



# **Yoga Teacher Training Guide**

5 Things Every Student Should Know  
Before They Take A Yoga Teacher Training

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Welcome Yogi!

My name is Sarah Thompson and I am the co-founder of YogaTrainingGuide.com, a site that helps yoga students along their path of becoming a yoga teacher and find the right school for their teacher training.

Like you, I started practicing yoga (back in 2002) and reached a certain point in my practice where I was ready to take it to the next level. Since most studios focus on working with beginners, I thought it might be good for me to take a teacher training.

I wasn't sure if I wanted to teach professionally or just do it for myself, but what I did encounter was quite a challenge in finding the right program and had a few questions as to how all of this stuff really works.

Through my extensive research, I discovered over 1000 schools offering teacher trainings programs and a lot of information about how the yoga school community works. Because I felt so overwhelmed at times, I decided I wanted to help my fellow yogis make this process much easier!

Over the last three years I have helped hundreds of students address their questions and concerns about whether or not they should take a teacher training and which school is right for them.

Because it seems as though I keep answering the same questions over and over again, I thought I would make this simple E-book that will help clarify some of the most pertinent questions being asked.

Whether you just want to deepen your practice or teach professionally, this E-book and our site will aide and assist you along your path.

Sincerely and Namaste,

Sarah

## **Question1: What Is A Yoga Teacher Training?**

One of the biggest misconceptions I see with students when they search out a yoga teacher training is the understanding of what it really is and means. While a teacher training program can cover many topics such as asanas, pranayama, meditation, yogic philosophy, postures and alignment, food & nutrition, etc...these are just the “tools” that are being taught.

However, there is something much more going on then meets the eyes. What a yoga teacher training really is, is your graduation towards becoming a self-reliant and responsible human being and let me explain...

For many of us, we found yoga because we needed some help with our lives. Either something was going on emotionally or physically (probably both) that brought us to a yoga class and it changed our lives.

As soon as we began to notice how much it impacted our lives, we got hooked and we wanted more. So we began going to as many yoga classes as we could, started taking workshops, going to events, reading books, listening to audios and watching videos, and so on.

Over the course of six to twelve months we immersed ourselves in our style of yoga and it changed our lives.

### **But why did it change our lives so much?**

Because many of us have had very poor upbringings. Lets face it, our parents did not do that great of a job of teaching us the tools we need to create a vibrant, healthy, balanced, and thriving life (both physically, emotionally, and spiritually) and so we lived for years in misery until the point where we reached our first yoga class.

Now I am in no way here to bash on our parents because the truth is that they did the best they could with what they had. And for many of you, your parents did a fine job of teaching you some core life principles on how to be a good person.

But what many of us did not learn is how to:

- Manage stress
- Breathe effectively
- Move in our bodies
- Eat properly
- Love ourselves
- Address conflict

Etc...

These are the other core life principles that seems to get lost in the survival hustle and bustle many people are focused on.

But once we discovered yoga, what we really discovered is our authentic self.

But after one (or however many years you have been practicing), you have now reached a point in your practice (which is **your life**) where it's time to move on to the next step. You see, **change is the only constant** and we must always grow, evolve, and move forward no matter how much we have grown.

So what a yoga teacher training really is, is **your graduation to the next phase of your life**. It is where you become a self-actualized human being and take full responsibility for your choices and actions in life.

Whether you are choosing to teach professionally or just want to deepen your practice, a yoga teacher training is your **next transformation point**.

Are you ready to evolve and take on this responsibility?

## Question 2: But what if I am afraid?

This is one of the most common issues that come up for students: fear. But what exactly are we afraid of? In my honest opinion, three things:

1. Fear of failure
2. Fear of ourselves
3. Fear of the unknown

### **Fear Of Failure**

Many of us have been brought up in a way where we are more concerned about what others might think of us so we choose to be afraid of failure because we don't want to be seen by others as not good enough. Because of this, we are always afraid to try things out.

I want to offer you a suggestion: instead of defining "things not working out" as failing, redefine this experience as "trial and error" or your "learning curve". Anyone who is successful has also gone through trial and error and experienced a learning curve. No one just started out perfect!

So relax, take it easy on yourself, and give yourself permission to walk your path in a manner where you can go through your learning curve. So long as you give 100% and act with integrity, you have done all you can do.

### **Fear Of Ourselves**

Because our parents and society did not give most of us the tools to truly live our authentic lives, living at a "below standard" capacity has become the norm.

There is an old saying that goes "It's lonely at the top" and I used to think this only had to do with money and power. But the truth is that it applies to anyone living at a higher vibration.

Do you notice how there are very few leaders in the world which is why we hand our power over to presidents and other “officials” who are willing to take these rolls on? It’s because no one wants those jobs. It’s easier to be on the sideline complaining than it is to lead.

Well the same goes for your evolution: you have become comfortable with familiarity and it’s easier to be a follower than it is to lead. When you become a leader (even of just yourself), you now have a much larger responsibility and have no one but yourself to blame if your life is not going the way you want it.

Remember in the last chapter how I talked about how our parents and society did not give us the greatest start to our lives? Well deep down in our subconscious we use this as an excuse as to why our lives may not be as great as it could be. We use our past to blame our present circumstances and because we had no control over them, we feel a little bit better about ourselves.

But what happens if we take a yoga teacher training and are now made aware of the fact that we are fully responsible for our lives and must now behave in such a manner? A yoga teacher training is a “right of passage”. Something that most of society has lost and that indigenous tribes (to this day) still practice.

Our brothers and sisters in the jungle are very well aware of the importance of rights of passages. It is important that each of us have a benchmark in our lives that say:

*“Hey, you just hit a milestone in your life and are growing up. It’s time to behave in a different way now.”*

We have become frightened of our own power because we don’t know what to do with it. Other people have been telling us how to live our lives and now all of a sudden we must be ready to take full responsibility for who we are in this world.

## Our Greatest Fear

*“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.*

*Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.*

*It is our light not our darkness that most frightens us.”*

**- Marriane Williamson**

### **Fear Of The Unknown**

And because we are so afraid of becoming our higher and powerful selves and we don't know what that world looks like, we become afraid of the unknown. Lets face it, going to the same yoga classes and just being a student is safe and easy. You know what your role is and what to expect. You don't have to lead you just have to follow.

And because you are “just a student”, no one expects much of you. This way if you make a mistake or behave in a certain way, then you can chalk it up to “I'm just a student”.

Have you noticed how much criticism John Friend and Bikram have gotten? If you are a student then no one cares about your sexual conduct or any other behaviors (for the most part). But when you are a teacher/leader, then all eyes are on you and this is what is scary for many students: the responsibility.

Now more than ever, our world needs more leaders that are coming from a place of love and compassion. We need you to step up, claim your power, and act like the God or Goddess that you truly are.

Our world is being run into the ground by a bunch of immature children who are constantly fighting over ridiculous things and then take us into war with other countries for monetary gain.

It's time to stop just being someone on the sidelines watching and complaining and becoming a leader who can help steer this planet in a new healthy direction.

So my question to you is this: Are you ready to face your fears and claim your power?

### Question 3: What should I look for in a yoga school?

There are three key factors that determine what you should look for in a yoga school:

1. What is your goal?
2. Who is the teacher leading the program?
3. What style of yoga do you want to align yourself with?

#### Your Goal

It is VERY important that you have a clear goal as to what you want to accomplish by taking a yoga teacher training. So please pull out a piece of paper or a Word doc on your computer and answer these questions:

- A. Do you want to teach professionally or just deepen your practice?
- B. What do you want to gain from the teacher training?
- C. Are there any specific tools or methodologies you would like to learn?
- D. What type of people do you best resonate with? Are they more spiritually oriented or fitness oriented? Are they a bit more “hippie”, “playful and young”, “mature and simple”, etc...

#### The Teacher

*“What you see in another you see in yourself”*

It is very important that you resonate with the teacher and that they have qualities you want in yourself. So answer this question:

What two or three qualities are you looking to improve upon in yourself? For example: more confidence, strength, playfulness, elegance, more grounded, etc...



Remember, the technical mechanics of yoga are all pretty much the same. Yes, each style such as Vinyasa, Hatha, Kundalini, etc...may vary. But each teacher becomes a “filter” for these tools.

Our teachers, in many ways, become the parents we never had. This is why so many students become enamored and hand their power over to teachers because they are seeking those qualities in themselves (this is what happened with John Friend).

**Note: Never hand your power over to a teacher (or anyone).**

Remember, what you see in another you see in yourself. So it is important to find a teacher that has the qualities you want in yourself. Now the truth is that there will probably be a few teachers that have all the qualities you seek and this is fine. Start with one and then go from there.

## **Style Of Yoga**

If you plan on just deepening your practice and have no intentions in teaching professionally, then this only matters based upon your preference. But if you plan on teaching professionally, then you need to draw a line in the sand and decide “which club” you are going to run with.

From a business perspective, each style has its own circle. Now I am not saying that Vinyasa people don’t mix or mingle with Kundalini people, but generally speaking when you are starting out as a teacher, the style of yoga you train in will determine who you can play with. Once you are more established then you can venture out and mix it up.

So your best bet is to keep it simple and start with a major one such as Hatha, Ashtanga, Vinyasa, Power, and Kundalini. Then as you expand your brand and practice (and grow your following), you can mix it up a bit more.

## **Question 4: Should a school be certified by the Yoga Alliance?**

Here is the deal with the Yoga Alliance: It's a political "pay to play" game where schools feel pressured to have to get registered with them so that you the student feel better that the school is accredited by an outside source.

The Yoga Alliance does not go around policing schools. This means that if a school gets accredited by them and then decides to change something in their curriculum, the Yoga Alliance would never know nor do they have the resources to keep on top of over 1200 schools.

However, it is good that there is at least one organization setting some form of standards that schools should adhere to. But these standards are very subjective and have very little to no impact on your education.

### **The Truth**

If you want to teach professionally in the US, then yes make sure your school is registered with the Yoga Alliance. Many studios won't hire you unless you are a registered teacher. And you can't get registered unless you took a training from a school that is accredited by the YA.

However, please be aware that if you are just looking to deepen your practice, then it really does not matter whether they are registered or not. And most importantly, just because a school is accredited by the YA does not mean they are better than one that is not. All a school does to get accredited is pay them a fee and submit their curriculum to ensure it meets a specific set of standards (which is not very hard to do).

So don't get too caught up on this. If you want to teach professionally, then just "play the game".

## Question 5: Can I make money as a yoga teacher?

The short answer is yes. However, what most schools won't tell you is that it takes a lot of work to learn the business side of teaching. In the beginning you make very little because you are unproven. After you prove yourself, then you can make more.

### **Beware of the school who markets to you that you can make a lot of money!**

If you see any school marketing to you that you can make lots of money, then they are no different than some get rich quick scheme. Once again, yes you can make a lot of money. But it takes a lot of work. Just like the get rich quick schemes, those systems can work. But they are not "quick". Anything in life takes work.

The name of the game is about building your own following of students. Yoga studios have a business to run and they are in the business of "filling yoga classes". They want to hire the teachers who are going to bring a following, not a teacher that has no one that will show up to their class.

So when you first start out, you need the studio more than they need you. The name of the game is to turn that around so that the studio needs you. And the way you do this is by building your name and following which can take some time.

But don't let this discourage you! The truth is that no matter what industry you are in, you have to "build your career". If you were to become a doctor you don't get out of school and start making \$100k right away. You do internships and play the game to build your career.

So whether it's teaching yoga, becoming a health practitioner, becoming a graphic designer, or working in ANY industry, you have to pay your dues like everyone else.

Here is the secret: No matter what industry you are in you are going to have a two year hill to climb. Once you climb it, it starts to get easier. So you better make sure you love what you do so you can push through the challenges because you will face them no matter what!

The good news is that if you are authentic and willing to learn the trade, not only can you make good money (well over \$100k), but you will love your life.

A career and your “life purpose” is about creating the **lifestyle** you want. Not just about the money you make. Look at it this way....

You could work a desk job and make \$50k. Or you can be a yoga teacher and in the beginning only make \$30k. But the difference is that being a yoga teacher means you have an opportunity to grow where as most desk jobs you have very little (especially for woman). And, you will be living the lifestyle you want and every day is filled with you doing yoga instead of sitting at a desk!

## Getting Started

Did you know there are over 1200 schools in the US and around the world that offer yoga teacher training programs? I know that can feel overwhelming. So if you need help finding the right program, please let us know.

We offer a **personal custom search** done by an actual human who not only addresses your goals, but we also take into account your personality type. We have a database of over 1200 schools and growing and we have interviewed each school so that we know exactly what they offer and what their “vibe” is.

### Here is how it works:

Step 1 - Tell us what you want

Step 2 - We send you up to 5 matches

Step 3 - We answer any of your questions or set up a call with the school you are interested in

Step 4 - We handle your tuition and booking

Step 5 - You take your teacher training!

[Begin your search here](#)

