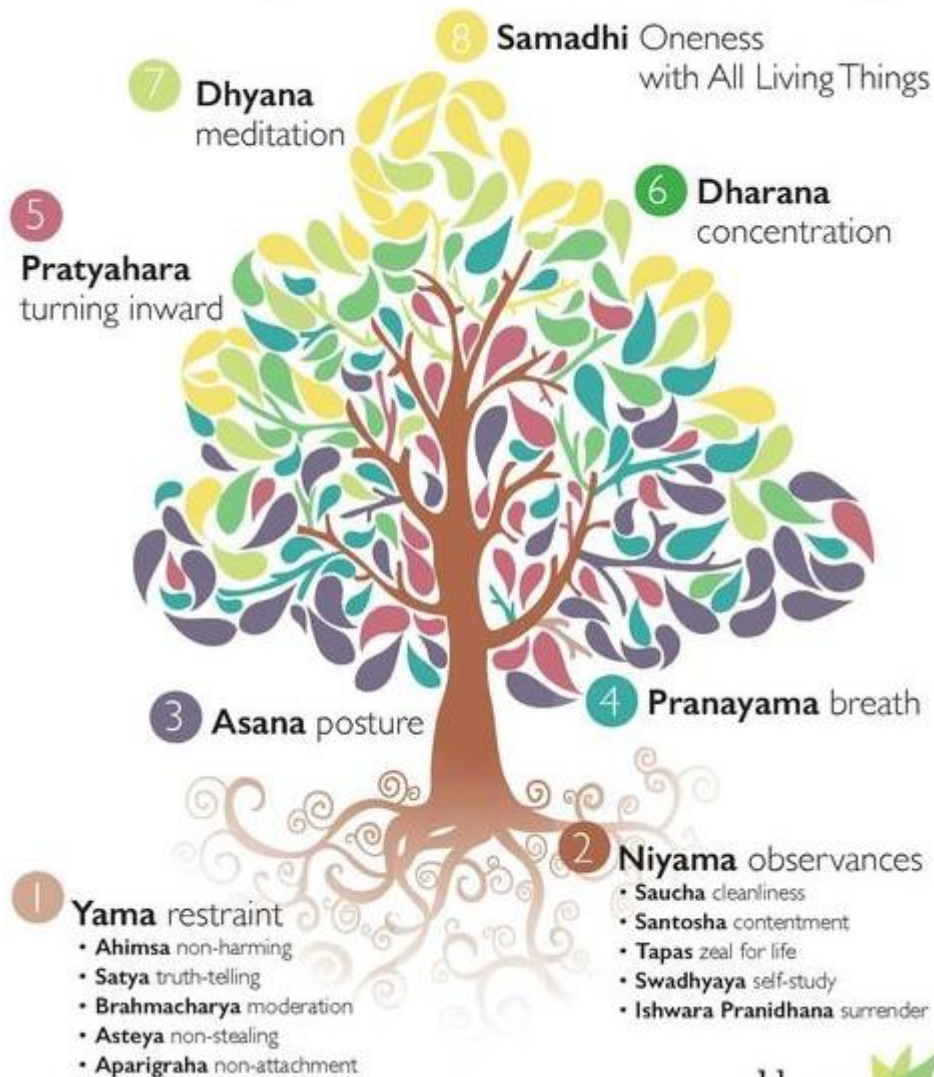


# The Eight-Limbs of Yoga



## Patanjali Yoga Sutras Yamas and Niyamas

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# THE YAMAS

The attitude we have towards things and others outside ourselves

## Satya

Means to speak the truth. However we should avoid doing so when the truth has negative consequences for someone else.

"If you have nothing nice to say, say nothing at all"

## Brahmacarya

"Brahma" means truth, "car" means to move. Therefore brahmacharya is the movement towards the truth. As we make our way towards the goal of finding truth (ourselves), we should take care in all our actions: being mindful in what you do and how you do it..

## Ahimsa

"Himsa" means injustice or cruelty. The prefix "a" is used to imply an absence. Ahimsa is the kindness, friendliness and thoughtful consideration you have of other people and things.

## Asteya

"Steal" means to steal. Asteya is the opposite - meaning not to take anything that does not belong to us. Also not to take advantage of others.

## Aparigraha

'Parigraha' means to take or to seize. Aparigraha, then, is to take only what is necessary, and not to take advantage of a situation.

## SAUCHA ~ PURITY

In striving for purity in our environments, bodies, and minds, we find ourselves closer to what matters, to the simple pleasures of life and a basic connection to our divine nature. Ultimately, we disidentify with the material. To see that pure spirit is Truth, the physical is other.

## SANTOSA ~ CONTENTMENT

In practicing Santosha, we acknowledge that our reaction to conditions is in our control. This sutra encourages us to understand that peace is a state of mind, not the result of acquisitions or achievements. Foster the ability to feel contentment in all situations and you will be free.

## TAPAS ~ SELF-DISCIPLINE

The word 'tapas' comes from the root 'to burn' and the interpretation includes the idea that hard work will 'burn off' impurity. The sense of 'fighting' is not part of Tapas, but commitment and consistency are key, with an attitude of enthusiasm for challenge and perseverance.

## ISHVARA PRANIDHANA ~ SURRENDER

'Ishvara' can be defined as 'Lord' but this niyama is not tied to any particular religion-only the spiritual idea of the Divine. Do your best, and then give up all attachment to the outcome. Surrender preconceptions. Devote yourself to the present.

## SVADHYAYA ~ SELF-STUDY

Svadyaya can be practiced during almost every waking moment-it is being present with yourself, not judging but discovering, with every thought, action and reaction, another part of your true Self. Through Svadyaya, we learn that looking inside ourselves leads to the Divine.