EARTH:
A GUIDE FOR THE KAPHA-BRAIN TYPE YOGA TEACHER
Kapha-Brain Type Yoga teachers are committed, caring and consistent.

You are warm and nurturing and your students feel your deep desire to help them grow and flourish. Your steady, dependable classes make your students feel well taken care of. They are drawn to your sweet, loving personality and appreciate your mindfulness. They know what to expect each week and your presence makes them feel confident and supported.

Below find some information about your Kapha-brain and how you can optimize it to improve your classes, your practice, and your life!

Information about specific brain regions and systems can be found in the last section of this guide.
You are warm and friendly and your students feel safe and secure in your classes. Your diligence and attention to detail reflect the steady executive function of your prefrontal cortex.

Your memory is clear and steady and this serves you and your students well. Your frontoparietal working memory networks and your hippocampus help you to retain a lot of information, organize it well, and deliver it mindfully and methodically to your students.

Your classes are thorough, consistent, and dependable because you teach from a place of inner knowing and wisdom.

Your limbic system is not easily thrown off balance. You tend to be emotionally stable, consistent, and grounded.

Your gut-brain axis functions well and supplies a steady flow of energy to your brain (which uses more glucose than any other organ in your body!) This helps you deliver strong, consistent teaching.
ATTENTION NETWORKS
(FOCUS & CONCENTRATION)

✦ You are a natural at sharing slow, mindful, conscious classes and your students love them! They also appreciate your capacity for listening attentively to them and they know that you really understand their needs.

✦ Once you get rolling, it’s relatively easy for you to focus and concentrate. You have great stamina and your classes reflect your diligence and attention to detail. But sometimes you need a little push to get going with planning.
New information may take a while for you to process but once you get it, you own it and can share it clearly and methodically.

Your Reticular Activating System functions well and helps you concentrate and avoid distraction. You are able to plan your classes and other offerings without rushing or becoming obsessive.

When you put your mind to something, you accomplish it – completely and thoroughly. You are a great workshop participant, you take in all the information and allow yourself sufficient time for it to percolate through you so you can share it accurately with your students.
Fortunately your stress response is quite balanced. Your Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal Axis is not easily activated. You are able to withstand many challenges and stressors with amazing equanimity. You are the textbook definition of resilience!

As a result of the steadiness of your nervous system, you tend towards excellent health and, in general, are able to avoid stress-related illnesses. You have a strong immune system and your students appreciate that you rarely miss class.

Because of your steadiness and the excellent function of your Autonomic Nervous System, you are able to fall asleep easily and stay asleep.

You have great stamina and steady energy, and you are a natural when it comes to practicing and sharing slow, conscious movement. But sometimes you have difficulty getting started and need a little push in the right direction, which could come in the form of a friend, a deadline, or even a cup of coffee! A regular, slightly stronger practice is excellent for your constitution.
You are able to tune into the feelings in your body (interoception) and you move gracefully and fluidly. Your asana practice is steady and consistent. You also excel at giving adjustments.

You are strongly empathetic, connected not only to your own feelings, but also to the feelings of your students. This correlates with a high functioning insula and anterior cingulate cortex.

Although your interoceptive skills are well honed, sometimes it can take you a little while to tune in – which is why slow, mindful practice is such a natural for you – to practice as well as to teach.

Your cueing reflects your ability to help your students tune into their feelings.
You are a consistent, steady, and caring yoga teacher. Students love your classes because they are grounded, reliable, and incredibly relaxing.

They know that you will always give them ample time for śavāsana, restorative postures, pranayama and meditation.

You are a caring, kind, honest and thoughtful teacher, and your students greatly appreciate these qualities.

Students are drawn to your loving presence and depend on your classes to help them manage the stress in their lives. They appreciate your steady mind, your quiet presence, and your capacity to refrain from giving unsolicited advice. They feel safe and nurtured when they are with you.
YOGA TEACHING SKILLS TO BUILD

When you are balanced, you have steady energy and life is interesting and exciting. But sometimes you find yourself in a rut, struggling with boredom and/or lethargy.

To help your classes avoid reflecting that struggle, get in the habit of adding at least one new pose or practice to every class you teach.

Also, a friend or accountability buddy may be a good idea for helping you get out of a slump or motivating you to acquire new practices or techniques to enhance your learning, and keeping your classes fresh. Your students will love the variety and you will benefit from new growth opportunities.
For the Kapha-brain type yoga teacher, self-care may mean adding a few stronger postures to your daily routine, or trying something new and different.

Consistency is your strong suit, but branching out may be more challenging for you. Try taking some different yoga classes or adding a little pilates or qi gong into your practice.

Bringing new, active habits into your life, like a slightly stronger and longer morning practice, or a brisk walk after your practice, may be a great way for you to address sluggishness or lethargy. Regular inversions may also help. You will benefit from bringing a sprinkle of adventure into your practice, and into your life!
GLOSSARY
FOR THE KAPHA-BRAIN TYPE
YOGA TEACHER
PREFRONTAL CORTEX

The prefrontal cortex is a region of the brain that is involved in planning, rational thinking, decision making, social behavior, and personality expression. It is largely responsible for executive function, or the capacity for decision making and self-regulation.

CORPUS CALLOSUM

The corpus callosum is a thick band of white matter fibers that connects the left and right hemispheres of the cerebral cortex so that they can coordinate their different functions. It’s also involved in eye movement and vision, and maintaining a balance between arousal and attention, e.g. noticing something in your environment, and then paying attention to what it actually is and what it actually means. (e.g. “Flames, smoke, heat – fire!”)

HIPPOCAMPUS

This hippocampus is a structure of the limbic system (which is involved in emotion, behavior and motivation) and plays a very important role in memory consolidation and spatial memory.
2. Focus & Concentration

ATTENTION NETWORKS

There are three main networks involved in attention. One concerns alertness, the second is about orienting awareness to information from the senses, and the third is the executive network, which is involved in rational thinking, planning, and decision making.

RETICULAR ACTIVATING SYSTEM

The Reticular Activating System or RAS, is a network involving many parts of the brain including a bundle of nerves in your brainstem. This system filters out unnecessary information and helps you focus. It is also involved in cardiac function, sleep, pain modulation, and habits.
2.1 Focus & Concentration

**PARIETAL CORTEX**

The parietal cortex is involved in integrating sensory information which is relayed via the thalamus. The parietal cortex helps you know where your body is in space (proprioception) which is particularly important for ease of movement and skill, as well as keeping you from hurting yourself while moving.

**THALAMUS**

The Thalamus is a relay station in the brain that transmits signals from all the senses (except the sense of smell) and motor signals to the cerebral cortex. It's also involved in sleep, alertness, and awareness.
3. Stress response

The Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal Axis (or HPA axis) are mechanisms of the stress response system. The HPA axis controls your physical and emotional responses to stress and regulates many body processes including digestion, the immune system, emotions, sexuality, and the storage and expenditure of energy.

The Enteric Nervous System (often called the "Gut-Brain") is a system of neurons embedded in the lining of the entire gastrointestinal system that is in charge of the function of the GI tract. It can act independently of the ANS (Autonomic Nervous System) and is involved in reflexes and other autonomic functions.
4. Body Awareness

**PROPRIOCEPTION**

Proprioception is the sense of knowing where your body is in space, including position, motion, and balance. It involves your brain, eyes, vestibular or balance system, and stretch receptors in the skin.

**INTEROCEPTION**

Interoception is the sense of how your body feels. It occurs on a continuum from the unconscious to the conscious and its main function is to maintain homeostasis or balance in the body, mind and emotions.

[Image of Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man for proprioception]

[Image of a hand in the sunlight for interoception]
4.1 Body Awareness

**INSULA**

The insula is a cortical island deep in the cortex on both sides. It is involved in linking emotional responses to actions in order to maintain homeostasis. It is involved in interoceptive awareness, cognitive function, interpersonal experience, and decision making.

**ORBITOFRONTAL CORTEX**

The Orbitofrontal Cortex (or OFC) is a part of the prefrontal cortex that interfaces with several other areas, including the insula and is involved in cognitive processing and decision making.

**MIRROR NEURON NETWORKS**

Although still theoretical, the idea of mirror neurons is fascinating. They are thought to fire both when you act, and when you observe others acting, and possibly help us understand, better communicate with, and empathize with others’ feelings and behavior.
At some point you may feel like you could use more help with this stuff.

Explaining the scientific benefits of yoga is not easy. It’s taken me years to curate the research and help my students understand how yoga helps improve health and well-being and why they should spend time taking care of themselves.

So check out my newsletter, my online courses, and my in person trainings. I’d love to have you join our subtle tribe.

Namaste,

Kristine Kaoverii Weber

Key References:


