

# Showing and Telling

## Inclusiveness in Your Class for a Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing Person

### Tips for Yoga Teachers

First and foremost, someone who is deaf or hard-of-hearing relies on being able to see you. This is true whether they use a Sign Language or if they use residual hearing and lip reading.

Position the class in a semi-circle, if possible. If not, check with the deaf student where they will be most comfortable (usually in the front row, often at the end of the row) and ensure you reserve that place for their use.

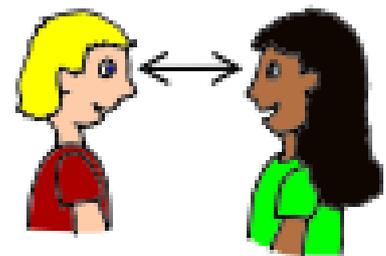
Ensure there is adequate lighting; if there are windows in the room, have the deaf student's back to the window(s), if possible.



When demonstrating or instructing, ensure you are in the front, where the deaf student can see you. Try not to “call out” group instructions whilst moving amongst the group. Prior to giving any instruction or feedback, ensure that you have the deaf student's gaze; if they cannot see you, they most likely will not know what you have said. Gain their attention either by placing your hand lightly on their shoulder or upper arm or by waving your hand in their field of vision. Hard-of-hearing students may not prefer these tactile techniques. Ask how they want you to gain their attention.



Ask initially, but most Deaf and hard-of-hearing students are quite happy to have you make hands-on adjustments to their poses. After you know that your student is OK with hands-on adjustments, always ensure that they are aware of your presence before making the adjustment. Otherwise, you can startle them, especially if you are behind them. Come into their field of vision and then make the adjustment. In necessary, demonstrate how they are in the pose and how the pose should be.



For students who can lip read, be mindful that it is not an “exact science” and many English sounds look the same. Speak clearly, in a measured tone, but do not exaggerate lip patterns. Don't shout, but gauge with the person if slightly raising your voice helps them or not.

Be yourself – be authentic, be genuine, show your energy ... you've got this! Namaste

