

Help Your Health - The Weekly Review - #03 Autumn 2016

During our third week we have continued to work on our Fall theme:

Building Bone Density through a focus on bone strength, muscle strength and balance.

Please refer to the last two newsletters with links to Dr. Loren Fishman, his books, articles and studies on Osteoporosis and Scoliosis.

Another book on the subject which may be interesting for your reading: "The Whole-body Approach to Osteoporosis" by R. Keith McCormick, DC

Asana:

Two weeks ago we explored in detail Gate-latch Pose/**Side Plank Knee Down Version also called Parighasana (modification)** which we sometimes do a version of after our cat/cow series.

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.

This week we continued with this asana to include a more lateral stretch of the torso and leg. Everyone should be sure to lengthen the spine before bending to the side.

This additional version also stimulates the sides of the lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones.

If you have moderate or severe scoliosis only do this pose towards the convex side of your curvature.

In some classes we did the chair and kneeling versions both.

Begin in your Gate position (as described two weeks ago) and instead of lifting the right leg/keep it well planted on the floor rolling out on your ankle, now lift the left arm, lifting the body and reaching straight up and then over head, bending from the waist as you stretch towards the right leg. Right arm sliding down the leg and left arm reaching over head as you look up on the inside of the left arm, keeping that shoulder open and back, eventually reaching towards the right foot with both arms. Repeat other side.

One of the top ten in the bone density building study is:

Jathara Parivartanasana or Supine Twist or Windshield Wipers

Purpose: Primarily to apply torque to the anterior lumbar and lateral thoracic and cervical vertebrae, secondarily to generate forces along the lateral thigh bones, anterior lower ribs and shoulders and to strengthen the abdominal muscles.

Contraindications: colostomy, inguinal or abdominal hernia, large herniated disc, spondylolisthesis. Twists are not necessarily friends of many lower back issues so be careful how far you move your lower back into the asana.

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Avoiding pitfalls: maintain maximum length in your spine as you twist. Strongly press your shoulders down onto the floor to stabilize your upper body as the lower body turns.

Most basic version:

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor hip width apart (closer is less twist/stretch and wider is more).

Extend your arms out to your sides at shoulder height, with your palms facing down but be mindful that the shoulders remain open.

Exhale as you lower your knees to the right towards the floor.

Making sure that your upper back and both shoulders stay in contact with the floor throughout the entire pose as you move from right to left.

Turning the head to look in the opposite direction.

Next version:

Same position as above but with a block between your lower legs.

With hips and knees bent 90 degrees.

Flexing your feet, spreading all ten toes and lengthening tailbone, firming abdomen.

Inhale to lengthen rib cage, then exhale and move your legs to the left with your shoulders still pressing down.

Inhale as you bring your legs back to center.

Exhale move your legs to the right, pressing both shoulders down. Continue from side to side.

More difficult version:

same as above but the knees open to an angle greater than 90 degrees.

Prevention Version:

Same as above but with legs straight and no block but this time shifting the hips to the opposite side to prepare to counterbalance our legs going in the other direction,

Keep both shoulders pressed into the floor. Lower the straight legs to the floor.

Aim your feet toward your opposite hand, stay in the pose, ankles together for 10-15 seconds.

Inhale bring the legs back to center.

Repeat and shift weight for the other side.

This is a strong twist so take it slowly with mindfulness and little steps.

While standing this week we went again through: **Tree, Triangle and Side Twist.**

Versions standing, with the chair and/or block.

We will continue with these which we worked through, touched slightly, and then explore some more of the recommended asanas.

Quote:

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Savasana/Closing Statement:

adapted from Max Strom "A Life Worth Breathing"

Take your palms to your thighs(or on the mat next to your legs) and drop your shoulder blades down your back...lie very, very long and close your eyes.

We want to elongate the spine by pressing the buttock down in two directions... becoming even heavier and longer than you think.

The spine is like a column of energy from which the rest of the body is merely suspended.

Let your breath ——breathe itself now——

I invite you to visualize into the heart center....in the eye of your heart.

Visualize, what is the MOST PRECIOUS entity to you in the world, the most precious entity that you know: person, idea, concept, belief.... Whatever it is that opens your heart to deep, deep gratitude.

Visualize this precious entity and let your heart blossom towards it and radiate light and color...this is your gratitude.

We can never do this enough....

Please bring your hands together:

Take your hands to your forehead.....this indicates the desire for a clear and calm mind.

Take the hands to the lips.....indicating a desire for a clear and loving communication.

Bring the hands to the heart center.....indicating a desire for a clear and loving intention.

May our practice help us become wiser and more truthful human beings and may we all teach peace by example.

Namaste.

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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