

WORKING WITH THEMES GUIDE



I know I taught you in our Level 1 training to work without goals or themes. This is often the case. However, with higher skill sets, you can learn to work with some class goals or themes in a trauma sensitive setting.

There are many themes. For this initial level 2 training we will start with a few.

Some initial themes to consider are:

- Strength
- Groundedness & Working with Support
- Uplifting
- Centered
- Expansive
- Ease, Rest, & Care
- Holding Both/And

Youth and teen groups like working with themes, so while this particular training will not be a youth training you may be able to adapt some of these concepts for teens.

There are of course other themes around chakras, colors, mantras, even single words that can be explored along with themes found in yogic texts like the yoga sutras such as theming around the yamas and niyamas. I will explore these with you over time.

Please note that when you center a class around a theme it has the potential to trigger in a person the ways they are not of that theme. It's important to watch for this and be proactive against it by letting folks know it's normal and natural that those thoughts could come up and using techniques such as acting "as if". "As if" I had strength, "As if" I was centered, etc.

Building a class based around strength...

Start by exploring a variety of positions both standing and seated and giving practitioners a chance to get curious around which postures allow them to feel into their strength. Offer many varieties even within one stance.

When folks are feeling strong, ask them to tune into what allows them to know that? What feelings or sensations are telling them that they are in their strength. Invite them to drop or amend the pose and see if they can still hold the feeling. Work with coming out and in.

Explore poses which don't feel strong at all and how to add elements of strength to them. Remind folks that there are no wrong answers and that they can stop at any time.

Have they been allowed to feel strong? To feel weak? What are their assumptions and notions around these ideas? What would a balance of both feel like and mean for them?

How does their body naturally want to move when feeling strong? Weak? In the middle? What's the size? What's the kind of movement: rough, smooth, heavy, light? What color is it? What speed? What element? What animal?

Suggested poses for strength:

- Warrior 1 and 2
- Lunges
- Dolphin
- Chair
- Mountain
- Crow
- Extended Side Angle
- Upward Lifting