

# INTERNATIONAL YOGA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (N.Z.) INCORPORATED CODE OF ETHICS

## Background

### 1. Definitions

#### 1.1 Ethics

The word “ethics” is used in this Code of Ethics (“Code”) to mean a system of principles and rules of conduct.

#### 1.2 Ethics in Yoga as Practised by the International Yoga Teachers’ Association (N.Z.) Incorporated (the ‘IYTA’)

Yoga is founded on ethical principles. These were set out by the yogi Patanjali in about 250 BC. Patanjali’s system of instruction is divided into eight limbs, the first two limbs of which are the ethical practices of Yama and Niyama.

YAMA or RESTRAINTS/SOCIAL CONDUCT		NIYAMA or VIRTUES/OBSERVANCES	
AHIMSA	Living without violence	SAUCHA	Living with a pureness of heart
SATYA	Living without lying	SANTOSA	Living with contentment
ASTEYA	Living without stealing	TAPAS	Living within our means
BRAMACHARYA	Living without emotional harm to others	SWADHYAYA	Living with self reflection
APARIGRAHA	Living without greed	ISVARA PRANIDHANA	Living with an appreciation of a higher being

### 2. Purpose of Code of Ethics

**2.1** The purpose of this Code is to ensure that all teaching members of IYTA and IYTA teacher trainees (“Teachers”) maintain a high degree of professionalism and ethical behaviour and, through this approach, support the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of their students.

**2.2** The Code is a summary of acceptable ethical and professional values and behaviours, standards of conduct and attitudes by which Teachers agree to conduct the teaching and business of yoga, and is based on Patanjali’s Yama and Niyama.

### Acceptance of the Code by Teachers

**1.1** Teachers shall read and agree to abide by the following Code, as a requirement of their teaching membership of IYTA.

**1.2** Teachers shall also read, and be familiar with, the Vision, Mission and Values of IYTA (also known as Yoga Aotearoa) set out in the Appendix.

# **The Code**

## **1. Relationship with Students of Yoga**

Teachers shall:

**1.1** Treat all students equally, equitably, sensitively and with goodwill, regardless of the students' gender, age, ethnic origin, physical limitations, religion, political persuasion or reasons for attending class(es).

**1.2** Have the needs of their students as the focus of their teaching. The programmes taught shall be suitable for the age, experience and ability of the students. Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety of their students during their classes, within the limits of their control.

**1.3** Encourage and guide students to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and practice.

**1.4** Be responsible for setting and monitoring professional boundaries in keeping professional relationships with their students. All physical contact in classes must be appropriate and carried out with the student's consent.

**1.5** Honour the trust placed in them by students and be transparent about fees, number of classes and methods of payment. Teachers shall always be professional and display high standards of behaviour while working as a yoga teacher.

**1.6** Share their understanding of the spiritual element of yoga with their students. This may be interpreted differently by Teachers.

**1.7** Recognise their own limitations and, where appropriate, refer students to seek alternative professional instruction, advice, treatment, or direction.

**1.9** Teach in a manner which is in keeping with the basic tenets of yoga, as set out in Patanjali's eight limbs.

**1.10** Treat as confidential any personal information shared with them by a student.

## **2. Relationship with Society and Potential Yoga Students**

Teachers shall:

**2.1** Present any advertising in newspapers, or on the internet, radio or television, in an accurate and professional manner.

**2.2** Accurately reflect any affiliation/ accreditation they have with any organisation.

**2.3** Follow all local government and national laws that pertain to their yoga teaching and business.

2.4. Respect Mother Earth (Gaia) and be conscious of the effect on the environment of their actions.

### 3. Relationship with Colleagues and IYTA

Teachers shall:

3.1 Confine their teaching to areas of yoga and/or other disciplines in which they have studied, practised and trained.

3.2 Honour and respect their yoga colleagues at all times.

3.3 Hold either an IYTA Teaching Diploma, or another recognised teaching qualification (as approved by the National Executive Council of the IYTA ('the **Executive**').

3.4 Maintain ongoing professional development as per the current rules of IYTA.

### Breaches of the Code

1.1 The Code encourages the development of an open and positive attitude to yoga in New Zealand.

1.2 The Executive reserves the right to investigate and, if deemed necessary, suspend a Teacher who is not teaching by the rules and principles set out in the current version of the Code.

1.3 When a Teacher seeks financial advantage, or attracts negative publicity to yoga or IYTA, he/she will be investigated and, if deemed necessary, suspended by the Executive.



*“Inspiring Unity through  
Yoga”*



## **APPENDIX –VISION MISSION AND VALUES OF IYTA-YOGA AOTEAROA**

### **VISION**

Our vision is to inspire unity through yoga.

### **MISSION**

We seek to support and encourage all who wish to travel the yogic journey.

- We aim to foster connectedness through being inclusive.
- We recognise that our purpose is to provide a transformative path to health, well-being and Oneness.
- We undertake to abide by a Code of Ethics which is founded on principles of common ground and our core values.

We aim to:

- Provide members with a sense of belonging;
- Support the integration of yoga into everyday living;
- Encourage members who aspire to the self-realising purpose of yoga;
- Provide quality, accessible, broad yoga teacher education courses;
- Reach out to the community: local, national and international; and
- Expand our organisation.

How we will achieve these aims, and why they are important, is set out in the objects clause in IYTA's Rules.

### **VALUES**

We hold the following values to be important:

- Integration/Wholeness– working towards integrating our emotional, physical and spiritual selves, through self-awareness and disciplined activity;
- Generosity/Service–sharing Yoga's unique gifts and skills with others as a way of serving humanity, without expecting anything in return;
- Vision–being champions for Yoga as a way of life, in ways that inspire others to give it a go;
- Education/Insight– providing opportunities for ongoing learning about Yoga, and supporting people motivated by the reward of new understanding gained through insights they have achieved for themselves; and
- Accountability/Ethics – to hold ourselves accountable to the yama and niyama (listed above), and to address the appropriateness of our behaviour in relation to our values.