

# Yoga: 3 Reasons to Go Slow

(A Cheat Sheet for Yoga Teachers)

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Slow, mindful yoga practice can change your brain and build greater resilience in your nervous system – essentially helping you better navigate the highs and lows of life. There are many benefits of slow, conscious movement – here are a few to keep in your back pocket when talking to a student who is not convinced of the benefits of this kind of yoga practice.



## 1. Slow Yoga Builds Skills for Greater Resilience

Slow, mindful yoga practice improves interoception – which is our capacity to feel and sense into the body. You can't get this from fast practice! Interoception is a skill that can be learned and improved upon, but there are very few opportunities in our culture to learn this skill. Researchers suggest that poor interoception is associated with chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and depression, and that improving interoceptive capacity can be useful in addressing many chronic conditions.

“Maladaptive construal of bodily sensations may lie at the heart of many contemporary maladies.”

– Norman Farb, University of Toronto

## 2. Slow Yoga Promotes Neuroplasticity

Slow, mindful yoga helps to change your brain in ways that develop:

- a. A greater capacity to self-regulate your nervous system when you are faced with a stressor;
- b. An increase in empathy, feeling more connected to, and more in sync with others; and
- c. A positive attitude

## 3. Slow Yoga Reduces Inflammation

Inflammation is the new “bad guy” associated with a variety of disease processes including heart disease, diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer’s, arthritis, autoimmune diseases, and chronic pain. Slow, mindful yoga turns on the relaxation response which helps to reduce inflammation. This in turn can benefit respiratory and cardiovascular function, mental health, addiction recovery, chronic pain, sleep, and foster a greater sense of well-being.