



# From Average Yoga Teacher to Stellar Badass in 5 Steps

*I'm no expert (OK, somewhat), but I have been practicing yoga for 20 years, teaching for 12 years and leading yoga teacher trainings for 7 years. The following components can help take your teaching from average to stellar with a few simple tweaks.*

## **01/** RHYTHM & FLOW IN PRACTICE

The practice need not be fast, but I'd sure like it to ebb and flow in a steady pace with breath, especially if the class is called Vinyasa. While we're at it, the transitions are a part of the practice. Cue them, but at the same time keep it simple. If you want students to come to seated you can simply say, "Come to a seated position." You don't have to say "Scooch your hips over to one side. Swing your legs around." Sometimes we get so caught up in saying just the right thing that we tend to make cues more complicated than they really need to be.

## **02/** INTERESTING & DYNAMIC SEQUENCING

"W2, Reverse Warrior, Side Angle" we've all heard it, but I want something new and different! I know these are the same ol' yoga poses we've been doing for years, but if I wanted to have a repetitive practice I would do Ashtanga. Feel free to get creative, but at the same time your sequencing should make sense. Are you just stringing poses together for the sake of movement or is there an overall theme? Is there a peak pose you are emulating throughout the class? Are you focusing on open chest and backbends? There are a plethora of themes to investigate in your teaching.

I suggest you pick 5 and get really good at teaching them. I don't mean teach 5 of the exact same classes. The poses and sequence will change depending on the group. Take 5 overall themes and practice sequencing different classes to your theme. Some of my favorites include Core, External Hip Rotation and Twists, which almost always lead up to some arm balance or inversion. Once you have these 5 themes in place, you'll be become a wiz at teaching on the fly and have a basic class outline in place. You'll get really good at reading the room, seeing where people are at and meeting them there.

### **03/ CLEAR, CONCISE CUEING**

Just tell me what to do and how to do it. "OK and now we're going to do this and now we're going to do that." I don't need to know WHAT we're going to do in advance just tell me what TO do. Just as I want my practice to be as smooth and efficient as possible, I want to hear seamless cues that make me feel like the teacher knows exactly what they are talking about. This takes time and practice. It's a language. Once you learn it, practice! It's the only way to get fluent. Teaching isn't easy and it comes easier for some than others. Keep in mind mistakes happen. Let it go. Students usually don't even notice or care.

### **04/ MORE OPTIONS (BUT NOT TOO MANY)**

For those who have been practicing for a while it's nice to have more options offered in class. We are so busy trying to stay safe that we forget people are also strong and capable. Even if students can't do a specific pose, they can usually make a shape of the pose. People like to see what is doable while at the same time not being discouraged. Open them up to a realm of possibility. They may have only come to stretch and relax, but when they realize their practice is a never ending journey they'll keep coming back for more. At the same time if you offer *too* many options people get confused. There's definitely an art to finding that balance. Pick where the options are necessary and choose your words wisely.

### **05/ ENTHUSIASM & JOY**

If you do not enjoy teaching and let it shine through in your voice and presence why would I want to take your class? I have been in yoga classes where the teacher seems like they don't even want to be there. Thanks for lack of enthusiasm, but I want to be inspired and motivated. Take me on a magical mystery tour, otherwise go find a new job!

**REMEMBER** - You can't please everyone and in the course of trying, you usually end up pleasing no one. Teach in your own authentic style that radiates YOU! People will come to your class because they like you. If they don't that's OK. They'll find another class that better suits them. I know my powerful, sweaty style isn't for everyone. I want you to have fun and love yoga for the rest of your life, regardless of whether or not it's my yoga. If you don't like my class, please find another, just be nice about it in the process.