

Amber: We've done all of our awesome asana modifications. As you can see we use a lot of props in our teaching. We use props to support the body and find better alignment. What do you do if there are no props? What if you're not teaching in a yoga studio that has props?

Maybe you're teaching yoga in the work place or you're doing a pop-up class somewhere in someone's home. Maybe you're teaching outdoors at a festival or a park. What do you do then? We have a couple of ideas.

Do you have a wall? If you're inside of a building presumably there are walls around you. Walls are excellent props. As you remember, we can do wall salutations, we can take downward-facing dog at the wall plank. We can work on building strength, lowering the chest between the hands.

We can use the wall for all sorts of balancing poses and for different ways to teach the standing poses like the warrior poses or triangle, side angle, with the back foot against the wall. There is plenty of stuff that we can do with the wall to build strength and to work on balance. We can do lots and lots of poses with the wall as our best prop.

Do you have chairs? Most people, wherever you are, whether you're in an office, a business or someone's home, you're going to have a chair. As long as it doesn't have wheels it's fine to use for yoga. You can use the back of the chair and do sun salutations with the chair like we demonstrated before.

You can use the seat for lots of poses. You can do seated poses. If you search online there are tons of chair yoga sequences that are available. There are also separate trainings for this. Diane's done videos on chair sequences. You can use the chairs as you would a block – in forward folds, bringing the hands to the chair instead of two blocks or to the floor using the chair for support.

Thinking about props in a different way, even if you don't have holsters and straps and blocks, what's around you that you could use? That brings us to the third point: improvise.

I've taught outdoors at festivals before. You can get about 50-strap worth of rope, so thinking about a four to six foot piece of rope, for about \$20 or \$30. What I did is bought a big huge hank of rope and cut it into pieces. Then I have straps for every single person in the class. That opens up a huge range of possibilities from shoulder openers, doing pass throughs with the strap, doing different shoulder opening binds and things with the strap, using it in reclining hand-to-big-toe pose, all kinds of different stuff.

With just a little tiny investment, probably less than \$1 per person, I was able to bring in a prop that expanded the range of poses that I could do. I was outdoors I didn't have

walls, I didn't have chairs, I didn't have anything. Often you can get students to bring their own if you're having a class that's in a place that's not a yoga studio or if you're doing a private session or if you're holding a retreat that doesn't have props.

Ask students if they can bring props. Often people have a few things at their house, maybe a block or two. Almost everybody has a blanket or a firm couch cushion or something like that. Ask them to bring them. Look around and see what's around you that you could use.

If you're in a gym, often they'll have towel service. Can you use a towel folded up under the head to support, to sit on? The towel can be used in place of the strap. Use your imagination and see what you can improvise to create props where there might not be any.

Finally, this is pretty common sense, use poses that work well that out props. A lot of the reclining poses like hand-to-big-toe you don't have a strap but can the students grab behind the thigh? You could do dead pigeon. You can do reclining twists. Lots of the poses on the back are a little bit easier for students to deal with without props.

Think about bridge; think about the active warm-ups that we showed you on the back, happy baby, knees-to-chest. All that kind of stuff can be great and accessible for a lot of bodies. Seated poses can be a bit trickier if you don't have any way to elevate the hips or you don't have a wall handy. If you do have the wall, take the seated poses to the wall and let the wall support the back.

You've got lots of other poses you can do without props: cat-cow, you can do the balancing table pose; you can do tons of standing poses. I would stay away from balancing poses if you don't have access to a wall. Some students might not feel safe or might be at a bigger risk for injury depending upon their equilibrium and their skill with balance. There are lots of standing poses and strength building poses that you can do.

Savasana doesn't really need a lot of props. If somebody can't lie comfortably on the floor you can always just have them bend the knees, bring the soles of the feet to the floor, and then widen the feet and let the knees knock together. Just thinking creatively about what poses are accessible for most bodies without props and using those. If you have students who have mobility issues or maybe aren't as strong, they can do those basic poses. Then using the bus stop method you can step it up for the students who are in more abled bodies.

For instance, if you're doing cat-cow, maybe some table pose, maybe some child's pose, you can always up the ante and let the folks that are a little bit more advanced take downward-facing dog instead. You can start out with a really basic class template and

then add on top of that for the people who maybe don't need the props. Keep the basic class pretty simple for the folks that do.

Finally, if you run out of things to do or you can't find poses that really work for your students, you can always bring it back to the breath. Breathing exercises, pranayama, can be extremely transformational and empowering for folks that are learning to come back to their bodies. Everybody can benefit from some deep breathing, from learning different things about the breath, and different pranayama techniques. Experiment with that with your students.

A lot of times breath and meditation get left behind the asana because we only have so much time or we're trying to get to everyone. People come in expecting to move and stretch and they want to leave sweaty. Getting back to basics and just bringing it back to really simple things: deep abdominal breathing, three-part breath, ujjayi breath, all that stuff, can be really transformational and help people to become more embodied when they just bring in these really simple breathing techniques. Make your yoga class more focused around that.

Maybe do a little bit longer meditation. It doesn't have to be seated cross-legged meditation on the floor. You can have someone set up against a wall, you can have them sit in a chair, you can have them lie back or whatever is comfortable for their body. You could do this while they're supported in this comfortable position. Really spend some time with the breath. Really spend some time with some meditation, maybe a guided meditation or something like that.

Just a couple ideas to work with if there are no props. If you have any questions about this we'll have a special thread in the forum where you can discuss this with other teachers and ask us questions as well.

Congratulations, you've reached the end of Lesson 4. Now it's time to take action. We'd like for you to create three to five personalized yoga-for-all classes that you can have at the ready. No matter who walks in to your yoga studio, to your class – sometimes we plan out the perfect sequence and it's a good class but then the people that walk in, it's not right for them.

We want you to have those back-pocket canned classes that you can pull out no matter who walks in. Most of the poses are going to be 80-90 percent accessible for all bodies and give students lots of places to work. Work those sequences up. Feel free to post them in the thread that's dedicated to this lesson in our forum.

Then we'd like for you to use this new template and teach one to your friends or to your next group class. Reflect on your experience with that. See how people received it.

Module 4

Yoga For All: Creating Body Positive Yoga Classes for All Shapes, Sizes & Abilities

Maybe you're using props with folks that actually don't "need the props," maybe they're in more able bodies. How did that go? What kind of feedback did you get?

If you're teaching it to people that are recovering from a surgery or are differently abled or in a bigger body, did they respond differently than to the way that you normally teach? Reflect on that in the forum and share your thoughts with the other teachers.

What's next? You are done with all of the video modules. Next week we are going to have our live webinar Q & A jam where you get to hang out with Diane and me and ask us all your burning questions. We will have a thread started in the forum where you can start to post some of these questions just so you don't forget them as you go along the way. We will get to those next week.

You'll get an email. There'll also be something posted in the forum about how to gain access to the webinar. We will see you online. We can't wait to hang out and talk with all of you.