

Help Your Health - The Weekly Review - #03 Winter 2017

Continuing with Side Plank (see instructions from last week). Please let me know if you have Scoliosis and if you have intentions to do this asana as suggested by Dr. Fishman. If you have Scoliosis and have a copy of your MRI or X-Ray I would love to see it.

Pranayama:

In some classes we did deep breathing without letting the belly move, engaging the stomach muscles and letting the breath fill the ribs and shoulders. We will continue this Pranayama exercise of "Unlocking the Heart". This can be practiced while sitting or supine. It takes steady and constant concentration as we are so use to the belly moving.

Asana:

I introduced a new shoulder rotation exercise which may remind many of Butterfly/Clock.

Half Clock:

Supine on your back, roll to the right side (shoulders stacked) with the knees bent and feet together on top of each other. Bring the left palm to the right palm which is extended on the floor at shoulder height. Keeping the arm straight and clocking it from 9 to 3, letting it come directly on to the head/ear and releasing the shoulder down with floor contact as soon as the head rolls to the other side. The arms continues to 3 and then goes back with the same intention. Attempting to keep the moving arm straight with as much floor contact as possible, it will roll with palm moving up over and up.

The knees can roll up and over as the feet also roll from the side to flat to the other side, the amount the knees need to roll has to do with the need of the shoulder to maintain normal contact rotation.

You may find that your knees hardly roll at all, staying down and keeping contact. This is fine if it does not compromise the shoulder rotation. This creates a very powerful twist in the back, do take it slow if you have any back issues.

Eventually you may even be able to lift the legs off the floor and have them (as in windshield wipers) go from side to side with the arm. The closer the knees are to the body the easier. Be mindful that you have your abdominals engaged if you decide to lift the legs, this is core work. But again, do not compromise the shoulder rotation.

DownDog Variations:

This new asana which we have not done before is **#1/2 DD** and can be integrated into a Yogi Snack flow. Beginning in ChildsPose to Up-Dog to 1/2 DownDog to DownDog to Plank to Up-Dog to ChildsPose.

Since this information is for multiple levels of ability please listen to your body and only do what feels right for you, the next step will come eventually with steady practice.

This first version (no included in the Yogi Snack Flow) can be done at any time during the warm up portion of your practice:

#1/4 DD (a version of Thread the Needle)

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-In Puppy (buttocks over knees/knees hip to shoulder width apart), right forearm on mat, palm down/ fingers spread, left arm eventually reaching/stretching over head but keeping the arm aligned next to the left ear, release forehead to lay on forearm/gradually moving it forward as you release and stretch feeling the arm pits coming closer to the mat. Let the back completely relax with the relaxation moving to the shoulders. Breath wide and full, long and slow.
Switch Sides.

This is the A-Symmetrical Version and can be done with both arms stretching forward, forehead on the mat and eventually sliding the nose forward on the mat, go slowly as this is a mighty stretch and not for everyone.

#1/2 DownDog -Coming from Up-Dog, draw the shoulders back so they are not stacked over the wrist, curl the toes under and slowly and slightly lift the knees off the mat as you bring the thighs closer to the chest, the pelvic area is in a dog tilt and do not loose this placement. Hold and feel the thighs working.

If you can't lift the knees off the mat, bring the shoulders slightly forward until you can, once the knees are up you will eventually be able to draw the shoulders back, they will have a tendency to come forward but then the thighs will not be working and the shoulders will not be lengthening. If you hold for sequential breaths you will feel the thighs begin to heat up. This is a gradual strengthening practice.

Please work on this during the week and we will review in class, ask if you have any questions or would like to have this asanas adjusted or corrected. I always suggest that if you have the possibility, that seeing yourself in a new asana will give you an idea of exactly what you are doing and not doing. A mirror can be used once in a while as a prop for guidance but not to become a regular habit. Once you know how an asana feels you will be able to come to that placement without a mirror or my adjustment. Feel your yoga!

#Full DownDog -slowly from 1/2 DD straighten the leg bringing the heels towards the floor , if they easily come to the floor you DD may not be long enough. If the hamstrings are tight the legs may not straighten and the heels will be some distance from the floor (you can add a rolled blanket under the heels), this is a continual process of slowly stretching.

DownDog is an inverted V, so be mindful that you still do not let the shoulders come forward. Drop the head slightly so the ears are aligned between the upper arms, spread the shoulder blades.

Eventually you may want to continue releasing the chest down if you are looking for a deeper stretch for the back and shoulders.

Essential Oil: doTerra: On Guard /Protective Blend, we will continue using this the coming week since I did not share it in all classes.

Music: Deuter "Illumination" plus George Winston "The Summer" for Savasana

Quote: "A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, him aim fulfilled, they will say: "We did it ourselves" -LaoTzu

One last tidbit:

When you come to your yoga class just remember: You have no place to go and nothing to do... except possibly some yoga and breathing. Try to leave everything else out side the front door. If

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you are have any physical issues you can always come to your class and just be there, supine or sitting in a chair and breathing. Yoga offers a myriad of possibilities.

Miscellaneous: Suggested book for anyone with Scoliosis: Yoga for Arthritis by Dr. Loren Fishman and Ellen Saltonstall. There is a full chapter in this book on the subject.

This 11-year-old could be the youngest certified yoga instructor in the country
<http://www.ocreger.com/articles/yoga-741524-tabay-mother.html>

Question to all my students: Please feel free to comment and give suggestions as to what you are enjoying or maybe not. Are there aspect of class which you would like to see more of, specific asanas or working with specific parts of the body.

If I were to give some workshops in the Spring, what would you like to know more about, what are you interested in?

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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