

The Yamas and Niyama's are like guiding principles or ethical habits from yoga philosophy, offering a framework for living a balanced, peaceful, and meaningful life. Think of them as tools to help you be a better version of yourself and improve how you interact with others and the world. Here's a breakdown in simple terms:

The Yamas (How You Treat Others and the World)

These are about controlling your behavior and actions in a way that promotes harmony:

1. **Ahimsa (Non-violence):** Be kind to yourself and others. Avoid causing harm through your words, actions, or even thoughts.
 - *How to use it:* Practice compassion. When frustrated, pause and choose understanding instead of reacting harshly.
 2. **Satya (Truthfulness):** Be honest with yourself and others. Live authentically and align your actions with your true values.
 - *How to use it:* Speak the truth kindly and avoid exaggeration or deceit.
 3. **Asteya (Non-stealing):** Don't take what isn't yours, including time or attention. Practice gratitude for what you already have.
 - *How to use it:* Respect people's boundaries and focus on what you need, not just what you want.
 4. **Brahmacharya (Moderation):** Practice balance in your life. Avoid overindulgence and use your energy wisely.
 - *How to use it:* Limit distractions, whether from food, entertainment, or habits, to focus on what really matters.
 5. **Aparigraha (Non-possessiveness):** Let go of greed and attachment. Don't cling to possessions, ideas, or relationships out of fear.
 - *How to use it:* Declutter your home and mind. Share freely and trust that you'll have what you need.
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The Niyamas (How You Treat Yourself)

These focus on building positive habits and nurturing inner growth:

1. **Shaucha (Cleanliness):** Keep your body, mind, and surroundings clean and clear.
 - *How to use it:* Organize your space, eat healthy food, and practice mindfulness to maintain mental clarity.
2. **Santosha (Contentment):** Be satisfied with what you have. Find joy in the present moment, no matter the circumstances.
 - *How to use it:* Practice gratitude daily, even for small things like a sunny day or a kind word.

3. **Tapas (Discipline):** Build inner strength through effort and commitment. Push yourself gently toward positive habits.
 - *How to use it:* Stick to a routine, like exercising or meditating, even when it feels challenging.
 4. **Svadhyaya (Self-study):** Reflect on yourself and your life to grow and understand who you are.
 - *How to use it:* Journal regularly or read inspiring books to gain insights about yourself.
 5. **Ishvarapranidhana (Surrender):** Trust in something bigger than yourself. Let go of the need to control everything.
 - *How to use it:* Practice acceptance when things don't go as planned and trust the process of life.
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How to Begin Using Them in Your Life:

1. **Start Small:** Pick one Yama or Niyama that resonates with you and focus on practicing it daily. For example, you could start with Ahimsa by being kinder in your interactions.
2. **Reflect Daily:** Take a few moments to think about your actions and thoughts each day. Were they aligned with the principle you chose?
3. **Be Patient:** Change takes time. Don't expect to be perfect progress is more important than perfection.
4. **Incorporate Gradually:** Over time, add more of the Yama and Niyama into your life, weaving them into your daily habits and mindset.

By practicing these principles, you'll likely notice more peace, clarity, and balance in your life. They're not rules to follow rigidly but gentle reminders to help you live with purpose and harmony.

If you are interested in going deeper in understanding more about Yama and Niyama and how to embody and incorporate these basic yogic principles of right living please buy Maetreyii Ma's book, [Living Love the Yoga of Yama and Niyama](#) on her website or directly from Amazon.