As the client struggles, coaches support them without judgment or criticism. Just as yoga teachers help the student begin at their core, coaches understand how to help clients tap into their core beliefs and intuition so they may grow. As the client expands, grows and develops, the coach helps the client stay “in alignment” and creates a space for that development to be possible.

~ *Acceptance & Compassion* ~

Yoga teachers help us start from where we are and grow from there. We say that yoga is a practice because it is not about perfection, it is about growth. Yoga teaches us to keep moving forward, one breath, one posture at a time. However, growth is sometimes one step forward and two steps back. Yoga teaches us to have compassion with ourselves during the process.

**On the mat**, we may get into a posture and fall out. That's okay. It is not that we need to sit back and focus on all the ways we went wrong and all the obstacles that we may have to overcome. Instead, we get back into alignment, keep breathing and keep moving. The posture will unfold. Teachers make it possible for clients to take the journey at their own pace. When we help our clients let go of outcomes and open themselves to new possibilities, they are more likely to challenge themselves. In the studio, we appreciate yoga teachers who create an environment where we feel encouraged to challenge ourselves, step outside of our comfort zone and to sometimes fail.

**Off the Mat and into Life**, the role of the coach is to help facilitate growth (or change) in our clients. When we adopt the yoga teacher mindset in our interpersonal relationships, we help clients see opportunities and open themselves to possibilities. The coaching workbook will train you how to use conversation techniques to compassionately support others as they strive toward growth. Sometimes clients are frustrated by their own limitations. Just as in yoga, we must accept where we are and have compassion with the process of growth.

### *Action Challenges*

- ◆ **On the Mat:** How does the instructor create an environment where it is comfortable for the client to try a pose and fail?
- ◆ **Off the Mat and Into Life:** Then next time you find yourself giving advice or making a correction, ask yourself, “Am I building confidence or competence?”
- ◆ Describe a time when someone helped you build confidence and competence. Did you struggle?

### *~ Intuition & Alignment ~*

**On the Mat**, we teach alignment in our physical bodies. When we are physically aligned in a posture, breath flows.

**Off the Mat**, when we are living in true alignment, life flows.

As teachers, we help our clients become more equipped to recognize when they are truly aligned. When our clients experience true alignment, they become more intuitive. When we Take Yoga Off the Mat and into Life™, we encourage people in our lives (clients, co-workers, friends, family) to intuitively make adjustments to bring themselves back into alignment. As a coach, we understand how to help others intuitively solve their own challenges that are hindering their success.

### *~ Summary of Yoga Supplement ~*

Yoga is literally translated as “the settling of the mind into stillness” so that you can focus on your intuition. The same ideals that help you go deeper in your yoga practice can be used to empower, motivate, support and encourage individuals outside the yoga studio. Taking Yoga Off the Mat and Into Life™ draws upon your existing yoga knowledge and provides additional training so that you can apply it to a new arena. These new skills and mindset can be used to help others tap into their own intuition, overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.

***You may call upon your newly developed coaching abilities during interactions with co-workers, clients, family members or friends or you may decide to pursue a stand-alone career as a coach. Naturally, your newly developed skills can also be applied to your yoga practice***