

Help Your Health - The Weekly Review - #09 Summer 2016

Asana:

This week, in all classes except the Chair classes, we went through the “5 Tibetans” both actual and preparation/modified.

Please **click here** for the stick figures with explanation both versions, printable.

Also a **link** to the article: the Ancient Tibetan Practice for Health and Vitality.

Work those Toes:

Using either a wash cloth or a paper towel. Place the foot down on the material, but not the heel.

1. Curl all toes under and try to grab the material with all toes don't forget the pinky, that is the hardest Hold for a breath or two still keeping a slight contact with the big toe. Still keeping the heel down on the floor, lifting only about an inch or so and hold again for a breath or two. Feel the work and action which is being asked of the foot muscles, ligaments and tendons. 3x each foot.
2. Now curl the toes under without grabbing the material and try to push the material away, this will happen very gradually and don't let the big toe do all the work. Keep pushing with each curl until the material is no longer under the foot, switch feet.

It is suggested to do these foot exercises on a daily basis.

A Walk In the Park:

Sitting on your mat (or the floor if the mat is too sticky) legs stretched straight, hands resting on thighs.

Keeping good posture, pick up right buttocks and leg, stretch it forward, release and go to the other side. Do NOT bend the knees.

Gaining a few inches with each movement forward.

Once you have reached the end of your mat, or the distance you choose, then reverse the movement and walk your buttocks backwards on the mat, one side at a time and always switching.

Be aware that if you do not pick up the buttocks enough, your pants may become tight on the way forward and come down on the way back.

Enjoy your walk and do it a few times, you will feel it the next day!

Repeated this week again but with a different blanket placement:

Breath Focus, during the second part of attunement with the **blanket lengthwise** under the spine and legs up on the chair, relax with the eyes closed.

“Unlocking the Heart”, a 5 minute continuous breathing exercise followed with 5 minutes of relaxation.

Begin by engaging the abdominal muscles to prevent the belly from protruding during both the inhale and exhale.

If you are not sure if you are doing it correctly then take one hand for a moment to monitor that the belly is not rising up and down.

If you feel any discomfort in the lower back then readjust the roll as it should be at the base of the shoulder blades but allowing the shoulders to lay on the mat and the arms to be relaxed in cactus. You may also need to add a small folded towel under the small of the back for support when you being this exercise. After multiple repetitions you will notice that you are more relaxed with the engagement and will probably not be feeling the same pressure in the lower back.

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At first we are often tense wondering if we are doing it correctly. You will notice that the breath has limited space and so will fill/expand the ribcage as well as begin to open the shoulders and the chest in general.

It is suggested to repeat this pranayama exercise daily for a month. You may experience a range of emotional releases and/or physical changes/sensations and openings in the chest area.

Continuing with 2 x Sun Salutations with and without the Chair! Pictures, explanations and YouTube videos are also to be found on the [video page](#) of my website. Just scroll, check and click on the thumbnails.

Or check and print out my stick figure explanation of the different stages of Sun Salutations, both with and without the chair. [Click here.](#)

Music: 3 different albums by Parijat: “Offerings” “Reiki Healing” “ The Healing Path”

Quote:

There is little difference in people, but that little difference makes a big difference. The little difference is attitude, the BIG difference is whether it is a positive or negative attitude.
-W.Clement Stone

We spoke about current brain mapping being done by numerous neuroscientist which is proving may established theories of eastern yoga philosophy and practices.

I mentioned two scientists in particular: Andrew Newborn MD and Mark Waldman researchers at the Center for Spirituality and the Mind at the University of Pennsylvania authors of “**How God Changes Your Brain**” and “**Words Can Change Your Brain**”. Mark Waldman is also leading the Business Masters Program at Loyola Marymount University.

Two excerpts which I read in class was about the way one views faith activating different parts of the neural circuitry : “Thinking of a moving being causes the compassion centers to light up, whereas belief in an authoritarian spirit stimulates regions that prime the brainier fighting.” and “To improve well-being in general, they say, the four most important elements to include in your life are cultivating faith (in God or another power, or simply in the belief that a positive future awaits you), engaging in dialogue with others, getting exercise(including aerobic) and meditating.

They devote the last chapters of their book (How God Changes Your Brain) to specific exercised drawn fro both spiritual traditions and modern brain science - meditative, physical and interpersonal techniques that can be used by anyone, atheist or believer, to enhance cognitive function, emotional serenity and communication with others.

One last tidbit: for every 1 negative thought we should counter with 3 positive thoughts.

Miscellaneous: A 30 minute video worthy of your time: The Science Behind Yoga

<http://upliftconnect.com/watch-science-behind-yoga/>

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I hope you will not only enjoy the video but pass it to others who may have contemplated a yoga class but not yet experienced or possibly those who are skeptical about the practice of yoga.

Important Disclaimer

The news, suggestions, information, exercises and other items in this list are intended for informational purposes only. Not all exercise is suitable for everyone. To reduce the risk of injury, please consult your Doctor before engaging in any physical and/or therapeutic exercise program. Nothing is intended to be a substitute for professional medical care.

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