

Help Your Health - The Weekly Review - #01 Autumn 2016

Asana:

Welcome back to class.

The theme for this session beginning our second week will be: **Building Bone Density through a focus on bone strength, muscle strength and balance.**

We will add **Side Plank Knee Down Version** and/or **Gate-Latch Pose also called Parighasana (modification)**, after our cat/cow series each time in class.

For those of you who enjoy reaching back for your ankle after balancing, this version of the reach back is much easier and safer to attain.

Classified as an asymmetrical kneeling side-bending asana working the spine, upper and lower limbs.

Description:

Coming from kneeling on all fours.

Take the right leg straight back to the right corner of your mat, sole of foot on mat with heel pushing backwards and toes coming more forward, slightly rolling to the outside of the foot.

Take the left foot, lift and pivot to the side of mat almost off the mat (think of this movement as the back piece of a picture frame with one opens to help the frame sit on a flat surface).

Now take the left hand and place in also slightly off the left side of the mat but in a diagonal to the right foot.

Be mindful when the extremities are in position that the left hip should be directly over the left knee and the left shoulder over the left wrist. Stacking for support is important, no reaching.

You should now feel well balanced.

At this point when you are ready you can begin to lift the right foot, a few inches or more, eventually holding it level with the hip.

The next step would be to reach back for the right ankle with your right hand, engage and lift. Hold and breathe. Repeat on the other side.

Physical Benefits:

Improves balance, strengthens abs, arms, legs and wrists.

Adaptations/Variations:

Instead of lifting the right leg you can lift the left arm and reach over head, bending from the waist as you stretch towards the rear leg. Right arm sliding down the leg and left arm reaching over head as you look up on the inside of the left arm, eventually reaching towards the right foot. Repeat other side.

Low Lunge (with back knee down)- Hamstring Stretch Series

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Description:

Kneeling on the mat. Have two block near by for possible support during asana.

Bring the right leg forward with the front knee and shin directly over the ankle with the center of your knee aligned with your middle toes. Stretch/Inch the left leg back as much as is comfortable, feel the stretch in the left thigh/groin.

Be mindful, no groin pull, take it slow and don't over due as you shift your pelvis forward to deepen the stretch.

Place a blanket under your knees if they feel sensitive.

You may think this is not my hamstring, that's correct, one step at a time.

Gently release the torso down towards the inside of the right thigh and let the right armpit lay over the thigh slightly above the knee. Feel as if the right side of the torso is zippered to the thigh.

Frame your foot with both hands.

Keeping the contact, slowly begin to straighten the right leg with the right toes on the ground.

Only go as far as you can without lifting the chest, breathe into the stretch.

After a minute or two, start raising the torso, walking the hands back(using the blocks if necessary), lifting the heart and keep the back flat, engage the core during this process.

Lifting the toes and flexing the right foot, straightening the leg as much as possible.

Pushing down on the right heel and pulling slightly back on the right hip for additional stretching.

Take you time and do not rush this stretch.

Flow To:

Pigeon Prep

Bring the right knee back to beginning position with knee directly over ankle.

Place both hands inside right foot and slowly roll over the right foot to the side, opening the hip and being in a pigeon prep position.

If you feel the need and the hips are open enough you can also bend the elbows back and start to lower the chest towards the floor. Don't be concerned if this does not happen and does not feel comfortable, a little is a lot in this stretch!

Bring the knee back to center, take the right arm up reach over head towards the ceiling.

If you want more, raise the left knee off the mat, hold and breathe, building strength and stamina.

Repeat the series on the other side.

Physical Benefits:

Stretches hamstrings, thighs, hips. Strengthens thighs, tones hip abductor stabilizers.

Caution knee and lower back issues.

Avoid sinking into your lower back and letting your front ribs pop forward, find the balance.

AdaptationsVariations:

Sitting in the Chair: a daily alternative to getting down on the mat and for anyone with kneeling issues.

Sit forward in your chair so the buttocks is on the chair but the thigh is not, stretch the right leg straight and forward.

Left leg is bent with knee directly over ankle.

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Hinge forward from the hip cradle with a flat back as far as feels comfortable.

Flex the right foot.

Place the left forearm on the left thigh as the right hand gently massages the back of the right thigh over the three hamstrings.

Although the stretch initially may not be localized in this area you are massaging, which is often referred to as the 'belly' of the hamstrings, you may be feeling the stretch more in the back and side of the knee where the tendons from the hamstrings attach to the bone. The feeling of where the stretch is coming from may switch over time and may be different in each leg.

It is important to keep the lower back relatively flat as tight hamstrings will pull on the back (tight hamstrings can be a contributing factor for lower back issues).

Coming slowly forward, as much as your hamstrings will allow, they should be speaking to you so don't over do, taking the stretch slowly in baby steps, holding for a minute or two and breathing fully.

Hold the stretch at your end position, the hamstrings like to have time to relax and unravel, but don't forget to continue breathing into the stretch.

The stronger you flex the right foot, push the heel down and/or pull it gently back, the more you will feel the stretch.

Reverse and repeat on the left side.

We reviewed, please practice at home as we will continue to do these in class every week.

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.](#)

If you haven't purchased my two DVD's yet, you may find them helpful for a home practice.

Music: 3 different albums by **Parijat:** "Offerings" "Reiki Healing" "The Healing Path"

Essential Oil:

"Cheer" from the doterra essential oils/emotional aromatherapy. I mix it with fractionated coconut oil.

Available here in OWV at The Living Temple, a retail shop specializing in products for healthy living, ask for Robin.

Quote:

Gratitude by Melody Beattie

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life....it turns what we have into enough and more
it turns denial into acceptance....chaos into order....confusion into charity.

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It turns problems into gifts.....failures into success.....the unexpected into perfect timing
and mistakes into important events.

Gratitude makes sense of our past....brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.

Miscellaneous:

A video to watch and to forward: please add the ..heroine video **LINK**

Suggested readings (just google his name) from Dr. Loren Fishman M.D. a professor at the
Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons. Include **LINK**

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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