

The logo for Chromatic Yoga features the word "CHROMATIC" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. A thin, gold-colored circle is positioned behind the letters "O" and "M". Below "CHROMATIC", the word "YOGA" is written in a gold-colored, sans-serif font.

CHROMATIC YOGA

2019 Chromatic Yoga Level 1 Teacher Training Manual
Written by Matt Giordano

Chromatic Yoga

What is Chromatic Yoga?

Chromatic Yoga is a systematic approach to teaching that provides a highly intentional and purposeful experience for students to cultivate awareness of their body and mind. Authenticity is our highest core value for the purpose of cultivating a supportive and empowered community.

Our Vision:

To ignite, and unveil each persons highest potential and empower them to live boundlessly.

Chromatic Yoga is a school that honors and welcomes the wide variety of yoga traditions and styles. Rather than defining ourselves by the postures or practices, we instead look at the higher purpose: recognizing that we are intimately and energetically intertwined with each other through the force of nature that exists within us. We are each unique expressions of a bigger power. This realization can be attained in any moment when we pause and become aware of the magnificence of our body, mind, and breath, but is easily forgotten in the busyness of our daily life.

P.A.C - Pillars of Chromatic Yoga

P.A.C conveniently represents the pillars of chromatic yoga - a pack of wolves for example, is a community that comes together to support their collective strength, fulfill their social rolls, looking out for the well being of one another. Chromatic Yoga is a place where we support one another in our journey toward our highest potential. Empowerment each individual inspires a rising of the collective. Chromatic stands upon these pillars:

Practice: *Practice is the action of aligning with our intention on a regular basis.* Chromatic teachers and students alike honor the importance of practice as the way toward self-awareness and living boundlessly from our highest potential. This is not limited to being on a yoga mat, but rather wide open to the spectrum of practices for the purpose of revelation. *From practice comes wisdom, and from wisdom comes the empowerment to support the rising of others.*

Authenticity: Authenticity, also a chromatic core value, is a pillar which we stand upon. To be authentic we must strip away the layers of our emotional armor and be courageous enough to share ourselves for the sake of inspiration and heartfelt connection. *Authenticity requires courage and vulnerability, and it is the energy that attracts abundance of all of life's gifts that we seek.*

Community: Community makes us stronger and holds us to our spiritual path - it binds us to our integrity. In this community we are held (and hold others) from a place of love. We support each other in our "Practice" of staying true to our intention. This is not about shaming or guilt but rather serving as a reminder and a reflection of our highest intention. When we are not living or acting in alignment with our intention the first thing we will do is step away from anyone that would remind us of that. This is why community is a pillar - it serves as a reminder of who we truly are below the surface of day to day troubles and it asks us to step up to our fullest potential. *In the good times, community is our collective strength for which we thrive, in the bad times community is the fire that re-ignites our soul's purpose, but first you must choose it.*

Awareness, Conscious Action, Transformation (A.C.T)

Chromatic Yoga seeks a remembrance of our true nature by providing a platform to explore self awareness through the structure of the elements of nature, known as the Maha Buthas: Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space. The elements are a way of breaking down the larger force nature into smaller pieces—to understand the whole, we study its individual parts. Being that we are nature, we each have the qualities of each element within us. By observing these qualities we become more self-aware and have the opportunity to unveil the truth about ourselves.

Chromatic teachers use this approach to support the growth of our students by breaking down bigger challenges (postures, practices, life goals) into smaller digestible parts, and encourage a step by step approach toward awareness, conscious action and transformation (A.C.T)

A.C.T (*awareness, Conscious action, transformation*) is a method unraveling patterns. Chromatic Yogis practice observing their patterns in order to better understand the "why" behind their way of thinking, feeling, acting, being (perspective). Our muscles have patterns based on our past physical experiences such as the sports we played, how we sat growing up, activities we did, injuries we had and so on. Our thoughts and emotions operate exactly the

same: if someone raises their hand in a classroom we are all patterned to assume that they are wanting to ask a question, this is a pattern. Some patterns serve us well and others do not. Our work as yogis is to become aware of them so we can have the freedom to change the ones that do not serve our well being. As teachers we provide the space for our students to do the same through the process we call Act.

- 1. Awareness:** What we are aware of can be changed. Awareness is strengthened by constantly directing our attention toward anything (breathe, body, the 5 senses, thoughts, emotions, subtle vibrational energy, etc.). Through practices attention building practice like asana, pranayama, meditation, contemplation, conversation we eventually become aware of our own awareness, and it is in this state that we deeply connect to all that is.
- 2. Conscious Action:** is required in order to make any type of change. Awareness reveals our patterns, but in order to make a change we have to take a different course of action in order to “Re-Pattern” our body or mind. Practicing non-action is still an action because it requires a choice to do something different which is to “observe” or witness. Action without being “anchored” into an intention can lose its purpose and its power when patterns are strong. Conscious Action is action that is inseparable from our higher intention, or the deep desire inside of us that desires long lasting change.
- 3. Transformation:** the result of repetitive awareness practices and conscious action over the course of time. Transformation requires a new pattern to be formed be it neurological, postural or otherwise. While change is inevitable, transformation is a choice and the Chromatic Yoga aims to choose.

H.E.A.R.T - Our Core Values

- 1. Humble**
- 2. Empowered**
- 3. Authentic**
- 4. Resourceful**
- 5. Tactical**

Humble: As we seek to reveal our highest potential we remain open ready for a revelation. To have a revelation requires the ability to not know for the sake of learning and growth. For many this means letting go of the need to be right, perfect or to have it all figured out. When we take the pressure off ourselves and

others to be perfect we open ourselves to growth, and the possibility of an life changing revelation. Humility is the willingness to stand fully in the “I don’t know”, and be open to what life (and others) have to offer. Humility is not about diminishing ourselves, but honoring our limitless potential over our insecurities.

Empowered: While we strive to be humble and open to our potential we also honor the magnificence of who we already are. Thus is the paradox: We are open minded to all that we do not know, but maintain the awareness of all we have to offer. We do not diminish ourselves to make others feel bigger, we stand tall in who we are and inspire them to rise up with us. When step into the roll of “teacher”, we confidently offer from the wisdom of our journey. There is no one in the world more qualified to share your life’s experience than you.

Authentic: As Chromatic teachers, we aim courageously to share our unique qualities and wisdom. Rather than trying to be what we think others want us to be, we share ourselves openly and honestly. This too requires courage and vulnerability. “What if they do not like me?” “What if they don’t like this class?” As a Chromatic teacher we recognize that being ourselves is actually a point of attraction— relaxing into our being (including our faults) allows others to relax into theirs. Authenticity requires removing emotional armor and leading by example. Your full potential to ignite the highest potential in other emerges the moment you step into your authentic expression.

Resourceful: While humility opens our minds to learning, growth and revelation, resourcefulness is the act of seeking out the knowledge and information that ignites the process. The chromatic teacher seeks to expand his/her knowledge first for personal evolution, and next to empower others. To be a yoga teacher there is so much to know and we will never be able to master all the aspects of the practice and this is one of the reasons we value community at our core. We may not have the answers, but think of our collective experience and the incredible knowledge that our global community has to share. The more willing we are to be resourceful, ask questions, seek information, the more supportive we can be for our students.

Tactical: Tactical and Resourceful go hand in hand because quite often to be tactical requires a certain level resourcefulness or willingness to do the research. Someone who is tactical employs a structured “plan” or “approach” toward their vision. *As Chromatic Yoga teacher this means mindfully structuring classes/ workshops/trainings for the sake of revealing each students highest potential. We*

do this in two main ways: sequencing (Physical Through-line), and theming (thematic through-line).

Teaching From the H.E.A.R.T: Humility and Empowerment are the emotional heart centered qualities. Resourcefulness and Tactics are the structured and linear qualities. To share Authentically, acknowledge which side you are most drawn to and embrace that in your teaching. H.E teachers will quickly be masterful at Thematic Through-lines, and R.T teachers will excel at Physical Through-lines. As a student, stay humble, open yourself up to the other side of the spectrum and with practice and time you will be able to masterfully integrate and share the full spectrum.

Chromatic Yoga Teachers lead with confidence and humility. We aim to lead by example rather than by unattainable perfection. We make mistakes and use them to empower our teaching. We encourage students to move toward their hearts desire and potential by inspiring them from our own experience. We are a community, a support system, students of our highest potential.

The Physical Practice

Technique and Alignment

One of the key defining factors that makes the physical practice of Chromatic Yoga is that it does not define any set alignment as being inherently good or bad- there is no one optimal way to hold your bones, or engage your muscles. Instead of defining a set alignment for each posture Chromatic Yoga offers a myriad of possibilities by teaching students the various anatomical actions available within any given shape. Instead we look at alignment as two questions:

1. What are the benefits?
2. What are the drawbacks?

These questions give rise to our potential rather than our righteousness. That being said the drawbacks of certain alignments due to high levels of risk might lead us to the decision not to practice them or offer them to our students. Respecting each others decisions starts with understanding the intention behind our choices. Our intention is based on what we are attempting to offer our students. Being clear with what the intention is, as well as the benefits and

drawbacks leads us to decrement - deciding what we feel is best based on our experience and education around the subject, in this case anatomy.

The focus is on feeling the sensations of the body and the poses are a platform to better understand our own bones, and muscles. Through This approach of sensation and knowledge based teaching, students gain a mastery of their body, empowering them to make their own decisions about what is most appropriate for them. The aim is to give Chromatic Yogi's the opportunity to know their body so well that they can choose what serves their over all well being. In addition, because of the increased body awareness, students develop the capacity to break down seemingly "advanced" poses and movements into small accessible parts which is the essence of this practice: The ability to take something complex and figure out how to approach it step by step.

Flow:

Similar to Technique and Alignment, there is no one way to move but rather we encourage students to find authenticity in their movement. That being said movement can be taught in two ways: Improvisational, and Technique.

Improvisation is the ability to freely access our current ability to move. Technique is the expansion of our movement potential. In the world of music, a guitarist can improvise given their current ability to move their fingers around the fret board, expressing themselves joyfully with skills they have. On the flip side they could also learn new scales and practice exercises to give them more freedom to express themselves without limitation of what their fingers are capable of.

Stepping into the Flow requires both letting go of the need to be perfect (improvisation) and the willingness to grow and step into the things that challenge us (technique). What is most important as teachers is being intentional with the space we are providing. Are we encouraging students to improvise, let go of their inner judgements, and access their creativity? Or are we giving them specific skills to help them discover their movement potential? By understanding this distinction we can be more powerful with the space we hold. While some of us will feel more authentic by offering one side of the spectrum, others will want to offer both sides.

Breath:

Breath is an imperative aspect of any yoga practice, calling our attention to it reminds us that we are full of life's energy. The breath often reflects how we feel and think, and it can also dictate our thoughts and feelings as well. It is the bridge between the mind and the body because it brings our attention back to the reality

that we are living beings of nature. Breathing allows us to stay present with our intention, and with how we feel. ***Chromatic Yoga is an awareness based practice***, so regardless if you are teaching Flow, or Alignment and Technique calling students attention to their breath will ultimately help students stay present throughout their actions and awake to the results. Breath can be taught in many ways to help students physically and mentally, and just like Alignment and Flow there is no right or wrong simply intention, benefits and drawbacks.

Mindset: "The Paradox"

A paradox is two contradicting truths. As Chromatic teachers we strive to see the benefits and drawbacks instead of rights and wrongs. This methodology provides a more open mindset. What if opposing opinions are both correct and yet can co-exist? What happens when the correct alignment of a yoga posture causes harm, and the incorrect alignment opens the door way to a students highest potential. We know this to be true along our path. Keeping an open mind and embracing paradox is the work of the chromatic yogi. The word Chromatic asks us to embrace the full spectrum of possibility. What could we achieve if the whole world embraced contrast? Yes, its an idealistic mindset but its something to work toward.

The Story Behind "Chromatic"

"Chromatic" comes from Art and Music. A Chromatic Color wheel is inclusive of all the steps from one color to the next as apposed to ROYGBIV which is a small representation of color. A chromatic Scale in western music includes all 12 Notes, where as most other scales include only 7. The famous major scale that every child learns in school "Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, Ti, (Do)" is a 7 note scale that skips 5 notes making it easier to create melodies for the beginner musician. Because there are less notes, it is easier to create something that sounds familiar and pleasant to the ear. For the child with tons of crayons they're coloring book might look like a blob of brown. Limitation and simplicity are great learning tools, but over time can inhibit potential creative expression as levels of proficiency rise. Again we see a *Paradox*. Often highly skilled musicians even in popular music will throw in a few extra notes here and there allowing the listener to feel a bit

surprised, or excited, but jazz music has fallen out of popular favor due to its complexity.

Similarly we find that many alignment based yoga styles ask us to fit ourselves into a specific shape. The benefit of this approach is that we may learn faster because we are less overwhelmed by the full potential of our body. Chromatic Yoga acknowledges this and utilizes the simplicity in the same way to help students feel empowered, however there is a fundamental difference. ***Simplicity is a learning tool, not the end result.*** Chromatic yoga limits options to help students learn rapidly but with time provides more options to help students move toward their highest, boundless potential. A chromatic teacher is skillful in keeping things simple (Black and white) when its appropriate, but courageous enough to share the spectrum of color.

Applying the Chromatic Approach

In a Chromatic Yoga workshop you may learn that there is a specific alignment for standing postures one day in order to understand how it provides greater access to the peak posture. The next day you might share the opposite alignment in order to align with a different intention. A class on Arm balances might emphasize protraction (separation) of the scapula, while a class on shoulder openers might offer the exact opposite alignment (retraction) for the shoulder blades. Rather than looking at a good or bad alignment, Chromatic yoga look for the *benefits and drawbacks* and align your choices with your intention. This will allow you to be purposeful with what you share instead of dogmatic.

The Step by Step Approach

The Chromatic approach is to see a goal and break it down into small easily approachable pieces. Rather than trying to climb up a cliff made out of sand, Chromatic yoga strives to look for steps upward toward where we want to go. For example when sequencing toward a peak posture, the teacher break the pose down into small pieces. What are the joint relationships (alignments), what muscles are stretching, and what muscles are engaging? Next devise a class plan that sets students of for maximum success. You will learn how to do this in the sequencing section of this manual and in Level 1 training.

The Elements

Chromatic Yoga uses the Elements as a basis for self-reflection (inquiry), communication (elements of voice), and sequencing for both our physical and thematic through lines. As Chromatic Teachers, we study the elements known as the Maha Buthas which are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space. The study of these elements can include philosophical traditions/systems such as Ayurveda, the Chakras, Tantra, etc. However, in order to authentically relate to each element we must observe nature. Observation of nature is the first *practice* when it comes to developing awareness of this systematic view of life.

Self-Reflection: As a being of nature, we have all the elements within us. To make this more comprehensible, let's look at the qualities of Fire in relationship to ourselves. A blacksmith uses the heat of fire to transform metal. The fire within us has the same transformative power. Fire is the energy of inspiration, motivation, empowerment, and transformation. Each element has multiple qualities, the more we observe them in relationship to ourselves, the easier it is to see how intertwined we are with nature. With this practice we can begin to see that we are not separate, but rather, we are aspects of nature.

Communication: Emotional energy evokes communication—when a feeling arises, thoughts form around it, and the desire to express ourselves leads us to speak and take action. This process of emotion to thought to expression happens so fast it can be automatic which we would call “reaction”. To help slow down and understand the process we can practice observing the internal experience of emotions and thoughts in relationship to the elements. For example we could pair feelings with elements such as: feeling light, free, joyful -“Air”. Or grounded, stable, safe “Earth”. The goal is to become authentic and effective in our communication with others, and that first requires internal clarity of our thoughts and emotions. For this purpose, we practice the Elements of Voice. (see below)

Sequencing/Theming: Utilizing the qualities of each element you can form sequences and themes for your classes. For example an earth based sequence might emphasize stability, or steadiness. Another possibility is to sequence around the root chakra. The elements can also serve as an easy thematic template for a retreats or trainings.

The Elements of Voice

The Elements of Voice is the practice of relating our inner environment - thoughts and emotions - to the elements of nature: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space. The goal of EOVS is to become aware of the effect we have on others, and use our voice for the purpose of inspiring and empowering everyone around us.

On the surface EOVS

1. Refines the vibration of your voice (tone)
2. Gives access to your range (pitch)

3. Helps you manipulate volume (dynamics)
4. Empowers you to let your words be heard (space)

In order to achieve these goals and maintain authenticity we must go beyond the surface. The voice is simply an outward expression and reflection of inner landscape (emotions, and thoughts). The EOV practitioner first cultivates *awareness* of their inner landscape to gain insight and clarity. Second *break through resistance* that deny's you access to one or more elements. Third is freely move through the range of emotions available to you and *boundlessly express yourself* and share with the world.

Awareness: To begin the observation of your internal landscape you will need a basis for self reflection. Start by categorizing the range of emotional experiences and include “ways of being”—Being grounded may not be considered an emotion but it certainly can be felt, so we can say this is a way of being or a feeling.

List Qualities of each Element

Earth:

Water:

Fire:

Air:

Space:

Given our Chromatic vision, to unveil and ignite the highest potential in ourselves and everyone around us for the purpose of living boundlessly, EOV requires Courage, Vulnerability, and high levels of Awareness.

Courage: For many of us it is easier to work on the outer tools of EOV (tone of voice, volume, verbiage) however in exploration of each element you will quickly find blockages in one or more elements. Herein lies tremendous opportunity for self-inquiry and break-throughs. The element that challenges you most will likely leave a pit in your stomach or tighten your jaw. You will want to run away from it—this is how you know you are on the brink of revelation! Courage will help you move into the fire of transformation and bring you through to the celebration on the other side of the adventure.

Vulnerability: Vulnerability is the ability to be completely honest with ourselves the face of our fears and judgements. We have emotional and thought patterns that cloud us from the truth, usually because its painful. These patterns also hold us back from stepping into our full power and potential. *If you value vulnerability than you can start a new pattern, one that celebrates who you truly are and allows you to share yourself boundlessly with everyone around you. A pattern of honesty and internal celebration will redesign the landscape of your inner world.*

Awareness: Awareness is the result of your courageous vulnerability, you will begin to see yourself clearly, unclouded by defenses and insecurities. This is where the empowerment lies. *It is in this pure, unobstructed place of clarity that you can access your connection to the infinite*

power of nature. Harnessing this power you will possess the necessary tools to ignite the highest potential in everyone you connect with.

Harnessing Your Authenticity and Versatility

Authenticity and Versatility

Versatility: Access to the spectrum of elements allowing for the ability meet others where they are at in their practice and support them in accessing their highest potential.

Authenticity: Ultimate clarity of our internal landscape and unrestrained ability to express ourselves. When someone is completely authentic it feels like they have taken off their emotional armor and shared their truth with you. This establishes trust and sincere connection, the perfect foundation to build student/teacher or any type of relationship upon.

The problem: without practice we have limited access to all 5 elements internally (emotionally) and outwardly (expressively). Therefore we can't be fully versatile with what we share. This is for a variety of reasons but it usually has to do with past relationships and experiences. For example if you had a boss who was particularly fiery and lacked self awareness and was often stressed out. And let's say they directed that fire toward you in the form of anger, aggression, verbal or physical abuse. Being on receiving end of this you would likely form a belief that people like that boss are not admirable, and your brain would negatively associate with the emotional qualities of fire. Next you would begin to value the opposite in yourself and others, seeing beauty in people that are calm, non-confronting, and even tempered. You would also be likely to express yourself in a calm or even quiet manner. Your verbal expression would change, and you would likely avoid raising your voice. Access to this element would be limited even if for the greater good.

Solution: Each of us has a story like this for one or more elements. This is why this EOVS system of self-inquiry is so powerful. It asks you to see each element in relationship to nature, and that all the elements have positive and negative qualities within them. We have access to all of these qualities within ourselves, but not without the the courage to be vulnerable and self-inquiry to cultivate awareness.

EOVS sets us on journey through our internal landscape and allows us to see our blindspots. Our past and our current choice is what makes each of us unique and powerful. To authentically express yourself with versatility you will need to go outside your comfort zone and willingly explore what feels inauthentic to you for the sake of *Practice*. With practice and time you will begin to feel comfortable in the elemental qualities that were once uncomfortable. Over time you will form new beliefs, have new internal stories and be able to authentically interact with each element. As each element becomes more authentic, versatility will emerge and your capacity to ignite others highest potential will infinitely expand.

Unveiling and Igniting The Physical Practice

How do we unveil the highest potential in our students within the physical practice of yoga? If we think about the teachers that have been most powerful in our lives they likely did one of the qualities below. (I.S.A)

1. **Inspire conscious action**
2. **Provoke Self Inquiry**
3. **Hold Space for Awareness**

Inspiration: Teachers that inspire us into conscious action are often our favorite simply because we have reaped the massive benefits of our own actions. Action out of inspiration feels light, joyful, easy, and sometimes even fun. Inspiring our students requires courage to go deeper and often the willingness to share your own challenges or lessons learned.

Self-Inquiry: Self inquiry is in essence the practice of yoga. Asana, pranayama, seated meditation, Yama's, niyamas, etc. are all practices of yoga that create the building blocks of going inward and asking our selves the questions. Self inquiry is the bridge from student to teacher, and from the physical to the non-physical. Provoking students to contemplate, and inquire with-in is awakens our core value of *Empowerment* within our students.

Awareness: At the highest level of the Chromatic practice is awareness, first on the physical levels and then beyond the physical and into the force of nature itself. It is from this place that are highest potential can be ignited. With routine practices that cultivates our awareness. Awareness is not something we can do for our students, but we can hold the space for them to reflect, observe, and be with themselves.

Applying I.S.A to the Physical Practice

How do we *inspire* people into conscious action in their physical practice?

1. **Practice:** Be the example of physical health - this does not require perfection only the willingness to do the work toward becoming more aware of your body.
2. **Share:** Share your revelations from your personal practice in a story at the beginning of class.

3. **Show:** Find the courage to show and demonstrate your practice, including your struggles. You can also empower other students to demonstrate and serve as an example of inspiration for everyone. *This also helps cultivate a supportive community*

How do we provoke Self-Inquiry in the Physical Practice?

1. **Ask Questions:** Inquiry is about asking questions, at first you can be the source of it. Ask them what they feel, how they feel, did that serve you, etc.
2. **Set an Intention:** Setting and intention or asking students to set one is the perfect opportunity to support students in self inquiry. If an intention is set at the beginning of the class, be sure to call back to it through out. For it to be physical inquiry it needs to relate to the physical body: *sensation*.

How do we hold space for Awareness?

1. **Attention:** Awareness of something can be cultivated through attention at first - attention on your body - see the masterful sequencing section to learn how to direct students attention toward their physical body.
2. **Observation:** Through out the class ask your students to feel their body, feel the sensations, observe the energy flow, “notice” subtle or obvious shifts. Asking students to observe begins the process of becoming aware.

Breathe, Stabilize, Expand

1. **Breathe:** When change occurs, be it a new pose, or life situation, take a breath first and feel into the experience as it is before trying to change anything. The breath is the bridge from the mind to the body. With an intentional breath self awareness is possible. In the asana practice, when you get to a new pose, try and feel your body - the sensations you are experiencing. Same is true off the mat, tuning into the body and the experience you are having physically can help release the grip of mental or emotional patterns and allow for a new experience to emerge. That being said, if you are experiencing something like anxiety, try not to make any shift or change just yet, just observe it and maybe label it - “feeling anxiety.” Follow that again with the breath.

2. **Stabilize:** Creating a safe space for yourself or your students can lay a solid foundation that encourages step 3 - expansion. In the asana practice if you try to push yourself deeper into a pose without creating a safe there is a higher risk of being ineffective in your efforts, or causing injury or failure. Creating a safe space in the asana practice is setting your body up so that it is stable. This could mean using props, or a partner. It could also mean activating your muscles, aligning your bones, or shifting your weight in such a way that your body feels more grounded and stable. As teachers our

verbal cues, visual demonstrations, and adjustments can all be tools we use to help our students feel safe and stable before we ask them to dive into transformation. Off the mat a safe space can be created for our students in many ways. Typically we as humans feel safe when we feel cared for or loved regardless of what we say or do. That love and care might be set by a teacher, and it can be created by ourself as well. Here are some guidelines for creating a safe space.

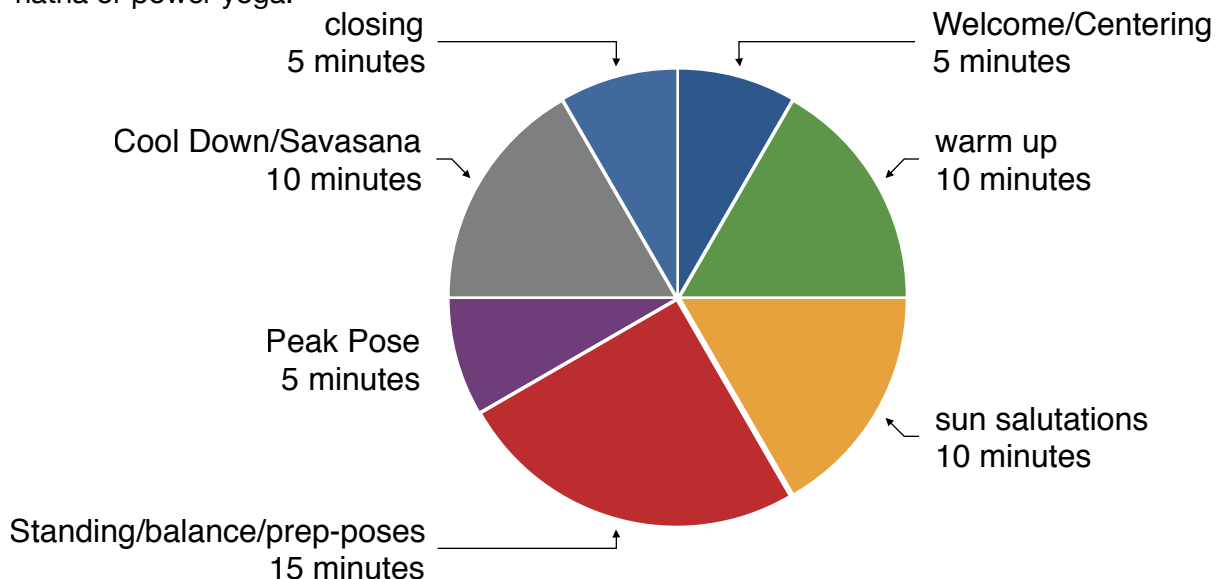
Tip: Build Trust. There are infinite ways to build trust in your self and with your students. You probably have your own methods but start paying attention to trust. Trust is often build on repetition, predictability, reliability, integrity, honesty, listening non-judgement, and authenticity.

3. Expand: While some teachers and students will avoid stability and push themselves or their students, others will avoid expansion out of fear. Fear of expansion likely came about because of a trauma on or off the mat. Some have had injury occur in their practice and then avoid either the whole practice or parts of it, doing themselves the disservice of the joy that comes with growth and change. Expansion is a natural instinct and if you are avoiding it for yourself or not providing the space for your students' growth, you will be denying the very nature of life. Expansion is the freedom we feel when everything lines up. When we establish presence through our breath, trust through our stability we are well set up for growth and expansion. From the expansion be sure to repeat step 1: breathe and connect to the new experience you are having.

Teaching Techniques and Tools

Masterful Sequencing

The first step to sequencing is to understand that there are sections to every yoga class. Before we get into the details of what to put into each section it is helpful to understand the general categories that you are likely already familiar with from your time practicing vinyasa, hatha or power yoga.



Welcome/Centering: 5 minutes

Welcome students to the class, ask about injuries, and bring the students attention into the present moment. This could include a dharma talk - a story or teaching that inspires students to put their heart into their yoga practice. It could also include pranayama, Childs pose, an om, or anything along these lines.

Warm Up: 10 minutes

Postures to awaken the body, typically low impact, slower movements and or joint mobility exercises like cat/cow, wrist ankle roles, lunge preparation, down dog, planks, baby cobra, etc.

Sun Salutations: 10 minutes

There are many sun salutations to help move the body, warm up the muscles, awaken the cardio vascular system, shake up thought patterns, and bring everyone into the energy of the group. Sun Salutations create heat in the body and help to create rhythmic breathing. For most vinyasa or power yoga classes you will be using Surya Namaskar A and B and for other hatha styles you will likely use a moon salutation or variations of Sun A and B.

Standing/Balance/Preperatory Postures (layering): 10-15 minutes

After the body is warmed up and breathing you can now provide longer held postures that challenge the strength and flexibility of the muscular system. This can include typical postures like warrior 1,2,3, side angle, triangle, half mood etc. In this group of postures you will want to “weave” in poses that prepare the body for the peak posture which I call “Layering” which you will learn about later on in this section.

Peak Pose: 5 Minutes

The peak posture is the culmination of the experience for students. This is where they will put together all the information that they have learned in their body and mind. The Peak Pose is often challenging in nature. We will get deeper into this later on. This is also a great time to include a visual demonstration for students to see how to approach the challenging posture, and to give them any tips you might provide. A Demonstration can also provide a brief mental and physical rest for students prior to attempting something that is demanding of their attention and physical strength.

Cool Down and Savasana: 10-15 Minutes

The cool down is a time to give your students the opportunity to feel the results of their practice both physically and emotionally. Postures tend to me more on the flexibility side, and calming for the nervous system. Forward folds, and hip openers tend to be more relaxing for the nervous system, where as backbends and inversions tend to me more exciting. Depending on your intention you can structure the cool down accordingly. If its morning time and you want students leaving more energized you may do a few forward folds and a mild backbend or simple inversion. If it is night time however you will want to avoid these postures all together. Twists tend toward a more neutralizing experience so these are a safe bet regardless.

Closing

Leave a few minutes at the end of class to wrap up the experience - this include providing an introspective experience. Ask students to feel their body or breath, or let them reflect on their experience. If you provided a theme, dharma talk, or teaching of some kind, be sure to bring this to a close so that there is an opportunity for students to carry the experience into their day.

The Purpose:

There are many ways to sequence a yoga class, but most teachers would agree that the primary purpose behind creating a sequence is to leave students feeling good. Coming up with

an intention behind your sequence can be very helpful in establishing your own template for creation. As a teacher my personal intention is to help students become more aware of their physical body which includes an increased ability to activate each muscle, feel the sensations of each muscle in an active or passive state, feel the sensations in and around their joints, and the subtle vibration of the physical body. I also feel it is responsible to teach students the names of the muscles, and their corresponding actions so that they gain the capacity to move their body on purpose in order to eventually have the ability to self adjust their body in order to feel better off the mat as well.

Other ways to sequence include things like following meridian lines, chakra stimulation, theme or philosophical teaching based, peak posture focused, digestive, emotional healing, etc.

For the Asana practice I recommend starting with a strong foundational understanding for the physical body first to establish the commonly understood traditional purpose for this practice - to address any physical body limitations that might otherwise distract the mind from being able to sit comfortably and focus for meditation practice. Once you establish a strong mastery of sequencing for the physical body than you can begin a path of creativity and authentic self expression based on your primary intention for teaching yoga.

Sequencing in its most basic form relates to a set of postures strung together to bring balance to the muscular system and realign the joints for more optimal postural alignment. In this exploration the physical body may become more capable of more complex postural alignments which we might call “peak poses”

The easiest way to develop sequencing skills is to start with a peak posture (a destination), and determine what muscles need to strengthen and what muscles need to lengthen in order to achieve the required joint alignments that make up the target posture.

Peak Posture: Often a peak posture is the most challenging posture in a yoga class due to the requirement of either strength, balance, flexibility, joint alignments and/or focus. In contrast to this definition, a peak posture might also be a simple pose but the entire class prepared for that moment. For example you could sequence a class to a complex pose such as Urdva Dhanurasana (full wheel/upward facing Bowe pose) or you could sequence to a posture like tadasana to support students in their awareness of their posture. Sequencing toward a complex pose tends to be easier for beginner students as the challenges tend to be more obvious than the subtle challenges of tadasana.

Strength and Flexibility:

Every posture requires both strength and flexibility of several muscles. When developing a sequence for a peak posture create two columns, one for strength and the other for flexibility.

1. Write down all of the muscles or muscle groups that are stretching.
2. Write down all the muscles groups that are strengthening in order to hold the posture.

Tip: Search the internet for the posture and look up tips. It is helpful to use yoga anatomy books such as the Key Poses of Yoga by Ray Long, or Yoga Anatomy by Leslie Kaminoff. Lets take a look at Dancer pose

Example
Peak Pose: Dancer pose

Strength	Flexibility
Lower Leg Muscles for balance	Hamstrings of standing leg
Outer Hip Muscles of standing Leg	Hip flexors of upper leg
Buttock Muscle of standing Leg	Pectoral muscles of bound arm
Adductors of standing leg (Abdominals
Extensors of the spine	Intercostal muscles (between the ribs to make room for expansion of the diaphragm)
Deltoids of the front arm	Front deltoids of bound arm
Flexors or the forearm of the hand on foot	Quads of upper leg
Diaphragm and transverse abdominals	
Quadriceps of upper leg	

Peak Action (aka Peak Engagement) & Target Stretch

After you have written down all of the muscle groups in the strength and flexibility column now is the time to choose one from each. How do you decide? Choose one from each column that you feel would provide students with the greatest access to the peak pose. Why only one from each column? You only have 60-90minutes and students can only learn and integrate 1-2 things at a time. To be effective at teaching you must be willing to limit the amount of information you provide for the sake of repetition and integration of knowledge and information. If you were teaching someone how to speak a language you would start with simple phrases and repeat these phrases over and over again rather than providing a dictionary of all the words they could use to have a full conversation. Peak Engagement is the muscle you are choosing from the strength column, and Target Stretch is the muscle you are choosing from the flexibility column.

Steps to Choose Your Peak Engagement and Target Stretch

1. Get into your body and try each muscle engagement, which one creates the greatest access to your peak posture?
2. Of all the muscles that require flexibility, which feels like it is most limiting?

Example
Peak Pose: Dancer pose

Peak Engagement And target Stretch

Peak Engagement	Target Stretch
Quadriceps of upper leg	Pectoral Muscles of bound arm

Note: *This is just one possible combination of many, and I may choose other combinations and create several sequences from just one peak posture!*

Layering:

The next step to the process is coming up with a set of postures for the strength category and stretch category. I recommend between 3-5 for each. Layering is the process of delivering information repetitively over the course of the class. Think of a layered cake that has icing between each of the layers of cake. The icing is the strength and stretch postures, and the cake itself are all the other postures that exists in the class including the warm up poses, sun salutations, cool down postures etc.

Example

Peak Pose: Dancer pose

Peak Engagement: Pectorals

Target Stretch: Quads

Layering Postures

	Peak Engagement: Quadriceps	Target Stretch : Pectoral Muscles
1	Lunge Prep Pose - “Press Back Knee Up to the sky”	1 Uttanasana with interlaced hands
2	High Lunge -“Press Back Knee Up to the Sky”	2 Humbled warrior - bowing with interlaced hands
3	Low Lunge w/thigh stretch “kick back foot into hand”	3 Belly on the ground, arm out to the side, twist to stretch pectorals
4	From All Fours- opposite hand to foot - “klick back foot into hand”	4 All Fours Opposite Hand to foot
5	Bow Pose - “Kick Both Feet into hands”	5 Bow Pose

Using this example of Layering Postures you can see that number 4 and 5 from each column are the same which is helpful in saving time. If a posture strengthens and stretches both of the target muscle groups it is likely to be a very effective preparation for the peak pose.

Advanced Structure for Sequencing

Physical Through-Line (PTL)

Physical Through-Line (PTL)

A Physical through is like a theme of a book - a message that keeps repeating until the conclusion. Make a choice for your physical through line, of all the muscles that are required to strengthen and stretch, choose one of each that you feel will provide the greatest access to the peak posture. This is challenging for most teachers - once you understand all that is required its hard to limit the focus to one muscle group to strengthen and one to stretch.

Action Cues:

Consider you PTL, how will you get your students to engage the muscle or move their bones accordingly? Brainstorm the myriad of ways you could - write them down and place them under the category of action cues.

PTL Phrase

Select the action cue that has the greatest revelatory power to give students an AHA moment in their practice, and repeat this throughout your class. The goal - the phrase triggers immediate awareness and action in your students bodies.

Layering Your PTL-Phrase:

Practice your speaking your PTL-Phrase in your selected layering postures. How would you say it from each elemental standpoint.

3 Categories of the Physical Through-Line Peak Action vs. Peak Engagement and Simplified Technique

Above I mentioned peak action and peak engagement as essentially the same thing, however there is a slight difference between the two. In addition, there is a 3rd option called "simplified technique" that can be incredibly useful when you start teaching more complex concepts.

Peak Engagement: When your PTL Phrase revolves around a particular muscle engagement then use the term peak engagement to denote an activation of the muscular system.

Example: "Squeeze your feet toward each other until you feel the muscles of your inner thighs engage. These are called your adductors"

Peak Action: Use Peak Action when your PTL Phrase speaks to the joint action.

Example: "Push down through your hands until your shoulder blades move away from each other. This action is called protraction"

Note: If you include both the muscle engagement and the joint action in your ptl-pal-phrase than use "Peak Action"

Simplified Technique: When multiple actions or engagements are essential to the peak pose or theme of the class then you may want to come up with a simplified technique. A simplified

technique is a combination of several actions and/or muscle engagements that has been given a single name for students to recall faster.

Example: In my twist workshops I have something called the “front diagonal” and the “back diagonal” which are two terms for a combination of muscle engagements and joint movements. The front diagonal is a combination of activating the serratus anterior and external obliques of the side of the bottom arm of a lunge twist, along with the internal obliques and psoas of the side you are twisting toward. I start the class showing where these muscles are and what they do and then name it “front diagonal” which decreases complexity and increases the opportunity for rapid integration and retention.

Selecting a Physical Through-Line

Secondary Peak Action(s): What if you have more than one peak action in your class? You could have 1-3 peak actions however the more you have the less students retain and the longer class time you will need to layer in everything for your students. Instead you will likely choose a secondary peak action (SPA) which would also need a layering sequence, however the major difference is that SPA repeats less, and is less emphasized. You may leave out the name of the muscle or action but simply get them to do it.

Joint Relationships: This is the alignment of the joints in a posture. You could say the alignment instead however we use joint relationships to emphasize the posture we are looking at rather than an artificial list of alignment rules.

Fundamental Action: An engagement of the muscular system that creates the joint relationships of the given posture. Picture the pose without gravity or the ground, if only your muscles could create the joint relationships these are the muscles that make up the fundamental action.

Balancing Action: The opposite of fundamental, balancing action is an engagement of the muscles in the opposing direction of the joint relationships.

Supporting Action: muscular engagement that supports the stability of the body in a neutral position. More often than not a supporting action will be used as a secondary peak action. In certain cases it could be your peak action such as abdominal engagement in a neutral spine handstand - the abdominals in this case help to prevent falling off of neutral.

Peak Pose:

A pose to help set the journey of the class. If you know a general direction of where you want to take your students you can sequence a class accordingly. If you know a very specific place you'd like to take them you have an even greater potential to reverse engineer the steps for your students to take to allow a greater potential for success.

Tools to Execute Your PTL

Reference Pose:

A pose in which a teacher uses to check the effectivity of their Layering, and whether or not the students have fully integrated the Peak and Supporting Actions along the way. If students have not fully integrated the teachings then more repetition or alternative approaches are required. The Purpose of using a reference pose is to set your students up for maximum success!

Preparatory Peak Pose:

Similar to reference pose in that the intention is to assess the students ability to apply the peak actions, however the difference is that a preparatory peak pose must contain a similar shape to the peak pose in that similar muscle groups is naturally shortened and lengthened.

Contrast Teaching:

One of the most useful tools of teaching to help students truly grasp something new is to offer them the opposite. Contrast shows up in life constantly and most of our reality depends on it. To truly understand happiness one must understand sadness. Applying this knowledge to teaching yoga is not only effective but quite often creates greater clarity in a shorter period of time. An example of Contrast Teaching would be:

3 Types of Learning

1.Auditory: The student who learns best from verbal cues is an auditory learner.

2.Visual: The student who learns best from “Demonstration”, “Active Demonstration” or a “visual reference” is a visual Learner

3.Kinesthetic: The student who learns best from hands on adjustments, assists, or a “Kinesthetic Touch” is a Kinesthetic learner.

To unveil and ignite the potential of our students we must honor the individual ways that people learn. Observe how your students are picking up information and integrating it. If you have a short time to get an alignment cue into each body in the room it is beneficial to know who is not going to respond to your verbal delivery. This way you will have the opportunity to give a “visual reference” (definition below) or one of the 3 kinesthetic teachings.

Verbal Teaching (Auditory Learners)

Verbage

At the highest core value, Chromatic teachers strive to be authentic, and our vision is to help students unveil and ignite their highest potential. In order to do both we must be purposeful with our words and become more aware of how we effect our students with our voice. Consider the fact that our words have the capability of inspiring action, self inquiry, and unlocking awareness. When considering your “Action Cues” or “PTL-Phrase”

1. Inspire conscious action
2. Provoke Self Inquiry
3. Hold Space for Awareness

3 Forms of Visual Teaching (Visual Learners)

1. Visual Reference

A short visual often done while walking around the classroom to help students understand what the teacher’s verbal cues. This form of visual teaching can be used throughout the entire class to reinforce the verbal and kinesthetic teachings.

Example: You may say externally rotate your arms while walking around the room while simultaneously showing what that action looks like in your body without going into the full pose or stopping the flow of the class.

2. Demonstration

A full visual example of a pose, action, or transition that breaks the flow and rhythm of class in order to get across something important that would otherwise be challenging to communicate verbally or kinesthetically to an entire class. This can be one of the most effective ways to teach visually but removes the students from their personal practice and rhythm, so it is recommended to use this option sparingly and intentionally.

3. Active Demonstration

A demonstration that does not break the flow of class for students. Often this is done on the teachers mat or in different parts of the room that is most optimal for the majority of the class to see. Active demonstration reinforces verbal teaching but makes it challenging for the teacher to stay visually in tune with the class so it is recommended to use this intentionally. Some teachers choose to teach a full class in active demonstration which works for the visual learners in the room, but know that this eliminates kinesthetic teaching, eye contact, and personal attention. On the flip side active demonstration can help the teacher to tune into their own body and perhaps be able to give more effective instruction.

3 Forms of Kinesthetic Teaching

1. Reference Touch:

Physical touch to reinforce a verbal cue. This is particularly useful because it:

- Requires far less physical exertion for the teacher
- Takes less time, allows the teacher to kinesthetically assist more students in a shorter period of time
- Has the potential to allow students the experience of re-adjusting their pose themselves.

There are many ways to do a reference touch some ways are:

- a. Tapping the students' muscle, bone or joint that you are asking them to create an action.
- b. Full palm touch (conveys more safety) usually paired with verbal cuing. (ex. Placing your hand on someones back and asking them to push up into your hand, or soften underweight it.)
- c. Directional touch to indicate a movement one way or another.

2. Stabilizing Assist:

Helping a student find more stability by using your own body as additional ground support. This is a longer commitment to each student and more co-created but still allows them to take them selves deeper into the pose. The goal of this is to create a safer space so the students nervous system relaxes, allowing for a muscular softening which can lead to an increase of range of motion.

3. Full Adjustment

Defining a Full Adjustment

A combination of a stabilizing assist and a physical effort on the teachers part to readjust structural alignment or deepen a students posture. a "full adjustment" is

- Physically the most effortful.
- More integrated with the students experience.
- Potentially more intrusive
- Potentially more effective
- Easier to feel the student's experience
- Highly beneficial for kinesthetic learners

3 Steps to a "Full Adjustment": SSA

1. **Sensitivity:** Take a breath before contact is made, and observe the students energy. Are they ready for your assistants? Sink up your breath with theirs of ask them to sink with you if they are not breathing well. Look at their foundation and become aware of any potential issues (do they have a visible injury, are they pregnant, are they off balance, etc.)

*Note: I recommend the Use of sensitivity prior to doing a "stabilizing Assist" and a "Reference Touch" as well.

2. **Stability:** Stabilize yourself and their pose to create a safe space.

3. **Adjustment:** Perform an assisted movement to either shift their alinement, or take them deeper into the posture.

Anatomy

1. Midline: Imaginary line down the center of the body, when facing the front of the body it divides into left and right sides.
2. Periphery: Near the outer edges (finger tips, toes etc.)
3. Anterior: Front of the body
4. Posterior: Back of the body.
5. Medial: Toward or at the Midline
6. Lateral: Away from the midline

Reciprocal Inhibition: When one muscle group engages the apposing group relaxes to allow movement to occur. When you walk the quads activate and the hamstrings relax on the step forward and the opposite occurs as the leg goes back into extension at the hip.

Facilitated Stretch: Isometric engagement of the same muscle that is stretching. The golgитendon organ senses amount of tension on the muscle and decides whether or not to release the tension. Holding a facilitated stretch will create a release

Joint Action Reference Sheet

Below is a list of all the possible joint actions within each joint listed. Refer to the videos to understand what each joint action is. Do the movements along with the video, and say the names of the actions out loud. Repeat the videos several times so that you become familiar with what the actions are called and how to do them in your body.

The Shoulders Glenohumeral joint	Shoulder Blades Scapulocostal joint	The Knee	Hip Joint
Flexion	Elevation	Flexion	Flexion
Extension	Depression	Extension	Extension
Internal Rotation	Protraction	Internal Rotation	Internal Rotation
External Rotation	Retraction	External Rotation	External Rotation
Abduction	Upward rotation		Abduction
Adduction	Downward rotation		Adduction
	Upward/Anterior Tilt		
	Downward/Posterior Tilt		

The Ankle	Radial ulnar joint	Wrist	Pelvic Tilts
Dorsi Flexion	Pronation	Flexion	Anterior (hip flexion/ spinal extension)
Plantar Flexion	Supination	Extension	Posterior (hip extension/ spinal flexion)
Eversion (subtalar joint)		Abduction	
Inversion (subtalar joint)		Adduction	

Conclusion

In the journey to becoming a teacher who seeks to empower students to live boundlessly from their highest potential remember that your own wisdom is all you actually need. No one is better suited to share your experience than you. Remember that Chromatic is here to support your growth and reveal your highest potential, but it is not the only way. Honor your own discoveries along the path even when they contradict what you have learned here. The spectrum of possibility exists within you not within the system. Go forward use what serves you and leave the rest.

With great love,
Matt Giordano