

• WELLBEING & MINDSET

A YOGAPROS LEARNING HUB COLLECTION

Who looks after the teacher?

*Twenty pieces on the working life of a yoga teacher
— steadiness, confidence, energy, and the craft
around the class.*

YOGAPROS

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The two minutes before you teach

Two minutes between arriving and teaching: a settling practice that treats your own state as part of the craft.

It's five to seven. You've come straight from somewhere else, the school run or the day job, and the drive took longer than it had any right to. The room needs unlocking, the heating is doing its own thing, and two students are already waiting by the door, one of them wanting a word about their knee. At seven o'clock you're supposed to stand at the front and be the most settled person in the building.

Most teachers know this gap. The few minutes between arriving as yourself and standing up as the teacher. Whatever state you carry across it walks into the room with you, and the first ten minutes of the class take their tone from it far more than from your plan.

This piece gives you a two-minute practice for exactly that gap. Nothing in it will be new to you. You've been handing these tools to your students for years; this is about keeping two minutes' worth back.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The gap between arriving and teaching, however short it's become
- Between back-to-back classes, when there's no real break
- Evenings when the day is still loud in your head at the door
- Covering an unfamiliar venue, where nothing is where you expect

THIS IS YOGA'S OWN TECHNOLOGY

Settling the body to settle the mind is the working premise of asana. Pranayama goes further and steadies the nervous system through the breath. And dharana, the practice of resting attention on one chosen point, is half of what people are actually coming to class for, whether they'd name it or not. None of this was invented by the wellness industry. It's the profession's own inheritance, and the strange part is how rarely teachers apply any of it to themselves on a working evening.

The teacher's own state was never an afterthought in that tradition, either. You steady yourself first, then you teach. Somewhere between training and a full timetable, most of us lost the order.

The research base agrees with the old texts, most clearly on the breath. Studies of slow-paced breathing show that when the exhale runs longer than the inhale, heart rate steadies and the body moves out of its alert state within a couple of minutes; a pace of around six breaths a minute keeps showing up as the point where that settling effect is strongest. You watch this happen in other people every time you close a class. It works just as well standing in a corridor.

THE TWO MINUTES, START TO FINISH

Do it somewhere you won't be interrupted: the car, or the quiet stretch of corridor outside the door. Before you walk in, not while you're greeting people. The point is a line between the day and the teaching.

First, the body. Roughly thirty seconds. Stand still with your feet flat and let the weight come even. Shoulders drop. Jaw unclenches. You're not stretching and you're not demonstrating anything. You're arriving all the way.

Then the breath, for about a minute. In through the nose for a count of four, out for a count of six, eight to ten rounds. If counting feels fussy on a Tuesday, keep it simpler: let every out-breath run longer than the in-breath and allow the pace to slow on its own.

Last, attention. Choose one thing to walk in holding. The first sentence you'll say, or one student you'll greet by name. In the tradition you might frame it as a sankalpa; on a wet evening in November it can be as plain as the word 'slow'. One point, chosen on purpose, so your mind has somewhere to stand while the room fills.

When there's genuinely no time, the 6pm finishing as the 6:15 arrives, shrink it rather than skip it. Three long exhales and one chosen point of attention takes thirty seconds, and thirty seconds on purpose does more than you'd think.

Two minutes won't repair a hard day. It doesn't need to. The job is smaller than that: the class gets the teacher, and the traffic stays in the car park.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Tonight, at home, run the whole sequence once with a timer, just to learn its shape.
- 02 This week, choose your spot at your regular venue. Somewhere you can stand still, unbothered.
- 03 Anchor it to a moment that already happens: after the room is set up, or when the phone goes on silent.
- 04 Choose your one point of attention before you leave the house rather than in the car park.

05 After a fortnight, pay attention to the first ten minutes of your classes. That's where this shows up first.

RELATED RESOURCES

- After the class that didn't land
- A morning practice that isn't for your students

How you arrive is part of the craft. The professional standards YogaPros keeps with its members assume a teacher who looks after their own state as well as their students'; settling before you teach belongs in that column.

This guidance is for general awareness and professional orientation. It is not a substitute for professional legal, tax, or insurance advice, or for medical or mental-health care, specific to your individual situation.

After the class that didn't land

How to catch the post-class spiral early and read the evidence instead of the story. One flat class is not a verdict.

The drive home is where it starts. You knew by the third posture that the class was flat: the room never quite warmed up, and the sequence you'd been happy with on paper felt like reading out someone else's notes. One student rolled their mat up ten minutes early. By the time you pull into your street you've re-taught the whole hour twice, and the story has grown past the evening. Now it's about whether you're any good at this at all.

Nobody teaches for long without this night. Fifteen years in or fifteen weeks, the flat class arrives on schedule. What varies is how much of the week it's allowed to take, and that gets decided in the first hour afterwards.

This piece is about that hour: how to close a class down honestly, without letting one Tuesday write a verdict it hasn't earned.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The hour straight after a class that fell flat
- The night you catch yourself re-teaching it in bed
- A quiet stretch when one bad class starts to feel like proof of something

- The morning after, if it's still sitting there

WHY REPLAYING DOESN'T HELP

Going over it feels like diligence. Mostly it isn't. Research on rumination shows that replaying a difficult experience doesn't digest it; it rehearses it. Each loop makes the pathway easier to run and the conclusion feel more true, and no new information enters at any point. The teacher who has re-taught the flat class five times by midnight doesn't understand it better than the one who looked at it once. They just feel worse.

And the body is in on it. Rumination prefers stillness: the parked car, the lying-awake position. Which is why the practice below starts with movement rather than thought.

A FLAT CLASS HAS A SIZE, AND YOU CHOOSE IT

In the 1970s the psychologist Martin Seligman started asking why the same setback flattens one person and barely marks another. The difference, his research found, sits in the explanation rather than the event. Explanatory style, it's now called, and it turns on three readings most of us make without noticing.

The first is time. Read as 'tonight was flat', the class stays the size of one evening. Read as 'I've lost it', it spreads across your future. Same sixty minutes.

The second is reach. One clunky sequence can mean the sequence needs work. In the harsher reading it means the whole career is in question. The evidence didn't change; the radius did.

The third is cause. A cold room at half-term, a group that arrived tired from work. You were one variable in that evening among several, and

the harsh reading deletes all the others and keeps you.

A flat class is allowed to be exactly what it was: one flat class, with contributing causes, most of them beyond you.

THE TEN-MINUTE CLOSE-DOWN

It has an order, and the order matters.

Movement first, two minutes. Walk the long way to the car, or shake your arms out in the empty studio while the kettle boils. The spiral needs a still body. Don't hand it one straight away.

Then the breath. Ten rounds with the exhale longer than the inhale, the same slow breathing you'd offer a student who arrived wired. It settles the nervous system measurably, and it doesn't stop being true when the wired person is you.

Then say it plainly, once, out loud if you're alone: 'that one didn't land.' Research on naming feelings shows that putting an emotion into ordinary words lowers its charge. Name it and stop. No speech to the windscreen.

Last, the notebook. Two lines. One line of evidence, meaning something that verifiably happened, the good with the bad: 'sequence rushed after the standing series; the student with the stiff shoulder said it finally let go.' One line of adjustment, the single change worth making next week, small enough to actually happen. Then the notebook shuts, and the class is over. Not at 2am. When the notebook shuts.

If the same class keeps reopening after it's closed, that's information rather than failure, and it's worth saying to another teacher instead of back to yourself. Out loud, to a peer, these things are usually half the size.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Put a small notebook in your teaching bag today. The close-down needs it within reach.
- 02 After your next class, move for two minutes before you let yourself review anything.
- 03 Run the full close-down the next time a class falls flat: move, breathe, name it, two lines, shut the book.
- 04 If the verdict still feels bigger than one evening, test it for time and reach, then count the causes that weren't you.
- 05 This month, tell one teacher you trust about a class that didn't land. Notice what happens to its size.

RELATED RESOURCES

- The two minutes before you teach
- What counts as a good class — rewritten

Steadiness on a flat night is professional practice, and it was never meant to be a private effort. The standards you teach under exist to hold the teacher as well as the class; that's a good part of what belonging to a professional body like YogaPros is for.

This piece is professional-development reflection, not therapy. If things feel heavy right now, talking to your GP or a qualified counsellor is a stronger move than any worksheet.

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The question you teach from

Every teacher teaches from a question they rarely hear. How to catch yours and choose a steadier one to teach from.

Halfway through a Wednesday class, a student stops following your cue and quietly does their own version instead. Nothing dramatic. Nobody else noticed. But somewhere under your teaching a question fires, and it's the same one it always is. For a lot of teachers it runs something like 'what if they realise I don't know enough?' For others it's plainer: 'is everyone bored?'

You've probably never said yours out loud. It's been running so long it doesn't sound like a question any more; it just feels like teaching. And it matters more than it seems to, because attention goes wherever a question sends it.

The work here is catching the question underneath your teaching, and then choosing a steadier one on purpose.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- When the same doubt fires however well the class went
- The third time you rewrite a class plan that was fine the first time
- Before teaching with another teacher, or your old trainer, in the room
- When kind feedback keeps bouncing off

ATTENTION FOLLOWS THE QUESTION

A question is an instruction to search. You can feel it in your own practice. Ask 'where is the tension tonight?' and the body files its report: the jaw, the shoulder that never quite lets go. Ask 'where is the breath already easy?' and a different report arrives from the same body. Neither answer is wrong; the question decided which one you got. Research on self-talk points the same way: the questions we habitually put to ourselves steer what we notice, and what we notice hardens into what we believe about how things are going.

So run 'is everyone bored?' under an evening class and boredom is what you'll find. The neutral face by the radiator. The early leaver with a bus to catch. The question harvests its own evidence, then presents the harvest as proof. It has been marking its own homework for years.

Most of these questions are old. A comment made once on a training course, or a studio owner's raised eyebrow in your first year of teaching. It got written in early, and nobody has reviewed it since. That's the real problem.

THE MOST COMMON QUESTION HAS A NAME

If yours is a version of 'when will they realise I'm not really qualified for this?', you're in well-documented company. In 1978 the psychologists Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes named the impostor phenomenon after studying accomplished women, high achievers with strong records who couldn't take their own competence to be real. The detail worth keeping: the pattern they documented ran through people doing genuinely good work.

Sit with that for a second, because it cuts the question's authority. Impostor feelings say something about how seriously you take the work, and nothing reliable about the teaching itself. Teachers with twenty years behind them still hear the question on certain nights; qualifications don't end it, and nor does experience by itself. What changes things is recognising it as a question rather than a fact, and declining to let it run the class.

CHOOSING THE STEADIER QUESTION

You can't delete a habitual question. You can out-practise it, the same way you'd out-practise a movement habit: choose the replacement deliberately and put it where the old one lives.

A steadier teaching question passes two tests. It faces the students rather than your performance. And it can actually be answered tonight. 'Am I good enough?' fails both: there's no finish line, and it points the wrong way. 'What does this room need from me in the next hour?' passes. So does 'who here needs to be seen tonight?'

Notice what moves when the question changes. The impostor question puts you at the centre of your own class, auditioning. The steadier one returns you to the side of the room, teaching. The students haven't changed and neither has your skill. The teacher standing in front of them has.

ACTION STEPS

- 01** After your next class, before the kit is even packed away, jot down the question that ran loudest under the hour. Today, if you've taught today.
- 02** Repeat for two more classes and look for the repeat offender.

- 03 Write it out in full, exactly as it runs, untidied. Then check where it points: at you, or at the room.
- 04 Write your replacement. Facing the students, answerable tonight. Put it at the top of your class plan where you'll see it every week.
- 05 Expect the old question to fire mid-class anyway. It will. Name it silently, come back to the one you chose, and count the faster noticing as the win.

RELATED RESOURCES

- What counts as a good class — rewritten
- The inner critic has a job description

Other caring professions build in supervision: a regular, honest conversation about the inside of the work, held with people who do it too. Teaching deserves the same. The resources YogaPros keeps for its members exist for this side of the work as much as for the paperwork.

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What counts as a good class — rewritten

Most teachers mark themselves against conditions they can't win. How to rewrite what counts as a good class, on your terms.

Seven people came on Thursday. Back in March it was twelve. The class itself was decent; the pacing worked, and the student with the frozen shoulder found something like ease for the first time since Christmas. And still, somewhere between locking up and reaching the car, the verdict landed: not good enough.

Two things happened that evening. The class, and the marking of the class. Teachers train for years for the first and inherit the second without ever looking at it. Most of us are running a definition of a good class we never actually chose: a full room and a faultless hour. On those terms, a wet Thursday in February wins every time.

The definition can be rewritten, so that a good class becomes something you can actually deliver, on terms you chose. That rewriting is what follows.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- Driving home flat from a class that was, by any fair reading, fine
- When tonight's seven keeps getting compared with spring's twelve
- When a quiet month starts to read as a verdict on your teaching
- End of term, before the next one gets planned on the old rules

THE RULE UNDERNEATH THE FEELING

The flat feeling after a decent class is a rule doing its work. At some point, usually early and usually without noticing, every teacher writes a private definition of success, and it runs in the background from then on. If the definition says a good class needs sixteen mats down, then eleven mats is a failure, whatever happened on them.

The inherited version usually has fingerprints on it. A training course that prized flawless sequencing, or a feed full of packed workshops. None of it was chosen, and most of it was never true of the teachers you actually admire.

Psychologists who study locus of control draw a useful line between outcomes you can influence directly and outcomes set mostly elsewhere. Attendance sits mostly elsewhere, with the weather and with other people's diaries. Whether the room felt held for an hour sits with you. A success definition built from the first column guarantees regular failure that has nothing to do with the teaching.

And the misses aren't neutral. Research on self-efficacy, the working belief in your own capability that the psychologist Albert Bandura spent a career mapping, shows that confidence is built mostly from mastery experiences: clear, repeated evidence of doing what you set out to do. The evidence only lands when the goal was yours to meet. A teacher marking themselves on attendance can teach beautifully for a decade and still starve the confidence that decade should have built.

CONDITIONS THAT ARE YOURS TO SET

The rewrite moves the bar onto land you own. The height can stay exactly where it was. If anything this is the stricter deal, because condit-

ions you control are harder to hide from; the weather makes a generous excuse, and you're giving it up.

A workable condition passes two tests. You control it on the night. And it can be observed, in things done rather than things felt. 'I arrived settled and taught the class I planned' passes both. So does 'every student was greeted by name and seen at least once during the hour'. 'The room loved it' fails the second test, and 'twelve people came' fails the first.

Keep the list to two or three conditions; longer and it turns into admin. Write them as things done, because on the nights your mood lies to you, and there will be those nights, the record of what you did stays readable when the feeling doesn't.

Self-compassion research, much of it led by the psychologist Kristin Neff, adds a finding worth building in: people who assess their own work the way they'd assess a respected colleague's stay steadier and are less derailed by a poor night than people who self-attack. So borrow the colleague test. If another teacher told you seven came through the rain and the shoulder that had been stuck since Christmas finally let go, you would not call that a failure. You'd call it an evening well taught.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, on paper, finish the sentence honestly: 'a class counts as good when...'. Keep the clauses you're not proud of in; they're the ones doing the damage.
- 02 Cross out every condition that's set by the weather or by anyone who isn't you.
- 03 Write two or three replacements that are yours to meet and possible to observe.

- 04 Put them at the top of your class plan and read them before teaching for a fortnight, without scoring yourself against them. The definition works by being in the room.
- 05 At the end of term, review the rule the way you'd review a sequence: keep what served, rewrite what didn't.

RELATED RESOURCES

- After the class that didn't land
- The question you teach from

The profession already measures teaching careers in years taught and hours logged, never in how full the room was on one thin evening in February. That's how YogaPros records a teacher's standing too, and it's a fairer mirror than the head-count.

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You qualified. When do you feel like a teacher?

The certificate came. Feeling like a teacher takes longer. What that gap really is, and the ordinary things that close it.

Someone at a friend's birthday asks what you do. You hear yourself say it: "Well, I've just qualified as a yoga teacher." The just is doing a lot of quiet apologising. So is the well.

You pictured the qualifying moment for a year. Then the certificate arrived, and the strangest thing about it was how little changed. You taught your Tuesday class the same way you'd taught it the week before, and then went home and waited for the feeling of being a real teacher to turn up. It's taking its time.

If that's roughly where you are, you're in a gap almost every teacher passes through. It isn't a competence problem. And the things that close it are smaller, and more ordinary, than you'd think.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- When "I'm a yoga teacher" still comes out with a qualifier attached
- When you're waiting to feel ready before approaching a studio or offering cover
- When a room of experienced teachers makes you feel like a guest in your own profession

- Any day in the first year or two when the certificate feels like it belongs to someone else

WHAT THE GAP ACTUALLY IS

Your training measured competence. Hours logged, teaching observed and assessed. Somebody qualified checked your work and signed their name to it. That part is done, and you did it.

What no course can hand over is the inner sense of being a teacher, because that isn't knowledge. It's identity, and identity runs on a slower clock than paperwork. Psychologists who study self-image describe a reliable lag: people act in line with who they believe they are, and the belief updates well behind the evidence. Research on what's called possible selves (the versions of yourself you can vividly picture becoming) points the same way. We move towards the self we can see clearly, and we stall at the one we can't quite make out yet.

So the wobble on the way into the studio isn't proof you trained too soon. It's the ordinary distance between a new fact and an old self-image. The fact was signed off in a day. The self-image has to be lived in.

HOW THE GAP CLOSSES

Identity follows evidence, and the evidence is the teaching. Research on habit and identity is consistent about the direction: the sense of being a teacher arrives after the doing, and it arrives through repetition rather than through one breakthrough class.

Which means the gap closes in units you already have. Four students on a wet Tuesday count. So does the chair-based class at the care home. The class that went sideways and got steadied counts double. You don't

cross a line one morning and feel like a teacher from then on; the feeling accrues, class by unglamorous class.

Your students, by the way, are not waiting. To the people on the mats, you were the teacher from the moment you said welcome and meant it.

The words you use are part of the evidence too, because you're in the room every time you say them. "I've just qualified" files you under student. "I teach Tuesday evenings at the community centre" files you under teacher. Both sentences are true. Only one of them is building the identity you've already done the work for.

And say it plainly: the teachers you think of as the real thing stood exactly here. Ask one how long it took before the title felt true. The answers are honest, and strangely comforting.

BELONGING DOES THE REST

Identity settles faster in company, which is something professions have always understood. Nurses have a register. Accountants have a chartered body. Part of what those structures do is give the question "am I really one?" a public answer while the private one catches up.

Teaching works the same way. Joining a professional body is an outward sign of a decision you've already made. Being insured is another. So is having your training verified and set down where students can find it. On the days the feeling wobbles, the record doesn't.

None of this asks you to perform a confidence you don't have yet. It asks you to keep teaching and let the identity settle at its own pace. It will.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, say the sentence once without a qualifier: “I’m a yoga teacher. I teach [your day] at [your place].” Out loud, to one person. The mirror counts if it has to.
- 02 For one week, notice each time “just” or “only” tries to attach itself to your teaching. No need to fight it. Noticing loosens it.
- 03 Start an evidence line. After each class, one sentence in your phone about something that worked. Read the month back when it’s done.
- 04 Ask a teacher you respect how long it took them to feel like one. Believe their answer.

RELATED RESOURCES

- The inner critic has a job description
- Your teaching story, told properly

When you want the outward sign as well as the inward one, membership of a professional body is how many teachers mark it: insured and verified, with training and hours recorded on a Live CV where students and studios can see them. The feeling catches up faster when the record already exists.

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The inner critic has a job description

The nervous voice before class is trying to protect something. How to hear what it wants without letting it teach the hour.

The students are unrolling mats and talking about their weeks, and somewhere behind your sternum a familiar commentary clocks in. They're going to be bored tonight. The cover teacher last week was better. Minutes later you're teaching, and part of you is still in that meeting.

Most advice about the voice comes down to fighting it. Push through it, or drown it out with something more positive. And most teachers have noticed what happens next: it gets louder, because now it's certain nobody is listening.

There's a steadier way to work with it, and it starts from an odd premise. The critic is a part of you doing a job. Badly, with terrible timing, but a job all the same.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- In the minutes before class, when the commentary starts
- After a quiet class, when the voice moves from prediction to verdict
- Before teaching peers, mentors, or anyone holding a clipboard
- In any season where nerves you thought you'd retired come back

WHAT THE CRITIC IS FOR

Counsellors who work with parts-based approaches begin from a simple observation: the mind speaks with more than one voice, and the harsh one is rarely malicious. It's protective. Its methods are dreadful and its manner is worse, but its aim is nearly always to stop something happening. Being caught out in front of a room, usually. Or repeating some older humiliation that predates teaching entirely.

Heard that way, the pre-class commentary changes character. "You haven't planned enough for this room" stops being a verdict from a panel and becomes a nervous colleague trying, clumsily, to make sure you're never unprepared. Annoying. Also, in its way, loyal.

You'll notice the volume rises with the stakes: the first class back after a break, or the day someone books you to teach other teachers. A louder critic usually means you care more about this particular room, and it has noticed.

Research on self-compassion, much of it by the psychologist Kristin Neff, backs the shift. People who treat their own missteps the way they'd treat a colleague's stay more motivated and hold up better under pressure than people who self-attack. The old fear that kindness breeds complacency turns out to be backwards. Being on your own side is a performance strategy, whatever the voice claims.

WRITE THE JOB DESCRIPTION

So interview it. Ten minutes on paper, kettle on.

What is this voice trying to stop happening? When did it start? For most of us that's long before teaching, which is a useful thing to see in ink.

What does it believe would happen if it went quiet for an hour? And what would it need to know to stand down?

Write the answers as an actual job description if it helps. Role: protection. Methods: worry and worst-case rehearsal. Hired: roughly 1998. Performance review: overdue.

If talking to a voice on paper feels strange, remember that you already work with parts all class long: the tight shoulder, the breath someone is holding without knowing it. This is the same craft, pointed inward.

Two things tend to happen when teachers do this. The voice quiets, because parts that feel heard stop shouting. And its one useful note gets easier to find. Sometimes the critic is holding a genuine flag (the playlist really does cut out before savasana) wrapped in forty layers of catastrophe. Take the note. Leave the wrapping.

IT DOESN'T GET TO TEACH

The interview is background work. The foreground is a boundary, and it's kept in the last minutes before you begin.

When the commentary starts, name it once, without ceremony: that's the critic clocking in. One slower breath out. Then put your attention where the work is, which is never inside your own chest. The faces arriving. The body on the mat nearest the door. The critic can ride along in the passenger seat; it doesn't get the register and it doesn't get the microphone.

Afterwards, protect the review. The critic loves a debrief. So before any accounting of what went wrong, write one sentence about what went well. Written first, it keeps the record honest.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, ten minutes with a notebook: write down the two lines your critic repeats most, word for word. Seeing them in your own hand-writing shrinks them.
- 02 Underneath, draft its job description: what it's protecting you from, and roughly when it was hired.
- 03 Before your next class, when it starts, name it once. Take the note if there's a real one. Then attention out to the room.
- 04 After class, write one sentence about what went well, before any other review.
- 05 If the voice is loud in every room, not only the studio, and it sounds less like nerves than contempt, take that seriously. A conversation with someone qualified reaches places a notebook can't.

RELATED RESOURCES

- The question you teach from
- You qualified. When do you feel like a teacher?

Every level of this profession has teachers who know this voice, twenty years in and letters after their name included. Progression here is recorded in years taught and hours trained; nerves have never been part of what's measured. A CPD room full of other teachers is usually where that truth lands.

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ific to your individual situation.

Your teaching story, told properly

Your career didn't start the day you qualified. How to re-read the arc you've already lived, and tell it like it happened.

It's late on a Sunday night, and you're staring at a box on a studio's website that says About you, 200 words. You type: "I qualified in 2019 and teach vinyasa and yin." You delete it. You type it again. Everything true about the last fifteen years refuses to fit, so you file yourself under a date and two styles, and press send.

Or a student asks after class how you came to teaching, and you hand over the short version. Trained in 2019. Career change. The real story, the one with the decade of practice in it and the year everything cracked open, stays where it usually stays. Untold.

This piece is a practice for re-reading the arc you've already lived, and for telling it like it happened.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- Writing or rewriting a bio, or an application to a studio
- Introducing yourself at a training, or to a room of new students
- When your career feels like it only began the day you qualified
- When you hear yourself apologising for the path that brought you here

THE SAME FACTS MAKE DIFFERENT STORIES

Psychologists who study how people make sense of their lives, Dan McAdams' research on narrative identity most of all, describe the self as a story under constant revision. The events are fixed. The telling isn't. And the telling does real work: it sets what feels earned, and what still feels possible.

The same ten years can be read as "I drifted into this sideways and I'm behind everyone who started properly", or as "everything I did before teaching turned out to be preparation for it". Both versions are faithful to the facts. They produce two different teachers at the front of the room. Research on how people narrate their harder chapters finds the same pattern again and again: those who can locate what a difficult period built in them come out steadier than those who read the same period as pure loss.

And most teachers tell their story short in one particular way. They start it at the training course. The office years, the decade of turning up to a Wednesday class through two house moves and a bereavement: all filed under before, none of it counting. It counted. It's usually where the actual teacher was formed.

RE-READING THE ARC

Give it half an hour and a pen you like.

Write your teaching life in chapters. Five or six headings, nothing under them yet. The only rule is that chapter one begins before your training. The first class you ever took, perhaps. Or earlier, if you can feel the thread reaching further back.

Then one line under each heading: what was going on, and what it taught you that you still use in a room. The unglamorous chapters earn their place here. Eighteen months of covering classes in a cold church hall looks like a footnote until you write it down and realise it's where you learned to teach whoever turns up.

Now read the page and look for the through-line. There almost always is one: the same care, showing up in jobs and years that had nothing to do with yoga. Teachers who find their through-line tend to stop asking whether they're the real thing. You trained everywhere. The course made it official.

Told this way, the qualification takes its proper place in the story. A plot point rather than the climax. The climax hasn't happened yet.

THE VERSION OTHER PEOPLE CAN SEE

The private re-reading comes first, and it's for you. But a story has readers, and yours are practical ones: the student deciding whether to come back, the studio manager scanning applications at speed. They go on what they can see.

So bring the visible record up to level with the truth. Start with the bio: let its first line begin where chapter one begins. Then gather the record itself, training and hours in one place, counted properly, because years and hours are the profession's own measure of an arc, and they're the part a stranger can trust before they've ever met you.

Most teachers, counting for the first time, find they're carrying more than they thought. That discovery changes how the story gets told, and often the teller with it.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, fifteen minutes: write five chapter headings for your teaching life, with chapter one set before your training began.
- 02 Add one line per chapter: what it taught you that you still use.
- 03 Rewrite the first sentence of your bio so it starts where chapter one starts. Keep it under twenty-five words.
- 04 Count your training and teaching hours properly, and write the totals where you'll see them.
- 05 This month, tell the fuller version out loud once, to the next person who asks.

RELATED RESOURCES

- You qualified. When do you feel like a teacher?
- Gratitude with a spine

For YogaPros members, the Live CV is where the arc becomes a verified record: your training and your hours, year by year, checked and visible where students and studios already look. The story stays yours to tell. The record backs it up.

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Who looks after the teacher?

You hold the room, and nobody holds you. The case for treating care of the teacher as part of the job, with a structure to build it.

Thursday, 8.42pm. The last student rolls up their mat, says thank you at the door, and steps out into the evening visibly lighter than they arrived. You wipe the floor, stack the blocks, switch off the heaters, carry the speaker to the car. An hour of teaching other people to rest, and you're driving home on empty with tomorrow's playlist half-built in your head.

That drive is common property in this profession, though it rarely feels it at the time. It's the strange arithmetic at the centre of the work: the person holding everyone else's hour is the only one in the building with nobody holding theirs.

This piece makes an argument and then offers a structure. The argument is that care of the teacher belongs in the same category as insurance and training. Professional infrastructure, in other words, and no more optional than either. The structure is how working teachers actually build it.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- At the end of any teaching day that emptied you
- When your own practice has quietly become the first thing you cut
- Each September and January, before the timetable gets rebuilt
- Before burnout, ideally. This page reads very differently afterwards

THE ASYMMETRY IN THE ROOM

Teaching yoga is care work. It rarely gets named that way, because the room is calm and the setting is chosen, but an hour of holding attention on other people's bodies and states is an hour of giving out. And unlike most care work, it's built to be done alone. There's no staff room and no handover. The difficult moment in the six o'clock class gets processed in the car, or not at all.

The research on burnout in the helping professions has said the same thing for forty years: sustained care of others, joined with thin recovery and thin support, wears people down in a predictable way. The World Health Organization classifies burnout as an occupational phenomenon. Occupational. It comes from the shape of the work, which means it's answered by reshaping the work rather than by gritting through it.

Other caring professions learned this slowly and then built the answer in. Counsellors are required to have supervision. Nursing builds reflective practice into revalidation. Yoga teaching grew fast and informally, so teachers inherited the demands of a caring profession without inheriting its scaffolding. Nobody decided that. It's simply where the profession's history left us, and it's a gap each working teacher has to close deliberately.

THE SAME CATEGORY AS INSURANCE

Most teachers file their own care under luxury, somewhere below new props on the list of things to get round to. The professions that last file it under maintenance.

Recovery science is blunt about why. Capacity for sustained work tracks the recovery built around it, and recovery is an activity rather than an absence. Sleep counts, and so does a day off that stays off. A practice of your own, the kind that produces nothing, restores more than it looks like it should.

Nobody calls servicing the car an indulgence. Nobody thinks a studio maintaining its floor is being precious. Your body and your steadiness are the working equipment of this profession, and maintaining the equipment is part of the job. A teaching career that plans its own upkeep tends to still exist in ten years.

WHO ANSWERS THE QUESTION

Some of the answer is a structure only you can build, because nobody else can schedule your rest. In practice it's smaller and more boring than the word structure suggests: a weekly hour of practice that belongs to you rather than to a class plan, and one other teacher you talk to on a standing basis about the work as it really is. Teachers who have those two things describe the job differently. The care stops being a mood and becomes an arrangement.

And some of the answer is bigger than any one teacher: this is the question a professional body exists to answer, and the reason one stands behind you.

It doesn't replace the weekly hour or the standing call. It sits underneath them, so that on the weeks your own structure slips, something is still holding.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Tonight, after your last class: list everything that currently looks after you as a teacher. People, habits, cover, anything. A short list is information, and it isn't a verdict.
- 02 Book one weekly hour of practice that belongs to you. In the diary like a class. Taught by someone else or by nobody, and never by you.
- 03 Arrange a standing call or coffee with one other teacher, once a fortnight. The agenda is the work as it really is.
- 04 Once a term, read your timetable the way you'd read a student's posture: where the load is landing, and what needs releasing before it starts to complain.
- 05 Check the floor under all of it: insurance current, and someone you could call if a class went wrong. If either is missing, that's this month's job.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Energy is part of the job
- Teaching is what you do. It isn't everything you are

Who looks after the teacher is the question YogaPros exists to answer. The insurance and the standards are part of that answer; so are 10,000+ teachers in 100+ countries who know this work from the inside. All of it exists for the person every class depends on.

This piece is professional-development reflection, not therapy. If things feel heavy right now, talking to your GP or a qualified counsellor is a stronger move than any worksheet.

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Teaching is what you do. It isn't everything you are

One quiet class can shake a whole week when teaching carries every need you have. How to spread the load without loving it any less.

Three people came to Wednesday's class. The room holds twenty. You taught well, you always do. But the drive home was loud, and by the time you pulled in you were not thinking about the class any more. You were thinking about whether any of this is working, and what it says about you.

That is a lot of weight for one quiet evening to carry. It did not get there by accident, and it can be spread so that a wobble in the room stops reaching everything else. The spreading is the work below.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- After a quiet class that hit harder than the numbers deserved
- When a studio cuts your slot and it lands as personal rather than practical
- When you notice every plan in your diary routes through teaching
- When someone asks what you do outside yoga and the answer takes a while to arrive

ONE JOB, CARRYING EVERYTHING

People need to feel capable at something that matters. They need to feel close to others, and useful to them. Decades of research on motivation keeps circling that short list, and it barely changes.

Teaching meets the whole list at once, which is part of why you love it. It's where many of your friendships live. It's the skill you have worked hardest at. Somewhere along the way it probably also became the answer you give when someone asks who you are — and if you came to teaching through a hard chapter of your own, it may carry the proof that the chapter meant something.

That works beautifully, right up until it doesn't. When one activity carries every need you have, a wobble in the activity shakes all of them at once. Three people on a Wednesday stops being a scheduling fact and reaches your sense of competence, even your idea of who you are. Which is exactly why the drive home was loud.

None of this is a flaw in you. It is what people do with work that feels like vocation: the research on basic psychological needs suggests we meet them wherever they are easiest to meet, and teaching makes it very easy indeed.

Burnout research is consistent on one point. The people who burn hardest tend to be those whose sense of self is most fused with their work; researchers call it over-identification, and the caring professions fill those studies. Meanwhile, class numbers move for a hundred reasons that have nothing to do with you. School terms. A gym opening round the corner with a January offer. None of that should have the power to reach your identity. When everything routes through teaching, all of it does.

The teachers who last decades tend to have somewhere else to stand when teaching wobbles. That is not a coincidence.

GIVE THE LOAD A SECOND HOME

Take a page. Write “teaching” in the middle, and around it list, honestly, everything it currently carries for you beyond the craft itself. Your social life, perhaps. Your own movement. The feeling of being useful. The proof that you made something out of a hard time. Most teachers who draw this find teaching is holding four or five jobs beyond the actual job. Seeing it on paper is half the work.

Now pick the one item with no other home. Just one. This is not an overhaul, and it is certainly not a plan to care less about teaching. Give that one need a second place to live this month. If teaching holds your entire social world, a regular evening with people who have never done yoga will do more for your teaching than another workshop would. If your body only moves while you’re cueing, take a place at the back of someone else’s class and be nobody’s teacher for an hour.

And the second home does not need to be impressive. A choir. A parkrun where nobody knows what you do for work. What matters is that one need gets fed somewhere the timetable cannot reach.

Then notice what changes on the next quiet night. When teaching carries less than everything, a quiet Wednesday stays the size of a Wednesday.

ACTION STEPS

01 Today, take ten minutes and draw the load map: “teaching” in the middle, everything it carries around it. Nobody sees the page but you.

- 02 Circle the one item on the page with no other home in your life.
- 03 Choose its second home and book the first small step this week, small enough that you cannot talk yourself out of it.
- 04 After your next quiet class, read the page again before deciding what the numbers meant.
- 05 Redo the map in three months and notice what has moved.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Who looks after the teacher?
- The room you grow in

This spread is part of what a professional body is quietly built for. Membership at YogaPros was never only cover and a listing; there are peers to learn beside, and learning that stretches you in directions your timetable never will. A teaching life with more rooms in it holds its weather better.

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The quiet month

August empties, January fills. How to read a teaching year as seasons, and plan for the winters instead of being ambushed by them.

The first week of August has a particular silence. The room that held twenty in January holds six, the regulars are away, and the cover requests have stopped coming. Somewhere between locking up and getting home, a sentence starts assembling itself: it's fading. They've moved on.

That sentence shows up in most teaching lives. Far fewer get told the other half, which is that the whole profession watches the same curve every year, and it has almost nothing to do with any one teacher. August was quiet before you qualified, and it will still be quiet after all of us have retired.

What follows is a way of reading the teaching year as seasons, and a plan for the winters so they stop arriving as ambushes.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The week attendance halves and the story about what it means starts writing itself
- June, with the summer diary open in front of you
- January, when the full room starts to feel like the permanent new normal
- Any quiet stretch that has begun to feel like a verdict

THE YEAR HAS A SHAPE

January fills. Resolution energy, waiting lists, names you've never seen before. By half term it settles into something more honest. Spring holds its shape, July thins, August empties, and September brings people back on the school run. December wobbles into the holidays, and then the whole cycle turns again.

Teach through two or three cycles and you know this curve by heart. It runs across the whole sector, from gyms to church halls, because it is the calendar working on people's lives. And the calendar does not know your name. The months here are the UK's pattern; if you teach where the seasons run differently, swap the names and the curve still holds.

The first time through, the January surge feels like proof the career has finally caught. The first August feels like the whole thing unravelling. By the third cycle both look like what they are, which is the same tide going out and coming back on schedule.

Two research findings quietly make the dip feel worse than it is. First, people adapt to good news fast: a full January room feels normal within a few weeks, so the summer dip registers as loss rather than as the year returning to its usual level. Which is why the same twelve students who would have made your week in your first year can read as failure in your fourth. Second, work on reappraisal, one of the better-studied ideas in psychology, shows that the sentence you attach to an event does most of the emotional work. The same six-person room can be a crisis or a fact of the school calendar, depending entirely on which sentence gets there first.

WHAT A WINTER IS FOR

Take one page and sketch January to December. Mark what you already know, because you know more than you think: which months fill, which months thin, the fortnight your venue closes, the school holidays that empty your Wednesday morning slot. On paper it stops being weather that happens to you and becomes terrain you can plan across.

Then give each quiet month a job before it arrives. Rest counts; a season of teaching spends more than most people ever see, and the voice and the patience both restock slowly. The course you have been circling for two years counts too. Some teachers use August for the things term time never allows, like the website that still lists last year's classes, or the venue conversation that needs an unhurried hour. And if the thin months genuinely bite into the livelihood, a winter you can see coming is one you can shape the rest of the year around, with the autumn planned while the room is quiet. None of that planning is possible in the week the room empties. All of it is possible in June.

The last move is the smallest. In July, somewhere you will see it in August, write one line: "Quiet because it's August." It looks too simple to bother with. It works because when the room empties the sentence is already there, and the first sentence in usually wins.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, sketch your teaching year on one page and mark the full and thin months you already know about.
- 02 Beside each thin month, write its most likely cause. School terms. Holiday season.

- 03 Give your next quiet month one job, and book one concrete thing into it now.
- 04 Before your quietest month begins, write the one-line reappraisal somewhere you will actually see it.
- 05 In January, write down what the full weeks looked like. You will want the evidence in August.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Who looks after the teacher?
- Teaching is what you do. It isn't everything you are

The profession reads the year this way as standard practice. Quiet months are when teachers book accredited CPD and take honest stock of the year, and YogaPros treats the seasons as part of the structure of a teaching career. Structure is exactly why a quiet month was never a verdict.

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Energy is part of the job

Teaching runs on the body. A plain, evidence-based maintenance protocol for the instrument: sleep, daylight, movement, water and breath.

The 6pm class at the end of a day that started at 6am. Two commutes. A voice that has been working since breakfast, and a minute in the car park where you sit completely still because there is nothing left. Then you walk in and give them what you have. Teachers are good at that walk. It has a running cost, and nobody mentions the running cost in teacher training.

Teaching is physical work, even in the stiller styles. Voice, joints, attention, presence: the class is built out of your body on the day. So energy belongs on the professional list, next to the paperwork.

What follows is a maintenance protocol with decent evidence behind every part of it. No doctrine. Nothing to buy.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The stretch of term where every class takes more than it gives back
- When you plan classes around your energy rather than your ideas
- Rebuilding after illness or a heavy season
- Before saying yes to another slot on the timetable

THE INSTRUMENT ARGUMENT

A musician who left a violin in a hot car every day would not be surprised when the tuning went. Teachers run the equivalent experiment on themselves for whole terms, then feel guilty when the sound thins. You are the instrument and the player, and there is no spare in the case. Most professions get to put the instrument down at the end of the day. Yours comes home with you and cooks dinner, then gets up at six.

An empty teacher also teaches differently. The cues shorten. The adjustments stop. The person on the back mat, the one who needed watching, gets less of you than the rested version would have given them.

The profession is careful about protecting the work in most other ways: qualifications kept current, cover in place. The body that actually delivers the class tends to come last on the list, mostly because it complains the least until it stops.

FIVE LEVERS, ALL OF THEM BORING

Sleep first, because the research is blunt: run short and the first things to go are patience and attention, which are the exact two things a class spends. A fixed wake time, the same every morning, teaching day or not, is the anchor sleep researchers keep pointing to. It steadies everything else, including the bedtime.

Daylight next. Morning light sets the body clock, and the circadian research here is solid while the dose stays small: ten minutes outside before the screens, cloud or no cloud. Sleep comes easier that night. The afternoon dips less.

Movement, and this one stings a little: demonstrating is not moving. Eight half-postures a day, always on your fresher side, is neither a practice nor training. The body needs an hour that has nothing to do with cueing, where you are nobody's teacher. A swim. The back row of someone else's class. It also refills the well your cueing draws from; a body that only ever demonstrates stops having anything new to say.

Water is the dullest lever and the fastest to act. Teaching is hours of talking in warm rooms, and research on hydration shows concentration and mood dipping with even mild dehydration, before thirst has said a word. A bottle in the teaching bag, refilled between classes, is the entire intervention.

And breath, the one lever the profession already owns. Slow breathing with the exhale longer than the inhale settles the nervous system within minutes; the modern studies mostly confirm what pranayama has taught for centuries. Two minutes of it, parked outside the venue, keeps the day's residue out of the room. It is the one piece of this you already teach; the only new habit is aiming it at yourself.

You will notice food is not on this list. Eat however you eat; this protocol carries no doctrine about it.

One more thing, and it matters: don't attempt all five this week. Pick the lever that stung as you read it and run it for a fortnight. The others can wait their turn. Maintenance is a rota, and rotas work because they are boring.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Tonight, set a fixed wake time for the next fortnight and put the alarm out of arm's reach.
- 02 Tomorrow, ten minutes outside before you look at the phone.

- 03 Today, put a water bottle in the teaching bag and decide where it gets refilled.
- 04 This week, book one hour of movement in which you are nobody's teacher.
- 05 Choose where the two minutes of breath will live between classes, and use it at the next changeover.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Who looks after the teacher?
- A morning practice that isn't for your students

One part of your career already runs on quiet maintenance: the cover behind your teaching is renewed on time every year because the work depends on it. The body that delivers the work deserves the same class of care. YogaPros files both under professional maintenance, and that is the right shelf for them.

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A morning practice that isn't for your students

Most teachers stopped practising for themselves the day they started teaching. Rebuilding a short morning practice that's yours alone.

Somewhere in the first year of teaching, practice changes hands. You get on the mat and half of you is sequencing: whether this transition would work for the Saturday group, whether that cue would land. And one morning it dawns on you that you cannot remember the last time you practised without planning to teach any of it.

Ask around; most teachers can date it roughly. The day the teaching started, practice quietly turned into preparation.

This piece is about taking part of the morning back: ten minutes that are yours alone, built from the tradition you already carry.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- When every practice has quietly become a rehearsal for someone else's
- When mornings begin with the phone and someone else's agenda
- After a stretch where your own mat disappeared entirely
- When the teaching feels dry and you can't name why

WHEN PRACTICE BECAME PREPARATION

A practice that only ever happens in public slowly becomes a performance, however sincere. You feel it as dryness first: cues that used to come from somewhere now come from memory. Students rarely spot it. You always do.

The tradition saw this coming. Svadhyaya, self-study, practice turned towards your own interior, sits among the niyamas: the canon lists a teacher's inward work beside the ethics, as discipline rather than decoration. Yoga has never treated the teacher's own practice as optional extra credit. It is where the teaching comes from.

And there is a professional cost as well as a private one. Students can hear the difference between a cue that came out of this morning's practice and one that came out of 2019. Rarely consciously. But rooms settle differently for teachers who are still practising, and most experienced teachers know which kind of room they would rather sit in.

THE OLDEST MORNING ROUTINE THERE IS

Walk past any bookshop's wellbeing shelf and the morning routine is everywhere: breathe before the day starts, set an intention, notice something you are grateful for, get still before the noise arrives. It is sold as new science, at volume. There is merchandise.

It has older names. The tradition calls a short daily discipline sadhana. Breath taken deliberately before the day is pranayama, and the one-sentence resolve at the centre of the morning is sankalpa. The gratitude and the stillness are old too. The wellness industry is selling the profession's own inheritance back to it, and you are allowed to take yours directly from the shelf it has always been on.

The modern evidence is welcome, and it is real. Gratitude research supports a line or two, noted regularly: occasional and specific beats daily and vague, because detail keeps the mind actually looking. Slow-breathing studies find the nervous system settling inside minutes. And habit research adds the practical detail: practices anchored to a cue you already have, with a low floor for the bad days, are the ones that survive.

None of this needs defending to anyone. You spent years learning these tools. Using them on yourself first is how they were always meant to work.

TEN MINUTES THAT BELONG TO YOU

The rules matter more than the sequence. This practice is not content, and no one ever sees it. The phone stays in another room. It doesn't have to be good. And it is not preparation: nothing from it needs to survive into Saturday's class.

The shape, about ten minutes. Sit before the phone gets to you. Three settling breaths, then a few minutes with the exhale longer than the inhale. If the body asks for movement, follow it without sequencing anything; some mornings it only asks to stay still, and that counts. Then the sankalpa: one present-tense sentence in plain words, kept for a whole season rather than rewritten daily. It does not have to mention teaching at all; teachers often make the sentence about their students out of habit, and this one gets to be about you. Finish with one line of gratitude, noticed or written down, and let it be specific: a name, a moment, not a category.

If ten minutes sounds implausible in your house, make it six. The point is ownership, and six owned minutes outweigh forty borrowed ones.

On the mornings it collapses, and some will, the floor is three breaths and the sentence. Habit research is unsentimental about this: the floor matters more than the ceiling, because the floor is what keeps a practice alive.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Tonight, choose the spot and leave the mat or cushion there, with a pen and notebook beside it.
- 02 Tomorrow, sit before you touch the phone: three settling breaths, then a few minutes of longer exhales.
- 03 Write your sankalpa this week. One plain present-tense sentence, kept for the season.
- 04 Close each practice with one specific line of gratitude in the notebook. Detail keeps it honest.
- 05 On the bad mornings, do the three-breath floor and count it as practice, because it is.

RELATED RESOURCES

- The two minutes before you teach
- Gratitude with a spine

The profession has always known where teaching authority comes from. The standards YogaPros verifies are built on practice depth, years on the mat counted before years in front of a room, and the part of that depth no record ever shows is the practice that is yours alone.

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What you charge is a sentence you wrote

Your fee began as a sentence written years ago under old beliefs. How to read it honestly and rewrite it for the career you have.

You can say the price of your mat without blinking. The insurance renewal too, and the room rate for the church hall you hire on Mondays. All of it comes out level. Then somebody asks what you charge, and something catches in your throat.

Most teachers know that catch. It arrives as a small apology before the number, or a discount nobody asked for. Sometimes it's a rate that hasn't moved since before the pandemic, held in place by nothing you could name.

Here is a different reading. Your fee began life as a sentence. You wrote it, usually years ago, under beliefs about yoga and worth that you would never hand to one of your students. And sentences can be redrafted.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- Before you set a rate for a new term or a new venue
- When you hear yourself apologise before you say the number
- When your fee has outlived the beliefs it was written under

WHERE THE CATCH COMES FROM

Charging for yoga sits on an old fault line. The practice reached most of us wrapped in the language of service, and somewhere in training a quiet rule got absorbed along with the anatomy: a good teacher doesn't make it about money. Ask for little, or ask shyly, and you stay on the right side of your own conscience.

Research on money beliefs shows how this works underneath. These beliefs form early, at home and in the rooms we learn in, then run under our decisions for years without being examined. They behave less like opinions and more like rules. You don't weigh a rule each time you quote a rate. You obey it without noticing there was anything to decide.

So when you set your first fee, you weren't reading a market. You were finishing a sentence. Something like: *a teacher at my stage, in a town like mine, charges about this much and shouldn't want more*. The number came out of the sentence. It usually still does.

WHAT THE SENTENCE QUIETLY DECIDES

It would be tidier if an undercharged class cost only the teacher. It doesn't work that way.

A fee that never quite covers the training and the unseen hours around each class is a decision about how long this career gets to last, made without ever feeling like one. Teaching becomes something you subsidise from the rest of your life. And subsidies run out. The teachers who leave in year five are often the ones whose fees were never once reviewed. Their students lost a teacher they trusted, which is the part the humility story never mentions.

There's also what the sentence teaches a room. A fee named plainly, without flinching, tells people how the work is held. You trained for years. Students take their cue from you.

REWRITING IT

This is paper work. Twenty minutes at the kitchen table will do.

First, catch the sentence as it stands. Finish this line honestly: *I charge what I charge because...* Keep writing past the first tidy answer. The real sentence usually appears around line three, and it is rarely about the number at all.

Then test it. Read what you've written as though a teacher you respect had written it about their own work. Someone whose training you know, whose classes you would happily send people to. Notice where you want to argue with them, gently, the way you would with a friend selling their work short. Most teachers start arguing within a line. We keep rules for ourselves that we would never let a colleague keep.

Then draft the revision. Write the sentence you would want that teacher to charge by, and try it on for yourself. A workable revision has less to do with nerve than it looks. It simply names what the fee holds up: the training behind each class, and a livelihood that lets the teaching continue. That last clause is the point. The fee is part of the craft, because it is what keeps the teacher in the room.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, write your current sentence. One line, starting *I charge what I charge because...* Honest beats tidy.

- 02 Read it back as though a colleague you respect wrote it about their own teaching. Mark every phrase you'd challenge on their behalf.
- 03 Draft the revised sentence, naming what the fee holds up rather than what it apologises for.
- 04 Pick the next natural review moment, a new term or a new venue, and test one fee against the revised sentence. One is enough to start.

RELATED RESOURCES

- “There’s no money in yoga” — the cost of the sentence
- One page that holds your year

Across the profession, the careers that last tend to be the ones where the fee gets reviewed calmly, on a calendar, as one more piece of the craft. Yours is allowed to be one of them.

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“There’s no money in yoga” — the cost of the sentence

*The scarcity line every teacher hears, and what believing it quietly decides.
An honest audit, and the evidence about teaching careers.*

Somebody says it in the changing room after the six o’clock class, or across the table on the second weekend of training. There’s no money in yoga. It gets said the way people mention rain. Nobody argues, because arguing would sound naive, and anyway the person saying it has been teaching longer than you.

By the second year most teachers have heard it often enough to stop noticing it’s a claim. It has settled in somewhere between fact and furniture. And background beliefs are the ones that make your decisions for you.

The audit below covers both sides: what believing it may already have decided on your behalf, and what the evidence about teaching careers actually says.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The week somebody says it near you and it lands
- When a fee review or a new class idea keeps sliding, on the grounds that there’s no point
- Before you decide anything about next term with that sentence still in the room

WHAT THE SENTENCE HAS ALREADY DECIDED

Beliefs like this don't sit still. They vote.

Part of the trouble is that the sentence costs nothing to say. It sounds like realism, and it asks nothing of anyone who repeats it. Claims like that tend to travel further than the checking does.

Look back over the last two years for their fingerprints. The beginners' course that never launched, because it wouldn't fill. The fee that has stayed put for three years so as not to upset the room. Somewhere in there is probably an invitation as well, declined before the diary was even checked, on the grounds that it wouldn't have led anywhere.

None of those felt like decisions at the time. That is the point. Research on how people weigh change shows we rarely audit a belief we inherited; we protect the present self from small risks and leave the future self to absorb the cost. A sentence taken in during year one can still be declining invitations in year ten.

So the first move is simply to see the record. Write down what the sentence has already decided for you. Real things, with rough dates where you can manage them. Most teachers find two or three entries they didn't expect.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS

Now the other column, because an audit needs both sides.

Teaching yoga, for most of the profession, is part-time by design. It runs alongside other work and around families, in the evenings and early mornings. That shape is how a teaching life usually gets built, and it can hold a real livelihood when there is structure underneath it: classes that

keep their regulars, and fees reviewed on a calendar rather than in a crisis.

The sentence also has the profession's own history to argue with. The professional body behind this work has stood since 2006, long enough to watch teaching careers cross their tenth year and keep going. Nobody handed those teachers a packed room. They built structure and stayed.

And the strongest counter-evidence is already in your hands. A class that has held its regulars through two winters, or a venue that asks for you by name. The record itself: trainings finished, and the hours you have taught year on year.

THE AUDIT, ON PAPER

Take one page and rule two columns.

Left: what has this sentence decided for me so far. The real entries, however small they look now. Ten minutes, no editing.

Right: what has believing it protected me from. Be fair here. Disappointment, mostly, and the awkwardness of asking for things. A belief that costs this much is usually protecting something, which is why it has lasted.

Then read the columns side by side and write a single line at the bottom: *the decision I would make this term if the sentence were not true*. One decision. The course finally launched, or the Thursday finally accepted.

Take that line seriously. It was written by the teacher you are without the sentence.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, write the sentence in quotation marks at the top of a page. Quoting it moves it out of the weather and back into claim territory.
- 02 Spend ten minutes listing what it has decided for you so far, with rough dates.
- 03 Add the fairness column: what believing it has protected you from.
- 04 Write the one decision you'd make this term if it weren't true.
- 05 Put a date on that decision's first small step, and tell one person who will ask you about it.

RELATED RESOURCES

- What you charge is a sentence you wrote
- The quiet month

One more entry for the evidence column: this profession keeps records. The standards its professional body verifies are built on what a teaching career accumulates, the hours and the years in the room. Sentences about scarcity age badly next to a record like that.

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Comparison is not research

A feed measures marketing, never teaching. What comparison does to confidence, and the quiet signals worth tracking instead.

Ten past ten, and you're one scroll from putting the phone down. Then there they are. Someone you trained with: forty thousand followers, and a retreat in Portugal with a waiting list. You watch their reel twice. Your Thursday class has nine regulars.

And the evening quietly turns. Twenty minutes ago you were a teacher who'd taught a decent class and got everyone home safe. Now you're somehow behind, in a race you don't remember entering.

It happens across the profession, and to new teachers most of all, because the first couple of years are when you're still deciding what kind of teacher you get to become. The scroll calls itself research. What it really measures, and the quieter signals worth tracking instead, is the business of this page.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The night a scroll ends in wondering why you bother
- The morning after, when the flatness is still hanging around
- Any week you catch yourself calling it market research
- Before you change your plans because of somebody's highlight reel

WHAT A FEED MEASURES

A feed is a highlight reel. You know this; everybody knows this. And knowing it doesn't help at ten past ten, because comparison runs on attention.

Research on social comparison has mapped this thoroughly: we compare upwards, against the most polished version of the most visible people, and our own ordinary day pays for it. The comparison is rigged before it starts. Their launch photo is set against your nine-regular evening. Their best month, clipped and colour-graded, against your actual life.

A feed is never a fair sample either. It is assembled by what holds attention, and comparison holds attention beautifully. The teachers you see most are the ones the sorting favours, which has plenty to do with posting and very little to do with teaching.

The numbers measure the wrong things anyway. Follower counts say nothing about whether anyone held a room. They don't show the student who could finally sleep, or the nine people who rearrange their week so they don't miss you. Nothing on a feed shows teaching. It shows marketing, done by people whose craft may or may not be underneath it.

ATTENTION IS A TRAINABLE THING

Here the profession holds an advantage, because you already teach the counter-skill.

Yoga has treated attention as trainable for centuries. Dharana, the practice of placing the mind somewhere on purpose and walking it back

when it drifts, is part of the tradition you teach from. You lead a version of it every time you bring a room back to the breath. The same discipline applies to a thumb on a screen. What you attend to grows, and starts to look like the truth.

Research on attention agrees in plainer clothes: the mind rehearses whatever it is fed. Give it other people's opening nights for twenty minutes every evening and it will build you a world where everybody is further ahead.

Staying on the platforms is fine. The change is deciding, on purpose, what gets your attention.

SIGNALS THAT ARE YOURS

Comparison fails as research because it samples other people's marketing. Research into your own teaching needs signals that belong to you. The strongest ones are quiet.

- Retention. How many of this week's students come back next week. In this profession, returning is the real applause.
- Requests. What people ask you for: a slower class, or whether there is another evening. A request is the clearest signal a teacher gets.
- Practice. Whether your own practice happened this week. It is the well the teaching draws from, and it is the first thing to vanish when confidence dips.

Track these for a week before the next verdict on where you are. Gather evidence the way you would want a nervous student to gather it: from what actually happened, over time.

Then the feed audit. Ten minutes, honestly sorted: accounts that teach you something stay, and accounts that reliably leave you smaller get

muted. Muting is allowed. It is the same placing of attention you teach, pointed at a screen.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Tonight, write your three signals down where you'll see them: who returned, what was requested, whether practice happened.
- 02 Give it one full week of evidence before any verdict on where you are.
- 03 Run the ten-minute feed audit, and be honest about which accounts shrink you.
- 04 When comparison lands mid-scroll, name the mismatch: their highlight reel, your ordinary Thursday. Then put the phone in another room.
- 05 At the end of the week, read your own signals before you open anyone else's.

RELATED RESOURCES

- One page that holds your year
- Your teaching story, told properly

It can help to know what the profession itself counts. YogaPros measures a teacher's standing in experience: hours taught and years in the room, verified, alongside the standards you teach to. None of that appears on a feed, and every part of it is already yours to build.

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Gratitude with a spine

The evidence-based gratitude practice, including the hard part: naming what a difficult chapter built in you. No fridge magnets.

A lot of teaching lives begin in a chapter nobody would choose. An injury that closed one door and, much later, opened this one. Or the year of burnout that made the old life impossible. Plenty of others begin quietly: a class tried out of curiosity that never let go. If yours is the quieter road, the practice here still stands, because every teaching life gathers seasons worth an honest accounting. And if yours did start in a hard chapter, the arithmetic is strange and familiar: the thing that broke your life open is also the reason you can hold a room now. Both things are true at once.

Gratitude is an awkward word to bring anywhere near any of that. It has been printed on too many mugs. Somewhere between the fridge magnets and the hashtags, a practice with twenty years of evidence behind it got mistaken for a mood.

There is a sturdier version, and it is worth reclaiming: what the research actually supports, and the harder exercise at the centre of it, naming what a difficult season built in you without once pretending it wasn't hard.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- When your gratitude practice has gone flat, or started feeling like performance

- In the weeks when the hard chapter sits close to the surface
- When you're guiding appreciation at the end of class and can't feel a word of it yourself

WHAT THE RESEARCH SUPPORTS

Gratitude research has been running for over twenty years, and its findings are more specific than the mugs suggest.

Two stand out. Specific and written beats vague and mental: three entries with real detail do more than a silent, general thank-you. And occasional beats constant. In more than one study, practising less often, with attention, outperformed practising more often, because dailiness slides into recital. The mind stops looking. The list becomes wallpaper.

The mechanism is ordinary and strong. Detail forces attention back over the day to find something true, and what the mind rehearses, it keeps. Written down, it becomes a record.

So the working format is small, and it fits inside a teaching life. Three things, with detail, a couple of times a week, in the notebook you already carry to class. Detail is the operative word. The rain that held off for the walk home is a better entry than *nature*. The student who finally let their shoulders drop is a better entry than *my students*.

THE HARDER EXERCISE

Benefit-finding is the research name for something older: looking a difficult season in the eye and naming what got built while you were surviving it. Studies of people who have come through serious illness or loss point the same way: those who can name what the season grew in them carry it differently afterwards. Not lighter, exactly. Differently.

One thing needs saying plainly. Nobody is asking you to call the injury a gift. The injury was an injury. The exercise names what got built while you were getting through it, which is different, and it only works if the hard part stays fully admitted.

A word about timing, too. If the season this touches is still raw, the exercise keeps; it will be here when you are ready. It is not required. Support first, writing later.

The form is a letter you will never send. Twenty minutes, by hand. Write to the season itself, or to the person you were inside it. Name what it took first; that part gets written honestly or the rest is decoration. Then name what got built: the patience your teaching runs on now, or the way you can sit beside a struggling student because you have sat where they are sitting. Fold it and keep it somewhere private. Some teachers read theirs once a year. Most never read them again; the writing itself is the practice.

KEEPING IT HONEST

Keep the whole thing on paper rather than in an app. Screens invite editing, and editing invites performance. A notebook lets an entry be clumsy and true at the same time.

And give it a fortnight before judging it. Four short entries and the one letter. Then decide honestly whether it stays. If it has done nothing, put it down without guilt; there are other doors into the same room. If it has, you will know, because the noticing starts happening on its own, mid-class, unprompted.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, write three entries with detail in the notebook you already carry. Let the detail do the work.
- 02 Choose two weekly slots and tie them to something that already happens, like the quiet after a regular class.
- 03 Once in the next fortnight, write the unsent letter. Twenty minutes, by hand, hard part first.
- 04 Keep all of it on paper.
- 05 After the fortnight, decide honestly whether it stays.

RELATED RESOURCES

- A morning practice that isn't for your students
- Five facts of a teaching life

Ask around any room of teachers and the same story keeps surfacing: someone arrived as a student in a season of crisis and, years later, is the one holding the room. Across YogaPros, that story repeats. If the hard-chapter start is yours, you are in serious company.

This piece is professional-development reflection, not therapy. If things feel heavy right now, talking to your GP or a qualified counsellor is a stronger move than any worksheet.

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Five facts of a teaching life

Students leave and studios close. Five facts of a teaching life, why none of them is a verdict, and what stays yours to control.

The message lands on a Tuesday afternoon, between the school run and your evening class. The studio is closing at the end of the month. Six years of Thursday nights, finished in two lines and a sad-face emoji.

You know the spiral that starts here. Maybe the numbers were my fault. Maybe I should have promoted the class harder. By ten o'clock a closing studio has become a referendum on you, and you're lying awake questioning the whole career.

This piece is for that night. Five facts that sit underneath every teaching life, none of which means what the spiral says it means, and a way of sorting what is actually yours from what never was.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The week a studio closes or cuts your slot from the timetable
- When a regular disappears and you're rereading your last class for the reason
- The night cover falls through, or a workshop doesn't fill
- Any stretch when the profession seems to be handing down a verdict

THE FIVE FACTS

Students leave. Even the ones who told you the class saved their week. Shifts change, babies arrive, knees object, families move. Most of it has nothing to do with you. And you will almost never be told the real reason.

Rooms rise and fall. January arrives full of resolutions and August empties for the holidays. Numbers move with term dates and the weather, the way tides move with the moon.

Studios close. The decision is made in a spreadsheet you will never see, sometimes by someone who never took your class.

The timetable you built will change under you. The cover teacher cancels at five. The retreat doesn't fill, and the hall gets double-booked for a children's party.

Some classes don't land. You prepared well and taught well, and the room stayed flat anyway. A year of teaching hands you at least one of those nights.

Read the five together and something loosens. These are conditions of the work, the way weather is a condition of farming. Nobody thinks the farmer caused the rain.

AN OLD DISTINCTION THAT STILL HOLDS

Yoga got here first. The Bhagavad Gita's most quoted teaching says you have a claim on your effort and none on its results. Teach the class as well as it can be taught; the size of the room was never in the contract. For anyone whose results run through other people, that line is less philosophy than job description.

The Stoics taught the same sort. Epictetus, teaching nearly two thousand years ago, opened his handbook by dividing everything into two piles: what is up to us, and what is not. Your judgment and your effort sit in the first pile. Other people and outcomes sit in the second. Peace, he said, is a matter of working the first pile and leaving the second alone.

Modern research on acceptance keeps confirming the old instruction. People who spend their energy fighting facts they cannot change carry the stress longer and act later; people who accept the fact and redirect recover sooner. Acceptance has a bad name among those who confuse it with giving up. Up close it looks more like accuracy: an honest account of where your effort still works, so that all of it goes there.

SORTING WHAT IS YOURS

The practice takes ten minutes, on the night something goes wrong.

Take a page. Write what happened in one plain line, with no interpretation. “The studio closes on the 31st.” Underneath, make two short lists, one after the other, headed Mine and Not mine.

Not mine: the studio’s rent, the student’s new shift pattern, the children’s party, August. Mine: how I prepare, how I reply to the email, whether my insurance is current and my agreements are in writing, whether I ask the owner for a reference and a farewell announcement before the doors shut, where the class could move.

Then act once, small, from the Mine list. One message, sent before bed. The Not-mine list gets read and left alone. Notice where the spiral lives. Almost everything it wants to chew on sits on the second list, which is exactly why chewing never produces an action.

The sort will not keep studios open. It changes what a closure costs you, and it puts your effort where effort still moves something.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, ten minutes: write the five facts in your own words on one page and keep it inside your planner.
- 02 Next time one of them lands, do the one-line, two-list sort before bed rather than at 2am.
- 03 Pick one item from the Mine list and act on it within 48 hours.
- 04 Once a term, check the floor: insurance current, agreements in writing, venue contacts saved somewhere that isn't the studio noticeboard.
- 05 When the verdict sentence starts ("this must mean I'm..."), make yourself finish it with evidence. There usually isn't any.

RELATED RESOURCES

- After the class that didn't land
- What counts as a good class — rewritten

When the Not-mine list holds a closing studio or cancelled cover, the floor under you starts to matter. Insurance that is current and agreements in writing decide what a bad week actually costs. Keeping that floor solid is a large part of what a professional body is for; it is the part of a teaching life YogaPros holds steady so you don't carry it alone.

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The room you grow in

Teaching is quietly solitary work. What the company you keep does to your standards, and how to build your peer room on purpose.

The class ended well. The room emptied slowly, two students stayed behind to talk, and then it was the key in the box and the walk across the car park. The students left with a community. You left on your own.

From the outside, teaching looks like social work: thirty students a week who know your name. From the inside it can be one of the most solitary jobs going. You plan alone. In every room you work in, you are the only teacher present. Often nobody has watched you teach since your assessment, and there is no staffroom, no colleague who says “long day” and means the same day you had.

That solitude does quiet work on your teaching, and it can be answered on purpose: by building the room most other professions are handed by default.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- Nobody has watched you teach in years
- The only teachers you “know” are the ones you follow online
- You can’t remember your last conversation about teaching that wasn’t with a student
- You’re choosing a training and realising you’re also choosing company

SOLITARY BY DESIGN

None of this happened because you got something wrong. The job is built this way. A schoolteacher has a staffroom, and a nurse hands over to a colleague at the end of every shift. A yoga teacher has the car park.

And it arrives slowly, which is why it goes unnoticed. Nobody decides to become isolated. The diary just fills, year after year, until every professional hour is spent being the most senior person in the room. Which is comfortable. It is also the precise condition under which people stop growing.

YOUR NORMAL IS BORROWED

Research on reference groups keeps arriving at the same finding: we calibrate what is normal against the handful of people we can actually see. Standards and effort, prices and rest: the levels around you become the levels in you, mostly without a decision ever being made. Research on social networks suggests the effect carries surprising distance, with habits turning up in the odds of people two and three connections away, though how strong that reach really is remains debated.

For a teacher, the practical version reads like this. If the nearest teaching voices in your life are five accounts on a screen, those accounts are setting your sense of normal. A feed is a strange committee to hand that job to. If nobody around you keeps studying, study feels like showing off. If nobody rests, rest reads as slacking.

The tradition saw this coming. Satsang, the deliberate keeping of company that keeps you honest, has been named practice in yoga for centuries. And it was never described as a treat; it sits in the lineage as maintenance, the way practice itself does.

BUILDING THE ROOM ON PURPOSE

Treat your peer room as something you design, with the same intention you would bring to sequencing a class.

Start by taking someone else's class as a student. Weekly if you can manage it, monthly at least. It rebuilds the memory of what a room feels like from the mat, and it is the easiest peer door in the profession: teachers talk to teachers who turn up.

Then make one conversation a month a working one. A coffee where you bring a real question: the sequencing problem you keep circling, or the pricing wobble you would never post about. Most teachers are quietly starving for exactly this conversation and assume everyone else is already having it.

Keep one voice in your room whose standard stretches you. A teacher whose classes make you want to plan better. Proximity to a higher bar raises yours without a word of advice changing hands.

And somewhere in your year, be the least experienced person in a room. A mentorship, say, or a training day. If you are always the most senior person present, your ceiling has been set at your own height.

ACTION STEPS

- 01** Today: list the five teaching voices you're closest to, screens included. Next to each, write what it makes feel normal.
- 02** This week, book into another teacher's class as a student. Local beats famous.
- 03** This month, ask one teacher you respect for twenty minutes and bring one real working question.

04 This term, put yourself in one room where you're the least experienced person present.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Who looks after the teacher?
- After the course high

The room is bigger than it looks from the car park. There are 10,000+ teachers across 100+ countries in the professional body behind you, and some of them teach five minutes from where you do. The YogaPros community and the member directory exist so that when you go looking for your room, it is already there.

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After the course high

Trainings end and Tuesday comes back. How to keep one thing from any course or retreat, with a fortnight's plan that makes it stay.

The last afternoon of a training has a feeling all of its own. The closing circle, and a notebook full of things you are going to do differently. Phone numbers swapped with people who were strangers four days ago and now know more about you than some of your oldest friends. You come home certain that something has shifted for good.

Then Tuesday. The inbox, the washing, the school run, the same 6pm class in the same draughty hall. By the weekend the notebook has migrated to a bag. Within a fortnight it is in a drawer, and the shift you were certain about has quietly gone back to being an intention.

If you recognise that sequence, you're in very large company. The fade is a design problem rather than a discipline problem, and the fix takes a fortnight. It works after any course, whether that was a weekend of CPD or a 200-hour training.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- The week you get home from a course or a retreat, CPD included
- When last month's course notebook is still in the bag
- When you catch yourself booking the next course mostly to feel that feeling again

WHY THE GLOW FADES

On the last day of a course, everything around you is arranged for the new thing. Someone else holds the timetable and meals simply appear. Everyone around you is doing the same work. There is nothing to remember, because the structure remembers for you.

Home has none of that scaffolding. The old week is already there, fully built, with years of experience at being your week. Research on habit formation is plain about the mismatch: surroundings and cues beat intention nearly every time. The course changed you for four days. It did not change your Tuesday.

None of which makes the glow worthless. The glow is fuel. It simply has a shelf life, and the fortnight after you get home is when it is still burning.

ONE THING, WRITTEN LIKE A PLAN

The first move is subtraction. A course hands you fifteen ideas, and the closing-circle version of you promised to keep five. Keep one. Choose the practice that made the biggest difference to how you felt or taught, and let the rest live in the notebook. Notebooks keep.

Then turn the one thing into a plan with its moment named.

Psychologists have studied what they call implementation intentions since the 1990s, and the finding is almost embarrassingly simple: people who wrote down exactly when and where they would act followed through at roughly double the rate of people who merely meant to. The sentence does the remembering, so your willpower doesn't have to.

The shape is an after and a where. “After I drop the kids at 8.40, I sit on the mat in the front room and do ten minutes of the breath practice from the weekend.” Specific enough that at 8.41 there is no decision left to make.

A FORTNIGHT WITH A FLOOR

A fortnight is long enough to find out whether the practice deserves its place, and short enough to survive real life. Two rules make it keepable.

Start within 48 hours of getting home. Before the washing wins. The glow is still fuel inside that window, and one small rep while it burns is worth three planned for next month.

And set a floor: a worst-day version, written next to the plan. One minute instead of ten. One round of the breath instead of twelve. The floor means the day the boiler breaks does not end the run, and an unbroken run is most of the point. Yoga has held this idea for a very long time as *abhyasa*. The Yoga Sutras say practice stands firm when it is tended for a long time without interruption. A course supplies the material; *abhyasa* is the part only you can do, and it was always the quieter of the two.

At the end of the fortnight, sit down with the course notebook for ten minutes and decide on purpose whether the practice stays, and at what dose. Swapping it for a different page of the notebook counts as a decision too. The only way this fails is by never deciding at all.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 Today, or the day you get home: choose the one practice and write the plan sentence with its after and its where. Put it somewhere you'll see it at the time it names.

- 02 Write the worst-day floor next to it.
- 03 Start within 48 hours. Start small.
- 04 Tick each day of the fortnight somewhere visible. The same page as the plan works well.
- 05 At the end of the fortnight, take ten minutes with the notebook and choose what happens next.

RELATED RESOURCES

- You qualified. When do you feel like a teacher?
- A morning practice that isn't for your students

Courses end on a date; the standard they leave behind is yours to keep. Holding your own bar between trainings is most of what belonging to a professional body means in practice. It is why the profession accredits CPD in the first place: a course counts for the record, and it counts again when what it taught you is still standing a season later.

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One page that holds your year

Nobody books your annual review when you teach yoga. One quiet page, written once and kept in view, does the job.

A Sunday evening in September, the kitchen table, and the new diary open at a blank week. You copy the timetable across from the old one: the 6pm, then the 7.30. Same grid, same handwriting, one year on. Somewhere between one pencilled-in class and the next, a thought arrives sideways: you have planned next week hundreds of times. You cannot remember ever planning the year.

Most lines of work would have caught this by now. Somebody books a room and asks what went well and what didn't, then writes down where you are heading. It can be tedious, and it does something quietly important all the same: once a year, the work gets looked at instead of just done. When you teach yoga, nobody books that room. Whole years go past, well taught and unexamined.

This piece is the review you run yourself, and all of it fits on one page. A single quiet sheet in your own handwriting: why you teach, and what this year is for. Written once and kept where you can see it. Read far more often than it is rewritten.

WHEN TO USE THIS

- At the turn of a year, September as much as January

- The week after a training ends, while direction still feels clear
- When the weeks are fine and nobody, including you, has asked where this is going

WHY A PAGE WORKS

The evidence for something this small is surprisingly firm. Decades of research on goal-setting show that written, specific intentions get acted on at far higher rates than intentions held in the head. A hope stays a hope; a line on paper becomes a decision you have already made once. Work on commitment devices adds the second half: a promise you can see keeps working on you, which is why this page lives on a wall or in a planning folder and never in a drawer.

Yoga holds the older version. A sankalpa is an intention stated plainly and returned to until it starts to organise what happens around it. This page is a sankalpa with a pen in its hand: written in your own words and read back on purpose, every time your eye crosses it.

WHAT GOES ON THE PAGE

Seven fields, all short. If you have read other pieces in this series you will recognise some of them arriving home; if you haven't, the page stands on its own.

- 01** Why I teach. One or two sentences, in words you would say out loud. Everything else on the page answers to this line.
- 02** What I am building this year. One line about the year's work: the classes, the setting, the standing you want twelve months to add. "A settled Tuesday and Thursday, and my first daytime class" is a perfectly good answer.

- 03 The question I teach from. The steadier inner question you have chosen to work under this year. If you have done that rewriting, the new question goes here in ink.
- 04 My rules for a good class. Two or three conditions that are yours to control, such as preparation done and your attention genuinely in the room. Rules an empty Tuesday cannot break.
- 05 Three signals I will trust. Your own measures of a good year: who keeps coming back, and the hours and years accumulating behind you. The third is often a sentence a student said that you wrote down the same evening. Signals that don't depend on a full room or a feed.
- 06 One intention per season. Four short lines. A teaching year has seasons; January fills, August thins, and each stretch does different work. Give every season one job: rest and planning for the quiet one, the new class for the full one. Yours will differ. The point is that a year is easier to hold as four smaller years.
- 07 Review dates. Two, put in the diary before the pen goes down. Twenty minutes each, six months apart.

WRITING IT AND KEEPING IT

Give it one evening. Forty minutes, with last year's diary and any course notes within reach, and a first draft that is rough and truthful. Nobody else needs to see this page, so write like nobody is marking it.

Then put it where your eyes already go: the front of your planning folder, or the inside of the wardrobe door. Photograph it for your phone if you like, but keep the paper original. Paper carries a weight a screen doesn't. Amend in pen at the review dates and leave the crossings-out visible; they are the record of an honest year.

There is a printable fill-in version of this page with this guide, sized to live where your planner lives.

Re-read it when a season turns, and at the two dates in the diary. And on any Tuesday when the work feels like it is just happening to you. The page will not answer everything. It will remind you that someone is steering, and that it is you.

ACTION STEPS

- 01 This week, one evening: forty minutes, one sheet, all seven fields in rough. Rough counts.
- 02 Put the page where you will see it weekly, and the two review dates in the diary tonight.
- 03 Read the season's intention before the first class of each new season.
- 04 At the mid-year date, amend in pen and keep the crossings-out.
- 05 At year end, write the next page alongside the old one. The pile becomes its own record.

RELATED RESOURCES

- The question you teach from
- What counts as a good class — rewritten

An annual look at the work is ordinary professional practice everywhere else, and this page holds the half of it only you can see. Your Live CV holds the other half: the verifiable record of the same year — the qualifications, the training, the hours, the years. Read together, once a year, they are the closest thing this profession has to that meeting nobody books for you.

This guidance is for general awareness and professional orientation. It is not a substitute for professional legal, tax, or insurance advice, or for medical or mental-health care, specific to your individual situation.