Art of Teaching: Introduction & Overview of Foundational Skill Sets

Answer Key

1. Name four or more general categories of skill that contribute to good yoga teaching.

* Presence
* Humility
* Healthy Boundaries
* Personal Practice & Self-Study
* Knowledge of Teachings
* Skillful Teaching
* Promoting Student Safety

1. While teaching, what are some priorities regarding presence and mindful awareness?

* Return your awareness to your breath, thoughts, energy and expression.
* Stay grounded in your body while teaching.

1. Describe specific objectives for teachers related to improving their knowledge of teachings.

* Prioritize personal practice and self-study.
* Stay in touch with your personal motivation to teach.
* Remain a student: be curious and intent on improvement.
* Solicit feedback. Invite awareness of personal weaknesses and mistakes and enthusiastically embrace professional development.
* Rather than “naive practice” (a form of repetition), engage in “purposeful or deliberate” teaching practice, which specifically builds on strengths and improves weaknesses.

1. Give examples of skillful teaching.

* Always teaching the basics, such as maintaining awareness of the breath; paying attention to bodily sensations, thoughts and emotions; and in *asana*: maintaining a balance of effort and ease and a focus on function and safe form.
* Embracing repetition.
* Having clear teaching objective.
* Inviting challenge while making teachings accessible.
* Mindfully choosing words for clarity and effectiveness.
* Allowing pauses in teaching for students to process and go inward and watching to see if the teaching has been assimilated before giving another instruction.
* Using one’s authentic voice.
* Adapting or changing a class plan to effectively respond to a particular situation.
* Teaching based on what is seen in students.
* Individualizing teachings for various student needs.

1. What tasks contribute to promoting student safety?

* Undertake specialized study before teaching children or students with injuries or conditions.
* Foster a safe, noncompetitive environment.
* Provide variations, alternatives and personalized options.
* If a class is too large to provide individual attention, avoid risky and/or complex postures.
* Utilize safe sequencing.
* Be cautious with risky *asana* and movement flows.

1. What are some practical tips for effective teaching?

* Mirror students when demonstrating.
* Greet students; smile sincerely.
* Honestly, sincerely acknowledge students' efforts.
* Address different learning styles.
* Continue to learn how students communicate about their experience and sensation.
* Experiment with different verbal cues; study responses.
* Practice your sequence before class.

1. Describe three levels of teaching.

* Information
* Method
* Transmission