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The Future Begins Now: My Learning Goals Moving Forward

The past 5 years have been an exciting mix of educational topics, technologies, philosophies, and personal growth. Looking back, I can see how far I've come; looking forward, I can see how far I would like to go. In the coming years, my goal is to focus on three broad areas of my professional development: how to balance theory with practice (i.e. content); how to improve instruction for the different activities I create (pedagogy); and how to blend leadership with knowledge to create unique learning program and activities for a broader audience (community). I feel these are areas that will have the greatest impact on my future as a yoga instructor and practitioner.

To help me achieve these goals, I plan to use the tools, concepts, and best practices I have learned through my Masters degree in Educational Technology at Michigan State University. These include continuing my studies at respected institutions, applying knowledge-based theories of learning and motivation in my yoga classes, developing and delivering new workshops, and maintaining a professional online presence to communicate with my students and the community,

Knowledge Growth;

My first future learning goal is to develop my knowledge base in all aspects of yoga. Yoga is a discipline that was born in India and many of the great yogis and yoga traditions still live there. In the near future, therefore, I plan to journey to India to study ashtanga at the [Shri K Pattabhi Jois Ashtanga Yoga Institute](#). This is a world-renowned school for studying the practice of ashtanga yoga and a destination for many yogis who wish to deepen their knowledge of yogic theory and practice. Beyond strengthening my physical practice, my goal while I am there is to gain a better

understanding of the foundational texts of yoga philosophy. I also wish to learn Indian approaches to living yogic practices both inside and outside the studio. This includes learning more about diet, mental discipline and spiritual wellbeing from the Indian yogic perspective. I plan to assess my learning and development by keeping a journal of my experiences while I am in India. I will then use my journal as the basis of a program of reflective practice and, hopefully, share these experiences with my students and the online yoga community.

Pedagogical Development;

My second future learning goal is to continue studying ways to improve my instructional practice. My pedagogical development will focus primarily on my yoga instruction but I plan to incorporate many elements from my Masters studies at Michigan State University. For example, I plan to use techniques and principles from my studies in Kinesiology to help my students with issues and challenges related to motivation and performance. I believe the [PETTLEP model](#) for using imagery in performance preparation and skill acquisition will prove very effective in yoga instructional environments. I also believe certain technologies I have explored, such as [Coach's Eye](#), will play an important role in developing new methods for performance assessment and instructional feedback. Of course, I also plan to incorporate the instructional practices I will learn in India. My ultimate goal is to develop a style of instruction and instructional support that blends Eastern and Western approaches, and uses modern and traditional methods, to effectively achieve learning outcomes. I plan to assess my progress by using reflective practices (my journal) as well as examining the learning outcomes of my students and eliciting feedback from them.

Community Engagement;

My third future learning goal is to develop methods and strategies to engage both local and global yoga communities. I plan to do this using three strategies: open my own studio; develop a series of workshops that I can teach at other studios; and develop an engaging online professional presence.

Opening a yoga studio may be the most basic and yet the most challenging strategy for engaging the community. I will have to learn how to manage the studio and the instructors I hire to teach. I will also have to learn about business issues, such as marketing and insurance issues. To help me learn, I have started teaching and helping out at [the studio](#) where I received

my 500-hour teacher-training certificate. My goal is to learn what I can about the day-to-day workings of a successful yoga studio and open my own based on the practices I learn. I also plan to develop workshops that I can teach at other studios. One of the best ways to professionally engage the yoga community (as well as earn money) is to teach workshops on specific yogic topics. To develop effective workshops, however, I feel I need to first strengthen my physical practice, something I plan to do when I travel to India to study ashtanga. I plan to assess my progress based in part on the number of workshops I can successfully book and the number of students who attend. Finally, I want to build a successful and engaging professional presence online. There are already a number of successful yogis, such as [Kino MacGregor](#), who maintain very active profiles online using a combination of platforms (websites, videos, social media, etc.). I plan to study the strategies they use, such as linking with other yogis and professional photography and web design, to help me develop my own professional online identity. I plan to assess my development in this by monitoring my site traffic and gauging my links to other websites and social media platforms. I also plan to use the skills and rubrics I have learned in my Masters courses, such as the Capstone, to help me constantly improve the content and effectiveness of my online activities.

Learning Now Guides Learning for the Future;

I have passion in many things, but I certainly want to continue instructing and mentoring with those who are interested in practicing yoga as a path to happiness and wellbeing. I plan to do this by with a 3-part strategy of knowledge growth, pedagogical development, and community engagement. Yoga philosophy and practice engages people to think reflectively on their life and their relationship to body and mind as parts of a wider and connected universe. While studying educational theories and communication technologies for my Masters degree, I realized that learning can happen anywhere, in any space, and that valuable information can enrich my community as well as myself. This has made me rethink how I can use Western educational practices and technology in my yoga practice and how I communicate learning and development with others. Looking forward, I believe that by connecting and sharing my knowledge and learning experiences with others, we can all find inspiration and insight to lead more meaningful and rewarding lives.