

Adult learning

within your classes

Learning Styles

The background of the slide features a soft, abstract design. It consists of several overlapping, wavy bands of color in shades of light blue, teal, and white, creating a sense of depth and movement. In the upper left quadrant, there is a faint, circular, dotted pattern that resembles a stylized sun or a celestial body.

Visual

Usually neat in appearance
Find verbal instructions difficult
Memorize using pictures
Notice details
Observe rather than act or talk
Like watching DVDs

Kinesthetic

Are tactile towards others
Does not like reading, poor spellers
Enjoys worksheets & discussions
Fidgets while studying
Likes practical activities
Use hands whilst talking

**There are four
main types of
learning styles**

Auditory

Easily distracted
Enjoy talking & listening to others
Have difficulty with written instructions
Hum, sing, whisper or talk aloud
Ask questions
Don't like noisy environments

Read & write

Good spellers & handwriting
Enjoys research
Likes to read books
Uses dictionary & thesaurus
Writes lists and makes notes

Most students are not one type of learner but possess different learning styles in different degrees, what is your learning style?

Visual learners prefer:

Demonstration

Creative imagery or visual cues

Seeing their own body or handouts/visuals

Auditory learners prefer:

Good verbal cues

To memorize your words

Listening to what their body says

Kinesthetic learners prefer:

Physical adjustment or touch to understand teaching points

Good detailed teaching points to help them experience their body

Movement or learning through practice

Therefore to successfully teach we must engage all learning types by using a **mixture of different teaching methods** using:

Visual cues, verbal cues and sensation/experiential cues, i.e. overlapping words, images and touch.

This means our choice of teaching methods can include the following possibilities:

- Demonstration
- Verbal instruction
- Working alongside students
- Individual coaching to include physical adjustment
- Partner work (aiding each other, observing one another)
- Presentation
- Discussion
- Handouts or visual aids

Prakruti: Your students ayurvedic constitution



In ayurveda, the science of life or knowledge of consciousness there are seven prakrutis or innate constitutions, and if we can understand these we can better understand our students.

This knowledge is based on the mahabhutas, the elements, of space, air, fire, wind and earth, where each dosha is comprised of two different elements.

Each person's prakruti relates to the blend of the three doshas both physiologically and psychologically.

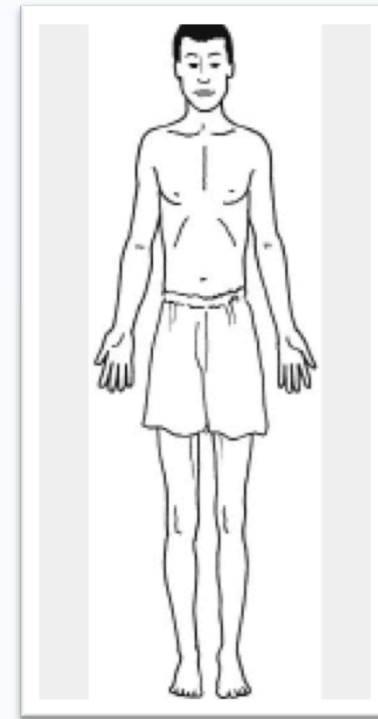
Although we all possess all of the doshas, generally many of us are dual prakruti, although you will encounter exceptions, usually of a mono prakruti, we may also find our physiology & psychology are of two different doshas:

- 1.Vata prakruti
- 2.Pitta prakruti
- 3.Kapha prakruti
- 4.Vata/Pitta prakruti
- 5.Vata/Kapha prakruti
- 6.Pitta/Kapha prakruti
- 7.Vata/Pitta/Kapha prakruti

What is
your
prakruti?

Vata Dosha

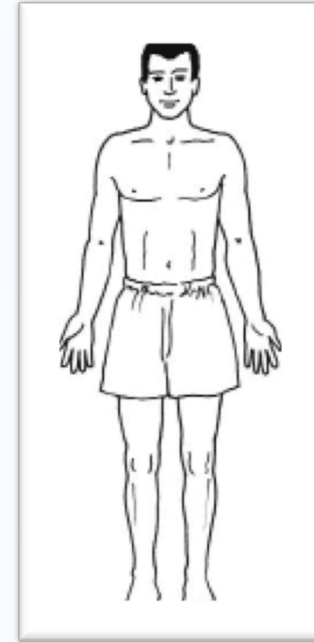
- Focus easily scattered, energy variable, lower physical strength & endurance likes creativity, change, movement, prefers to do rather than feel, often lives in the head
- Too ethereal “dispersing”
- Needs grounding, warming, calming, moving energy in one direction, focusing
- Need to reiterate instructions, use creative terminology to draw them into feeling inwardly. Can change our pitch or tone, or even physically move to keep vata students engaged.
- Must structure teaching to keep attention focused



*Typically ectomorph
body shape –
difficulty storing fats
and developing
muscle*

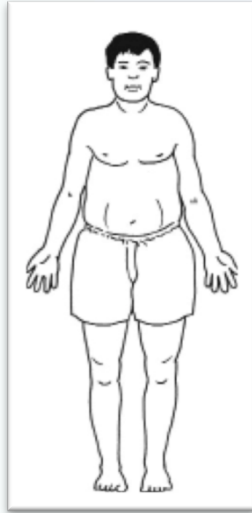
Pitta dosha

- Very focused, intense, average energy & strength, driven by mental energy, prefers to do rather than feel, likes challenge & achieving
- Goal-orientated, can be competitive “controlling & wants more energy”
- Wants to know why
- Needs explanations i.e. theory, we need to re-orientate these students towards working more sensitively with an inner focus, avoiding end-gaining or pushing excessively.
- Encouraging a cooling, calming, surrendering emphasis to practice.



Typically has a mesomorph body shape; gains muscle easily but also gains fats more easily than ectomorph types

Kapha Dosha



*Typically an
ectomorph body
shape; can gain
muscle and fat easily*

- Often little focus or dulled focus, strong energy, physically strong with good endurance, great patience, likes familiarity, routine and relaxation; needs to feel secure
- Tendency towards slow speaking & moving “holds or saves energy”
- Slow to grasp a concept then never forgets
- Needs lots of motivation, encouragement and stimulation
- Warming and drying practices are good

Learning styles & Teaching Methods

Learning styles & the doshas	Learning tendencies	How best to teach
Visual	Look up often, frequently takes them off task and out of position	Physically demonstrate and provide verbal imagery
Auditory	Often feels lost when there no verbal instructions are given	Give many and varied verbal cues. Use non-distracting background music
Kinesthetic	Need to become familiar with the movement and flow of a posture to feel the effects	Provide hands on adjustments, and remind them to breathe
Vata	Fast, conceptual learners, but quick to forget and easily distracted	Provide structure to keep their attention focused; reiterating points and repeating practices
Pitta	Intensely focused, may be hyper critical, and intolerant of teachers exuding a lack of confidence	Provide detailed descriptions, give some theory, answering questions with references
Kapha	Slow, patient learners with good retention; can lack drive	Provide motivational feedback often

Adapted from Instructing Hatha Yoga, Kappmeier & Ambrosini, Human Kinetics, 2006 p25

Verbal instruction

- This is a skill you will develop and can be used to very good effect; it will be based upon your own familiarity with the practices
- Be audible at all times, check with the group if necessary. If someone is hard of hearing then position that student close to your mat. Change location if necessary.
- Maintain interest by using pauses, varying pitch and tone; match the mood of the practices
- Be grounded, open at the heart and completely present
- Feel you can reiterate your teaching points, perhaps sometimes framing the same teaching point in slightly different ways.
- Be concise & use terminology pitched according to your student's needs
- Use student names as often as you can offering praise and encouragement but always avoid overly concentrating upon one or two students, who perhaps need extra guidance or more modifications due a condition they have.

Use of Language

Consider the language you are using to teach. There are four basic types of communication:

1. **Imperative:** a command (Lower heels to the floor)
2. **Interrogative:** questions (Can you lower heel to the floor?)
3. **Passive:** shifting the focus to what is being done rather than who is doing it (Lowering heels to the floor)
4. **Subjunctive:** polite request, somewhere between a command and a question (Please lower your heels to the floor)

So we can use very different terminology creating a different atmosphere or mood within the group.

Whilst each of us will find our teaching style we do need to consider this aspect of our teaching, so you are more conscious about your choices.

Consider the different feelings engendered by the following instructions:

I'd like you to raise your right arm	Can you raise you right arm up easily and smoothly?
Okay, raising your right arm	How does it feel when you raise the right arm?
Lift your right arm	Can you breathe easily as you raise your right arm up?
Raise the right arm	Does the lifting of the right arm feel any different from the lifting your left arm?
Gently, the right arm is lifting	Notice if the lifting of the right arm feels differently from lifting your left arm?

One possibility is to use more command type statements for the initial setting up of a practice, then moving into softer forms as students refine the pose or practice and move into exploration and self-questioning.

Consider the different feelings engendered by using the following descriptive terminology:

Push your heels to the ground

Draw your heels towards the ground

Lower your heels towards the ground

Encourage your heels to move towards the ground

Can you think of verbs which you might use to avoid the use of words such as push & pull, both of which create forcefulness?

Can you think of verbs or adverbs to create a certain quality of action e.g. gently?

Remember.....

- You will need to reiterate the same points, sometimes it is helpful to do this with different terminology
- Think of ways to creatively describe a teaching point using a visual image e.g. imagine the spinal vertebrae are like pearls on a string, placing each pearl, one by one to the floor as you lower the back down
- Try to use the positive rather than the negative e.g. in warrior to “*keep the knee safe and supported stack the knee above the ankle*” rather than “*the knee is very vulnerable and liable to injury so take care positioning it above the ankle*”
- Avoid labeling a practice as difficult as this creates a negative mind set; we can always however introduce the challenge of working with least effort possible or breathing fully in an unusual position!

Our use of demonstration

- Very useful when teaching something new or illustrating a particular point; also good for visual learners; for more advanced students less time spent in demonstration is required and for very familiar poses may be unnecessary.
- Always be as visible as possible, even if this means changing your own position; can mirror the class e.g. say turn right foot as you actually turn left foot.
- Demonstrate the entrance, stay and exit from a pose, giving students verbal cues as you proceed, including the use of the breath, outlining safety pointers.
- It is possible to stop the flow of the class and the group gathers around to watch a demonstration. This can be used to good effect on occasion.
- Can use a student or a helper; effective when cannot do a practice oneself, cannot easily speak whilst in pose or wish to show a pointer. Must have student's permission!
- Must try not over-use demonstration as showing every pose will mean students spend a great deal of time waiting; ideally mix verbal instruction, pure demonstration & working alongside students, as possible whilst meeting student's needs.
- Practice a pose yourself repeatedly until you are extremely familiar with the teaching points, refinements and safety pointers.

The use of staging asana

This is an excellent tool which helps students to work at the correct level of intensity (and can be use for other practices also).

You will need to decide upon ways in which an asana can be broken down into simpler less intense versions and stronger more challenging versions; remembering that the simpler versions can be often used as modifications for those who are less able, less experienced or possess a medical condition. And of course for those who can move on this is also great preparation.

- You can demonstrate the first possibility, highlighting the teaching points, safety pointers and help students to explore their experience of this pose
- Then once students have practiced this you can demonstrate the second possibility, asking students to either stay with the first pose or if possible move into the second pose. Here you will have to check and see all students appear to be working safely & effectively in the stronger pose and as necessary offer individual guidance.
- You might offer several possible versions of an asana.....