



Understanding Drills, Modifications and Variations

Meeting Any Student Level with Sequenced Progressions

CREATING DRILLS

A drill is a progression exercise used to generate the strength, flexibility, or timing for a more advanced skill. Before we learn to run, we learn to walk, before we learn to walk, we learn to stand, before we learn to stand, we learn to crawl. Each form is a progression to the next. Drills are especially important for building strength in the muscles and awareness in the mind. Like riding a bike, every time we repeat something with exactitude, we create a deeper groove in the brain until it becomes automatic.

The better you are at creating drills, the stronger your class becomes. Generally, build drills into learning every new skill so your student feels successful when they accomplish the final skill. Remember, just like life, it is all about the process, not simply the result. It is much sweeter to accomplish something after you have had to work for it.

CREATING MODIFICATIONS

When as an instructor you notice that a student is challenged on a specific maneuver (based on strength, flexibility, coordination etc.) three possibilities exist. 1) go back a step and let that be a modification for them (ie: down dog rather than teepee) 2) suggest another progression along the way (ie: plumbline shift) or 3) give them a variation on the pose to support their ability to succeed (ie: knees bent rather than straight)

MONITORING RESISTANCE CONSIDERATION

When someone chooses not to do a certain skill, hopefully it is because they are monitoring their resistance, listening to their body, and following their healthy intuition. Alas, sometimes it is also because they are afraid. By creating a progression in the form of a drill or variation, they still feel included, and they do not have to sit out of a sequence. For example, someone who is afraid of inversion can do every step leading up to Spiderman holding and then reverse the sequence. They can do this numerous times (building both strength and awareness) until they are ready for Spiderman. They hold only for but one breath cycle at first and progress from there until they are comfortable doing the inversion. Every sequence can have an alternative, it just takes a bit of creativity and an awareness of

what is holding the person back. Set up each sequence so that success is not solely from the ending pose but from the progress along the way. Remember the strength building process of learning is as important as the final pose.

CREATING VARIATIONS

An AntiGravity Class Design is based on yoga format, but it is more Vinyasa Flow style, less rigid. We follow a pattern, starting with the Womb and finishing with Cocoon. In between those we have a specific sequential structure that includes inversions, warm up, strength, mobility, swinging etc. The familiarity of the pattern of the class design gives the structure, but the actual sequences are malleable based on the use of **Variations**.

Variations do not change the wrap in a sequence, rather they stem from an existing pose and change the locomotion, timing, or both by adding either movement or stillness. One may choose to stop and do pulses within the sequence or add a rocking or swaying motion in a still pose. One may vary the breathing and timing of a pose within the sequence or change the plumbline to make it easier or harder. Adding deep core work to an existing sequence is another terrific variation (esp. inversions).

Provided the wrap is the same, the poses follow the sequential order. Variations are subtle and individual nuances are encouraged as every instructor brings their own flavor to their class. Music, student level and instructor experience dictate creativity within a variation.

We suggest that you explore variations in your own time and solidify with a partner before teaching. The more trainings you have under your belt, the more you will understand what variations might be discovered.

Variation General Rule: Less is more. Stay close to the existing sequence and make your variation subtle.

Example Vampire Sequence:

Drill: Gargoyle to Vampire move back and forth between the poses to build awareness and strength to maintain the Vampire pose

Modification: Stay in Gargoyle or even go back to Mosquito

Variation: Once in Vampire, Place one foot on floor to take a split or swing