

Body Language, Authenticity & Presence

Defining “Presence”

Differentiating the Teacher from the Teachings

- The teachings are the content. The teacher delivers the content.
- The teachings are filtered through the “presence” of the human doing the teaching.

Define Your Presence

□ ?

- What exactly makes up your overall presence? This is a difficult-to-pinpoint aspect of teaching, but here we endeavor to explore it for the purposes of more easily identifying opportunities to increase teaching effectiveness.
- We can think of presence as a collection of attributes and behaviors that include the sonic elements and rhythms of your voice, the words you choose, your body language and other factors related to how you show up and deliver your teaching.
- On one hand, a teacher's presence may be the most obvious thing about them and includes what makes them unique. But on the other hand, it's difficult to tease apart the things that make up a person's presence in order to examine them more methodically.

The reason we are using this lesson to dissect presence is to enable you to:

1) Embrace what is uniquely you, while also

2) Systematically identifying aspects of your delivery that may be improved for maximum effectiveness.

□ In other words, while sometimes a teacher can improve by learning to refine a technique such as choosing words to express a teaching, other times improvement comes from finding ways to be more your authentic self.

What is Authenticity?

- Authentic teaching refers to the process of uncovering what is genuine for you: your own experience, your own truth, your own voice, your own presence.

▣ [HTTPS://WWW.QUIZEXPO.COM/WPQPERSONALITY/WHO-AM-I-QUIZ](https://www.quizexpo.com/wpqpersonality/who-am-i-quiz)

- You might consider refinements to be less about finding the “right” way to teach and more about uncovering anything that is inauthentic for you.
- The fundamental ground of authenticity is to avoid teaching what you’ve simply been taught (or have heard or read) and instead teach what you know from your own experience (both as a practitioner and as a teacher).
- However, please also note the difference between leveraging your experience vs. teaching your particular path



- **Saying, “I Don’t Know”**

- **Avoiding Cliches**

- **The Temptation to Sound “Deep”**

- **Avoiding Cliches/The Temptation to Sound “Deep”**

Kat Heagberg of Yoga International does an excellent job of explaining the “yoga voice” or “yoga-speak” and why teachers are encouraged to minimize it:

- *By yoga-speak, I mean the speech patterns, habits, and clichés that we tend to fall into when trying to sound how we think a yoga teacher should sound. The trouble with yoga-speak is that it creates a barrier between teachers and students, often making us come across as perfectly polished, sing-songy yoga-robots (yobots?) instead of real, live, flesh-and-blood humans. And most of all, it prevents us from teaching as ourselves—the unique, interesting, adept, yet (charmingly) flawed teachers that we are. – Kat Heagberg, Yoga International*

It's OK Not to be Perfect

- **Speak From Experience**
- **Don't Teach It Until You Know It**
- **Teach as though you were teaching to a group of your closest friends or family members.**

Body Language

- Body language is a part of nonverbal language.
- It includes things like stance, gestures, facial expressions, and even small things that are barely perceptible like a brief shrug of the shoulder or nod of the head. We frequently communicate both bodily and verbally and an estimated 70% of what we communicate may be nonverbal. Nonverbal language is an even bigger category, which includes things like tone of voice.

The Importance of Body-Affirming Language in Yoga Class

- <https://yogainternational.com/article/view/the-importance-of-body-affirming-language-in-yoga-class>

VIDEO

□ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRI0dvPRkSI&t=44s>