



A Space to Be

Yoga Sūtra 2.30 – Five Yama

ahiṃsā-satya-asteya-brahmacarya-aparigrahāḥ yamāḥ

Non-harming, truthfulness, non-stealing, conservation and non-grasping are the restraints.

“The *yama* are the first of the eight limbs of yoga (*aṣṭāṅga*), presented in the second chapter of the Yoga Sūtra. They are five attitudes, or (literally) restraints, suggested by Patanjali to free our relationships with others. Together, they create the conditions needed to establish a relationship and allow it to deepen in healthy ways by setting certain boundaries. Furthermore, they bring insights to relationships that take us towards a universal wisdom that goes beyond any specific relationship.”

From ‘Embodying the Yoga Sutra’ by Ranju Roy and David Charlton

“Although traditionally a solitary practice, yoga offers great potential for transformation during those times when we are off the mat. For me, the strength of my yoga is not necessarily tested during my practice of poses or breathing techniques but in my intimate relationships. Here my anger, attachments and fears are not so easily hidden under a mantel of denial, avoidance or achievement.”

From ‘Living Your Yoga’ by Judith Hanson Lasater

Below are the literal translations of the five *yama* or ‘restraints’, along with some modern day affirmations that may help us to integrate them on our mats and in our lives.

Ahiṃsā – literally, non-harming or non-violence.

I am at ease and cause no harm to myself or others.

Satya – literally, truthfulness

I am aligned with and able to express my own truth.

Asteya -literally, not stealing

I use resources wisely, and do not take more than I need.

I am enough.

Brahmacarya – literally, celibacy, conserving energy (sexual and otherwise).

I can say ‘no’, and not give more than I have.

Aparigrahāḥ – literally, not grasping

I can let go, and allow life to find me.