

Yoga2Life

Introductory Supplement

Yoga2Life is a coach training program for the yoga community. It is designed to develop your ability to help others tap into their intuition, overcome obstacles and strive toward the change they see for themselves. Initially, you will use this document to bridge what you know about yoga (as a student or as a teacher) to help you better understand coaching. Over time, this document will serve as a reference point to help you incorporate the lessons from coaching back into your yoga practice.

This simple introduction is filled with ideas and strategies that you can immediately incorporate. We want to provide a taste of what our training can offer and its impact on your personal and professional life. For those that truly want to develop their capabilities, Coach Training Alliance offers *Yoga2Life - Core Coaching for Effective Change*. This course is appropriate for yoga professionals and individuals who want to:

- Expand your career - become a Coach
- Advance Teacher training - become a better instructor
- Develop facilitation - individuals and groups
- Work through blocks and challenges if you are feeling stuck

Learn more about this training and certification for the yoga community at www.coachtrainingalliance.com/programs/yoga

LESSON 1 ~ Foundational Similarities ~

Start with what you know and what is familiar. Think about your yoga practice, your attitude and the attitude of the instructor, the environment and your expectations. *Yoga2Life* shares the same foundation as your yoga practice. It is rooted in the same principles, attitudes and expectations. Both yoga and coaching begin with a shared view about growth, struggle and change.

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 and your attitude toward leadership and support?***

LESSON 2 ~ Taking your Seat as Teacher

Yoga2Life requires a willingness to adopt the same mentality as the yoga teacher when we interact with people outside the studio. When you “Take your Seat as Teacher” we simply mean that you are at choice to be supportive to a specific individual and that they are willing to accept your support as they work through challenges and strive toward growth. For our purposes, we will refer to this relationship as “the coach” and the people you support as the “coaching client.”

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 their clients to do the work. Similarly, the role of the coach is to create an environment for the client to work toward success.

When we take our seat as a teacher (as a yoga instructor or as a coach), we let go of our responsibility for results. With this understanding, our role is to authentically support our client with a servant's heart as they strive toward their goals.

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.

LESSON 3 ~ Being Present ~

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 yoga class feeling insecure about their body, their ability to perform a specific posture or about fitting into the 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 connect and 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 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.

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)?

Yoga2Life: Describe a situation outside the studio when someone was not authentic. How did that impede your ability to connect with them? How did that impact your relationship?

On the Mat: What does it mean to have a servant’s heart?

Yoga2Life: Describe a close friend and confidant. What about their attitude makes it possible for you to be honest? Practice being present in your conversations at work, with relatives or with a partner.

Want to go deeper in your practice? The certification course will develop your ability to take your seat as teacher. Learn how to prepare your mind and focus on your clients, practice skills that help you authentically connect with your clients, and practice holding space for your clients (in and out of the studio). www.coachtrainingalliance.com/programs/yoga

LESSON 4 ~ 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. When we set an intention, we are involved on a personal level and we are empowered to fulfill that intention. **Yoga2Life** helps us see

opportunities to be a guide to others.... but where are we guiding them?
How can you help your clients clarify their intention?

~ *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 come to class with an intention (a purpose) already in our mind.

What do I want from this class?

Why am I here today? - to quiet my mind, improve flexibility, test my boundaries, treat my body with tenderness...

How are my actions taking me closer to my purpose?

Yoga helps us set an intention which creates purpose for our actions. Outside the studio, you can 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 techniques to help clients discover their true thoughts, beliefs and desires.

Once a client has clarity on their intention, it is the role of the teacher (yoga instructor or coach) 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).

Yoga2Life - 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 simply hold the space and 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?

Yoga2Life: What is your intention in reading this workbook?

Yoga2Life: Coaches know when and how to ask questions to help their clients gain clarity. (Pick a question from the samples below or try one of your own.)

What do you want to do about that?

What one change would make the biggest positive difference?

What would be helpful to focus on right now?

Want to go deeper in your practice? The certification training course will develop your ability to formulate powerful questions: Probing, Leading, Strategic, Challenging, Inquiry and frame responses.

LESSON 4 ~ 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.

Satya (Truth) teaches us to constantly look for what we are not seeing or expose ourselves to different points of view. When we have an “aha” moment, it is often rooted in our ability to see something familiar, but with a new perspective or understanding.

On the mat - As a client works toward a specific pose, the instructor brings awareness if they are in/out of alignment. They 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.

Yoga2Life - Coaches help clients gain awareness between their intention and reality (so the client may recognize when there is / is not alignment). You may use conversation techniques to figuratively mirror back what you see and hear. Coaches ask questions and reframe responses to help clients gain awareness between where they are and where they want to be. 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.

Most important, we must support our clients to recognize (be aware) when they are successful.

Awareness is the last step. Awareness makes it possible to acknowledge successful change.

Action Challenges

On the Mat:

How do yoga instructors create awareness when a client is out of alignment?

What questions can they ask what tools can they use?

Yoga2Life:

What happens when our beliefs and our actions are out of alignment?

What questions or reframing techniques do you use to help others see honestly where they are?

What questions help us recognize when we are out of alignment in our lives? Are they welcomed?

***LESSON 5 ~ Extending Outward from your Core ~
The Client's Role***

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, our role is to 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.

On the mat - As we strive toward growth, 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 out. As we expand,

our yoga teachers help us see opportunities to adjust and make corrections so that we remain in alignment.

Yoga2Life - Coaches support their clients without judgment or criticism. When you support others, your role is to help the client stay “in alignment” and create a space for development to be possible.

LESSON 6~ Acceptance & Compassion ~

We say that yoga is a practice because it is not about perfection, it is about growth. Yoga teachers help us start from where we are and grow from there. However, growth is sometimes one step forward and two steps back. Yoga teaches us to have compassion with ourselves during the process. Supporting others as they struggle with change, we must adopt a similar mindset.

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. Teachers make it possible for clients to take the journey at their own pace. 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.

Yoga2Life - The role of the coach is to help facilitate growth (or change) in our clients. When we adopt this mindset in our interpersonal relationships, we help others see opportunities and open themselves to possibilities. Sometimes clients are frustrated by their own limitations. Just as in yoga, we must accept where we are with honesty and compassion as we move through the process of growth.

Action Challenges

On the Mat: How does the instructor create an environment where it is comfortable for you to try a pose and to sometimes fail?

Yoga2Life: Describe a time when someone helped you build confidence and competence. Did you struggle? What did they do to support you through the struggle? Then next time you find yourself giving advice, ask yourself, Am I building confidence or competence? Am I being a hero? Why? How might I best support their growth?

LESSON 7~ Intuition & Alignment ~

Yoga helps us become more intuitive beings. Instructors help us gain awareness about physical alignment. With practice, we become more equipped to recognize when we are truly aligned. When we take **Yoga2Life**, we start to intuitively make adjustments to bring ourselves back into alignment. Coaches help clients (co-workers, friends, family members) gain awareness and make adjustments. With practice, the coach and their clients develop the ability to intuitively make corrections and live truly aligned. **Yoga2Life** is about supporting others as they solve their own challenges, remove blocks, create opportunities and strive toward growth.

Action Challenges

On the Mat: How did teacher-training impact your ability to find alignment? What tools do you use in your personal yoga practice to reach alignment?

Yoga2Life: When have you made changes in your personal life to live more aligned with your intentions? What preceded that moment? How did you know you made the right changes?

~ *Summary of Introduction Workbook* ~

With a servant's heart, we make ourselves available to compassionately support others. With training, we develop the ability to confidently and competently help others tap into intuition, overcome obstacles and strive toward growth. We hope this introductory workbook has made clear the parallels between yoga and coaching. For those who want to go deeper in your practice and develop your capabilities as a Yoga Coach, visit www.coachtrainingalliance.com/programs/yoga for more information about the certification course, *Yoga2Life - Core Coaching for Effective Change*.

Please send comments or inquiries about *Yoga2Life*, to Paula@CoachTrainingAlliance.com