

# IAYT Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities

## Preamble

Yoga therapy is the professional application of the principles and practices of yoga to promote health and well-being within a therapeutic relationship that includes personalized assessment, goal setting, lifestyle management, and yoga practices for individuals or small groups. The practice of yoga therapy requires specialized training and skill development to support the relationship between the client/student and therapist and to effect positive change for the individual.

As yoga therapists, we acknowledge our responsibility to create a safe environment for learning and healing for our clients/students. We are committed to conducting ourselves in a manner that is consistent with the principles of yoga. We value the ethical principles of yoga outlined by Patanjali in the first two limbs of the eight-limbed path (*yama and niyama*) and strive to incorporate these principles into our professional practice.

IAYT-certified yoga therapists must be committed to responsible and ethical practice, to their own professional and personal growth, and to contributing to the growth and development of the field of yoga therapy. In furtherance of these commitments, we agree to be bound by the following Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility.

### A. Commitment to the Client or Student

#### I WILL

1. Respect the rights and dignity of my yoga therapy clients/students.
2. Provide my services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
3. Keep the client/student informed by explaining practices and recommendations and make only realistic statements regarding the benefits of yoga therapy.
4. Protect the confidentiality of information acquired in the course of client care. However, disclosure is permitted to law enforcement, family members of the client, or other persons when it is believed the client presents a serious and imminent threat to self or others, or as otherwise required by law.
5. Maintain professional boundaries in relationships with clients/students and avoid any relationships that may exploit the trust of clients/students.
6. Keep accurate client records.
7. Provide yoga therapy only within my level of skill and knowledge.
8. Provide the highest quality of care to yoga therapy clients/students.
9. Make timely referrals to other healthcare professionals as appropriate.
10. Refrain from providing yoga therapy to clients if I am unable to safely and effectively do so due to impairment (e.g., practicing while under the influence of drugs or alcohol).
11. Seek appropriate professional assistance for any personal issues that may impair my ability to practice safely and effectively.
12. Bill clients/students and third-party payers accurately and fairly.
13. Neither receive nor pay a commission for referral of a client/student.
14. Obtain informed consent to use ethical touch, as appropriate, in yoga therapy sessions and group classes. (Read more [here](#).)
15. Not engage in sexual contact with a current client/student after the professional relationship is established.
16. Be mindful that engaging in sexual contact with a former client or student can cause egregious harm and may be exploitative of the trust established during the professional relationship. Therefore, I will exercise extreme caution in engaging in any type of personal relationship with a former client or student.

### B. Commitment to the Profession

#### I WILL

1. Work to promote high standards for the profession.
2. Commit to working toward equitable access to yoga therapy services.
3. Credit the sources on which materials are based when developing materials for training programs or publication, and obtain authorization/approval to utilize another individual's or organization's copyrighted or otherwise proprietary materials.
4. Commit to the maintenance and improvement of my yoga therapy skills through educational activities and study.
5. Strive to communicate with and about colleagues in a professional, balanced, and factually accurate manner.
6. Provide accurate, truthful, and non-misleading information in connection with any IAYT application, requirement, or disciplinary investigation or proceeding.
7. Comply with all IAYT policies that pertain to my membership, accreditation, and certification status.

### C. Commitment to the Public

#### I WILL

1. Provide accurate information regarding my education, training and experience, professional affiliations, and certification status.
2. Use only the appropriate professional designations for my credentials, including any designations required or granted by IAYT.
3. Advertise only accurate, truthful, non-misleading information.
4. Refrain from making public statements on the efficacy of yoga therapy that are not supported by the generally accepted experience of the profession.
5. Respect the integrity of other forms of healthcare and other health and wellness traditions, and seek to develop collaborative relationships to achieve the highest quality of care for individual clients/students.

IAYT

THE INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
**YOGA THERAPISTS**