

Philosophy Assignment

Reading, Yoga Sutra's of Patanjali, 2.35

"As a yogi becomes firmly grounded in non-injury (ahimsa), other people who come near will naturally lose any feeling of hostility."

This sutra raised a huge importance. As students we look up to our teachers and rarely question if what we are being taught is right or wrong. We expect our teachers to transfer accurate information according to the subjects they have studied or continuously study in, we (students) expect the practice given is also a practice performed before hand by our teachers to ensure safety and real understanding.

It is our duty as we transform into Yogi's and Yogini's to only teach topics we are educated on; to teach a practice that we do ourselves outside of the studio. This will allow us to understand; which sensations may arise, how to enter and exit asanas safely, how we can breathe through difficult moments and ultimately understand the safest way to offer a practice that will not hurt our students in the present moment or in the future. It is also our responsibility to try different variations of movement and explanations through our own practice incase our students are unable to follow.

This sutra has a great responsibility in everyday life. It teaches how to be respectful, kind and honest with ourselves. If we cannot be truthful, honest, compassionate and respectful we fail in the practice of ahimsa not only towards ourselves but towards others. To be firmly grounded you often need to be balanced, truthful, mindful and aware. If you act without these four main things, you cannot fully see whether you're causing harm or injury towards others or yourself.

Through the class of philosophy and a couple of documentaries, I understand that people have the right to feel anyway they choose. Often the way people feel towards a situation isn't something we can change, but it is something we can try to understand. Agree to disagree, refrain from harming someone verbally, physically or emotionally just to prove your point, rather step away breathe and try to understand other people's point of view and if after you feel you cannot see eye to eye, simply distance yourself and walk away. Easier said than done, although with a lot of practice and awareness you so on realize what is worth taking a stance for and what is not.

This sutra has recently been changing my practice greatly from when I first started. I often shut out the ego when she presents herself my way through my yoga practice. I allow my body to build strength and open on her own time. I will often adjust myself when I feel uncomfortable in my body while hanging out in an asana rather than prove a point to absolutely no one in the room that I too can be extremely flexible. Through this process I find I am being truthful to my body and it teaches me to be patient which is something I have always struggled with.

This sutra will allow me to welcome students into a sacred space. A space of non-judgement, love, kindness, compassion, trust, patience and community. I want this sutra to remind me how important it is to remain a student even after I have become a teacher.

Reading, Yoga Sutra's of Patanjali, 2.34

“Actions arising out of such negative thoughts are performed directly by oneself, caused to be done through others, or approved of when done by others. All of these may be preceded by, or performed through anger, greed or delusion, and can be mild, moderate or intense in nature. To remind oneself that these negative thoughts and actions are the causes of unending misery and ignorance is the contrary thought, or principle in the opposite direction that was recommended in the previous sutra.”

This sutra is a reminder that if we allow the ego, anger, hatred and delusion to take over our minds we stumble into our own prison of negativity instead of enlightenment. As we feed our minds with unkind thoughts, we will also reflect that to the outside world. It is a recipe for unending misery and negativity. It is important to remind ourselves in these moments in time to take a step back, breathe and become the witness in the here and now and ask ourselves, “If I engage into these thoughts or actions what good will come out of it?” Acknowledging, becoming aware and witnessing the entire situation will be a useful tool of insight that will lead you to enlightenment and bliss.

This sutra had become a part of my daily life over a year ago, in times of stressful or unfair situations, I would bite my tongue, take a couple of inhales and ask myself if I said or did something what would be the outcome? Would it make me feel better? How would I feel if I was on the other side of the situation? When I first started to practice this sutra it was very difficult for me, it was as if my ego was being stomped upon. Now, this practice does come easier although there are still moments I feel like my ego is ready to lash out in challenging situation. The most important part in these difficult situations is recognizing the ego and shutting it off as best as possible. I've noticed in the moment of tough situations you may feel you want to yell or do something irrational but it's usually moments after you do that, that the guilt of letting yourself stoop as low as someone else makes you feel even worse about yourself than simply walking away or keeping your comments to yourself. So, I try to stay as truthful to myself as possible. I know my nature is to be kind, happy, compassionate and loving, so I try to stay as close to my natural self as possible in any situation. Anytime I drive away from those qualities, I feel lost and unbalanced.

In tough situations, I've noticed recently, that I often take a couple of long inhales and exhales and either agree with what a person is saying or simply walk away. Why get myself agitated over something that really isn't important in my life. Except for when I feel someone is truly out of line I will calmly state my argument with respect and if after I have said what I needed to say and the situation remains the same, I simply walk away because the person is not willing to understand or compromise the way they are thinking.

I've never experienced difficult people in my yoga practice, although if I was teaching my method of simply walking away wouldn't be the smartest way to deal with challenging situations. In that situation, I would likely try my hardest to understand why the person is so upset, apologize to them and reflect on the situation and the feedback. Of course, unless the person was way out of line, I would respectfully and kindly suggest to them maybe I wasn't a good fit to be their yoga instructor.