

Our **REAL Eyes Realize** podcast interview with **Jennifer Prugh** explored ways in which business leadership can also encompass compassion, kindness, right speech and conscious action to build a business and a "sanctuary" where every voice, every person, and every belief is welcome.

Tool Description ...

Here are a set of ethical guidelines, taken from the **Yoga Sutras** (from Patanjali and this version translated by Chip Hartranft), to offer practical ways for conscious decision-making. These can assist business leaders in making decisions that are good for business, good for the community, and are aligned for supporting the highest good. A special gift from our guest Jennifer Prugh.

Yoga Ethics in Life and at Work

These guiding principles were created several thousand years ago and provide a framework for students of yoga to aspire to in their daily lives. Most of these guidelines can be found within the world's spiritual traditions, which means that over the millennia, they have been useful to human beings, no matter what background or beliefs guide them.

Throughout the day, consider using them to support you to "see what we're not seeing," and get out of our own way with an ability to recognize and act upon the opportunities of a given moment.

The first five traditionally refer to our dealings with others (called the **Yamas** in Sanskrit):

1. **Non-violence**, which is sometimes translated as **kindness**. The Dalai Lama says, "Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible."
2. **Truth**. Kindness without truth is ineffective, but truth without kindness can be painful and ineffective. Aspire for both. Since we're all learning, we use our daily circumstances, whatever they may be, to practice and train ourselves over time.
3. **Don't steal**. A modern interpretation might be to choose to give wherever and whenever we can. Every moment presents the opportunity to "leave a situation better than we found it," just as our mothers told us.
4. **Don't cause harm sexually**, which has been interpreted in a modern context as **using our energy well**. We are an individual ecosystem within and touched by many other ecosystems. How we take care of the life within our skin, physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually affects the qualities we bring to others.
5. **Don't hoard**. A modern interpretation might be to be grateful for everything we're given, including the challenging relationships and circumstances which can be used to learn how to move through this world graciously and gracefully. We can take what we need, share our resources, release expectations (which is a form of hoarding the future) and be open to making the very most of what we're given. Saying thank you often, inside, and out loud, is a way of recognizing the truth of our human situation.

REAL EYES REALIZE “Conscious Business Leadership Practices”

The second five (**the Niyamas**) traditionally refer to how we attend to ourselves:

1. **Cleanliness.** Be open to life and other people. Listen and be curious. We often bring baggage in the form of stories, beliefs and judgments to situations without realizing. Listening means less talking. And when we're open, our next move is more likely to become apparent. When we do find ourselves in the past or in the future, returning to the moment is a form of inner tidying up. “Beginning again” often enough and we have more access to an inherent joy that comes from simply being present.
2. **Contentment.** Contentment has nothing to do with glazing over difficult events or feelings. There are always moments in work and in life that are difficult, tedious, tense, or monotonous. For these moments we can take three deep breaths. Enjoy the breath coming into and leaving the body. If we can be here for THIS moment, it means we can learn how to be truly “here” for each moment. Our actions will be all that more effective.
3. **Practice regularly.** Life is a practice, and work is a practice. We know now that we can change the brain through meditation. We can wake up and be more alive, and more joyful human beings through taking time each day to practice being present. We can do that on a cushion, on a mat, at the sink or in a meeting. We can do it with those we love, those we don't know, and those that we find difficult to be with. Every day then, becomes made for seeing how much of ourselves we can bring to it.
4. **Study often.** Life is school and so is work. Strive to grow in wisdom through reading, listening, watching, and studying oneself. When we have a series of repetitive thoughts about “how things are,” we ask ourselves, is this true? Learning to listen within is key.
5. **Offer away our efforts.** Remember often that our lives are short and precious. We want to make the most of them by offering back what we've been given, to each other, to life, or to the God of our own understanding. One of my teachers, Mingyur Rinpoche turns a cup over beside his bed at night, symbolizing the death of a day, letting it go, resting well

Putting It All Into Practice

First thing in the morning, we might establish an intention for the day based upon one of these guidelines, particularly **one** that we're working on. We can check in a few times during the day to non-judgmentally notice where there is ease or struggle. Enduring qualities like joy and wisdom, courage and understanding, forgiveness and patience, clarity and love are cultivated over time and with practice. Often, the people we admire most inhabit these qualities in a way we can feel. It is more “being” than “doing,” and they are more effective in life and at work.

We hope you find this wisdom exciting and helpful!