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Namaste

When asked the meaning of Namaste by Albert Einstein, Mohandas Gandhi replied:

"I honor the place in you where the entire universe dwells. I honor the place in you that is of light, love, truth, peace and wisdom. When you are in that place in you, and I am in that place in me, We Are One".

Combining the word Namaste with the hands coming together in front of the heart and a slight bow, the greeting deepens to a honoring of the teacher, the student, the practice itself and all those that are practicing with us, before us and after us. It is also a thank you to the wisdom of the Universe that guides our practice.

Some teachers will also use Om Shanti (peace), thank you, or even peace be with you at the beginning or end of the class. In India Namaste is used as a greeting as common as hello, goodbye, howdy, aloha, salut and 'sup. It is not that the meaning is lost, but the honoring behind it may not be focussed on. Other greetings such as Hari Om (Source of all that is and all that is not) or Om Shanti (peace) may be used instead at the end of a yoga session.

I like Namaste because it gets confused for "have a nice day" and that is also just as perfect.

Namaste,

Suzette O'Byrne

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