

## Asana this week:

**Boat**

**Dolphin**

**Sun Salutations (Standing & Chair)**

**Toe Tapping**

**Name: Boat/Navasana**

**Description:** Seated boat pose can be done with the legs hip width apart or you can use a block between the knees. Back should always be kept flat, shoulders back and down, do not cave in the chest and belly engaged.

Begin in staff pose placing the hands on the floor slightly behind your hips, fingers pointing toward your feet.

Lift your chest toward the ceiling as you lean back slightly always making sure your back remains flat.

Bend your knees and place your feet flat on the floor. Lift your feet one or two inches off the floor, balance on your tailbone and hips. (continue with our class version or follow \*)

Inhale and slowly lift the shins/feet until they are parallel to the mat.

Bring your arms forward at shoulder height holding on to the outside/back of the thighs if necessary.

Relax your shoulders down away from your ears.

Tip your chin slightly toward your chest to lengthen the back of your neck.

Hold the pose longer with each practice, releasing on exhale and you lower your legs to the floor.

### **Physical Benefits:**

Strengthens the abdomen, lumbar spine, hip flexors and helps with spine alignment and extension, creating physical sturdiness and stamina. Developing the muscles of the lower body evenly with regular practice and better sitting posture is achieved. Also aids in digestion as well as being a passive hamstring stretch when the legs are extended. Improves balance.

Target Muscles: Psoas, Rectus Femoris, Rectus Abdominis and Erector Spinea.

### **Adaptations/Variations:**

#1 \*Straighten your legs until the tips of your toes are slightly above your eye level.

Bring your arms forward at shoulder height, parallel to the floor with your palms facing in.

Relax your shoulders down away from your ears.

Tip your chin slightly toward your chest to lengthen the back of your neck.

Hold the pose longer with each practice, releasing on exhale and you lower your legs to the floor.

#2 You can also do this same pose raising one leg at a time.

#3 Resting back on your forearms with palms on the mat, brings knees over hips/feet parallel to mat.

Hold.

## Name: Dolphin/Salamba Sirsasana

### Description: this is the version we begin with in most classes

Begin on all fours in table pose, keeping the shoulders broad, widen through your collarbones. Lengthen your tailbone away from the pelvis and press it towards the sitting bones. Forearms on the mat, elbows under the shoulders but not as wide, hands interlaced (pinky pulled in). You can easily judge your elbow width when you are able to feel your hair/ears sliding past your upper arms then the elbows are in place.

Gazing back at your feet, on an exhale draw the head back through the arms so you can feel the stretch along the sides of the body.

Placement of the knees will change with strength and ability as the closer they come towards the elbows the more difficult the range of the movement will become. Always keeping the buttocks up and in dog tilt.

On the Inhale bring the head/torso forward as far as possible with the forehead/nose leading the way to the hands and possibly over the hands towards the floor (don't go so far forward that you can't get back). Breathing deeply and coordinating the movement with the breath, continue doing 3 sets of 6-12 repetitions each. Then rest in Child's Pose.

**See Alternative:** Eventually using the last one or two of each set for lifting the knees at the end. Until they are all done with the knees off the floor (can be slightly bent if the hamstrings are tight).

This will probably be easier for men to do but it is highly effective for women who would like to build arm strength.

**Physical Benefits:** One of the best postures for developing strength, stretching and flexibility in the shoulders and improving the alignment of the upper back and shoulder girdle. It also increases flexibility of the upper back and hamstrings.

### Adaptations/Variations:

#1 Continue as described but lift the knees off the mat and walk the feet slightly forward. Continue the movement but do not expect to go as far forward or back as you did with the knees on the mat. Be patient, move slowly, less is more.

#2 the only change is to place the forearms perpendicular to the front edge of your mat/palms and fingers (middle finger pointing directly forward) flat on the mat.

The elbows are in the same place as the interlaced hand version, they will again have a tendency to slide outwards, please try to keep them within shoulder distance apart.

This arm variation may be easier for some students, be mindful how far you go forward as you still will need to stretch back towards Child's pose. Still keeping the hips directly over the knees with the knees hip to shoulder width apart at the beginning of each movement or the variation with the knees off the mat.

## Name: Sun Salutations.

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.

## Help Your Health - The Weekly Review - #02 Spring 2017

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

**Physical Benefits:** All body stretching and strengthening from finger tips to toes. Plus can also be a cardio workout if done in unison with the breath and multiple sets.

**Adaptations/Variations:** Sun Salutations with and without the Chair!

### Name: Toe Tapping

#### Description: this is the version we begin with in most classes

Lie on your back with your arms by your side.

Engage your core and lift your legs in the air with your knees and get at hip width.

Keeping your spine and hips in a neutral position, (do not arch), relax your shoulders, using your arms to stabilize you if you need to.

Hold your left leg at a right angle, lower your right leg toward the floor slowly and with control, without letting your back arch off the floor.

Hold at the edge of the movement, keeping your core braced, tap the big toe one time on the mat slowly, then return to the start positions, maintaining control as you do so.

Repeat with the other leg and continue.

**Physical Benefits:** A core stabilizing exercise that can be helpful for strengthening the deep muscles of your abdomen and lower back. to get the best results from this movement, keep your core engaged throughout.

Target Muscles: Rectus Abdominis, Transverse Abdominis, Internal Obliques, Pelvic Floor Multifidus

#### Adaptations/Variations:

#1 A harder version is using both legs at the same time always keeping the knees at 90 degrees.

#2 Using the arms: first both vertical and held reaching towards the ceiling, continue toe taps.

#3 Using the arms: with alternating moment to overhead (touching the floor if possible) , a challenge of lateral instability, same arm, same leg movement of toe tapping. Other arm vertical and same side leg held at 90 degrees.

#4 Then with the same arm moving overhead adding rotational instability and dynamic movement but with this version bring the same side knee towards the chest while extending the opposite leg as far as possible without arching the back and without touching the floor/same side arm vertical as straight leg.

#### Attune:

#### Loving Kindness Meditation/Mantra (Sanskrit: Maitre) -Anytime, anywhere....

Many people equate self-love with selfishness and tend to be very hard on themselves, often feeling frustration and even self-loathing about their personal flaws. This Meditation/Mantra can help break mental habits of self-judgement, help develop positive feelings and lets us embrace all aspects of ourselves and other Unconditionally showing us how to meet our inner critic with love, being kind towards ourselves and finding the good in others.

Repeating these four phases several times, either silently or out loud, possibly when walking or at any time you would like to center yourself and send a message.

#### Repeating these phrases aimed first at oneself:

**May I be happy.**  
**May I be healthy.**  
**May I be peaceful.**  
**May I be safe.**

**Then to a loved one, then a person in your life where you may be having a difficult time and finally to the world at large/all living things and beings.**

**May you be happy.**  
**May you be healthy.**  
**May you be peaceful.**  
**May you be safe.**

**And then again to yourself, with “I”.**

### **Essential Oil:**

Lavender Synergy: lavender, clove, cinnamon, lemon, eucalyptus, rosemary.

### **Music:**

Deuter: Eternity

### **Quote:**

#### ***Dedication of Merit***

May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness.  
May all beings be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.  
May all beings never be parted from freedom's true joy.  
May all being dwell in equanimity, free from attachment an aversion.

### **Miscellaneous:**

Help Your Health Lending Library Book: “**Limbs from the Willow Tree**” by **Dr. Robert Chapman**. I have bought four books to loan to students for reading. **The wait list is on my desk, just put your name down and I will let you know when a book is returned.**

The book is currently available as a Kindle download and a new edition will be available soon, I will let you know. This is a very inspiring read and I highly suggest it for anyone dealing with an addiction problem in family or friends circle, near or far.

**Blankets for class:** At “**Local Fare**” in the SoCo OC Mart Mix. They are currently selling for \$18. But if you tell her you are coming from me she will only charge \$15.  
<https://oclocalfare.com/>

## Help Your Health - The Weekly Review - #02 Spring 2017

**Jade “Harmony” Yoga Mat** A wonderful mat to last a very long time.

**Yoga for Dummies** (Third Edition) by Dr. Larry Payne & Dr. Georg Feuerstein  
A very basic and thorough book on Yoga.

**Yoga as Medicine** by Dr. Timothy McCall

Dr. Mc Call teams up with various yoga experts on specific diseases/ailments. Written for the lay person, good explanations, descriptions and photos.

*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.*

**For more information contact: RoxAnn Madera 714.421.0477 [yogatherapyalacarte.com](http://yogatherapyalacarte.com)**