

# Grace and Presence

## Yoga Teacher Training

with Mollie McClelland Morris, Fern Trelfa and Nathalie Joel-Smith

### **Taught Class Assessment Criteria**

#### **30 minute vinyasa flow class**

This assessment is so that you feel confident to teach when you finish the course. it is a pass or redo situation, that will continue until you pass. You will not fail your assessment. Evaluated is individual, NOT in relation to other students or given “marks”.

Use the assessment to challenge yourself, put yourself forward as a yoga teacher, and if you are already confident in that, experiment with what you can offer. Hopefully you will find your strengths as a teacher, and also your “edges” where you are less confident, and want to dedicate extra concentration and energy as you progress in your journey as a teacher.

### **1) Planning and preparing Your Class**

#### **Required:**

- Choose a level for your class
- Choose a peak experience (asana or sequence)
- Incorporate a movement motif
- Create a class plan
- Consider options, modifications and variations in your class plan

#### **Optional:**

- Incorporate an additional layer of theming (e.g. philosophical)
- Create a full class plan (eg 60 mins) and scale it back to create your 30 minute class
- Imagined the scenario when you might teach the class (eg covering for someone, a class you set up, a workplace taster)

*NB Incorporating optional points will not gain you kudos! They are there so you can find what feels authentic, most comfortable and works best for you.*

#### **Things to consider:**

- Are the warm up and transition appropriate to the level and to the material that will come later?
- Are warm ups embodied and multi-faceted?
- Dynamic elements - is there appropriate challenge, heat and movement in the class?
- Does the class make physical sense? IE Clear peak? Are the students physically prepared for the peak?

- Use the transition guidelines to create flows that work well
- Give alternative accessibility options for asana, as required
- Refer to your understanding of body wisdom gained throughout the course and allow this to show in your sequencing and the way you guide the class.
  - Consider the architecture and movement of the pelvis, shoulders and spine.
  - Consider the relationship to ground and space. Consider how muscles work.

*NB Be mindful of not regurgitating cues from past yoga class experiences, if they are no longer relevant e.g. some alignment cues may contradict your current understanding of asana, movement, and the body*

- Explore the 'how to' in order to gain clarity around what to say when you're teaching EG What am I doing? Why? What am I exploring while I'm here? Where am I going? How do I get there?
- Be specific about the body parts you are talking about, in order for instructions to be clear. EG A hand is not the same thing as an arm/ A foot is not the same as a knee. You can refine your teaching and help the students understand what to do by being as clear as possible
- Remember what Yoga is, why people are practicing it and why you want to teach it :)

## **2) Teaching the Class - Format**

### **What to include:**

- Introduction and class set up i.e. your name, any props they might need, ask about any injuries/ailments
- A tuning in OR warming up element
- A heat building flow
- A dynamic flow
- A seated OR wind down element
- Bring the class to a close

### ***Optional Inclusions:***

- Short arrival
- Short Shavasana
- Use of rounds

## **3) Teaching the class - Guiding the experience**

- A seated OR wind down element
- Provide clear instructions to verbally guide students into and between asanas, paying attention to geometry, transitions and experience (see embodied cueing guidelines)

- Use language that helps cultivate presence and an embodied experience eg interesting verbs, adjectives, metaphors etc
- Demonstrate asana/sequences where appropriate
- Watch your students, giving verbal assistance, adjustments and encouragement as appropriate
- Use touch by offering a minimum of 2 hands-on assists (each one to a different student)
- Circulate round the room between students - don't be 'stuck' on your own mat, ensuring equal attention is given to all wherever possible

#### **4) Personality**

- Bring your personality to your teaching and class structure and be true to your beliefs, knowledge and principals
- Be assertive and confident in your ability to 'hold' the space in the room
- Instruct clearly and confidently, at a steady pace
- Authenticity and presence - are you really teaching or slipping into "yoga teacher voice"? Are you speaking to students or "performing"?
- Approachability, humility, naturalness
- Concise delivery without shadow words (we're gonna, um, like, just etc.)

#### **5) Student Health & Safety**

- Provide alternatives for students who are working with particular injuries or limitations (try not to just let these students rest or give them an asana that is totally out of keeping with the theme of the class)
- Have props available as/when required
- Put props away when not using them
- Ask students to be mindful of space and other people, especially if space is limited