

Asana this week:

Uttanasana (Ardha-Half-Up, Hasta-Arms Overhead)

Name: Uttanasana (Ardha-Half-Up, Hasta-Arms Overhead)

Description:

1. Begin in Mountain Pose/Tadasana.
2. Inhale as you stretch your arms above your head with your palms facing each other, keeping your shoulders relaxed. This is Hasta-Uttanasana.
3. Exhaling as you bend forward/hinge from your hips (at least a micro bend of the knees if your hamstrings or lower back are tight, it may be necessary to bend even more), keeping the soles of the feet evenly pressed into the floor/grounding, arms swan diving to the floor.
4. Placing your palms on the floor on either side of your feet, if this is not possible, place them in front of your feet or maybe just the fingertips touch the floor until you become more flexible to attain full hand position.
5. Relax your head and neck towards the floor as you lift your sitting bones toward the ceiling to lengthen the spine. Stretching the back of the legs, continue pressing the soles of the feet into the floor (you can also push the feet outwards, without moving them, to help open for forward bend). Always making sure the hips are directly above the knees and your knees are not locked. Let gravity do the work of moving one further into the pose.
6. Inhale and either come high onto the finger tips/spinal extension or slide the hands up over the feet and shins, drawing the stomach in, lengthening the spine away from the legs as the breast bone opens and lengthens forward, reaching with the heart, shoulders externally rotated and slowly start looking forwards. The legs should be straight but not locked, a hardly noticeable micro bend is appropriate the knees should never lock. This is Ardha-Uttanasana.
7. Exhale releasing down, inhaling and reaching out and up being mindful that you lead with the heart and not the head.

Physical/Mental Benefits:

Stretches and lengthens the entire back of the body including the back of the legs and decompresses the neck.

Opens the hips and groins.

Increases circulation in the upper/lower torso.

Improves digestion, stimulates the thyroid, parathyroid glands, liver kinds, tones the abdominal muscles and improves balance.

Alleviates discomfort from sinusitis.

Creates a calming effect on the body and mind, increases clarity.

Relieves stress, anxiety and mild depression.

Contraindications:

Acute hypertension, glaucoma, certain back conditions (can be modified), headaches, low blood pressure and pregnancy. If you become dizzy please come out of the pose very slowly by lifting the heart.

Adaptations/Variations:

Can use a block under each hand on the exhale.

Coming up on the inhale with the hands on the thighs for a flat back.

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Holding the big toes on the exhale with the yogi lock.

Palms facing up and under the fronts of the feet on the exhale.

Bringing the hands to the back of the calves for an additional stretch on the exhale.

Interlacing the hands and taking them behind the back and opening with a release on the exhale.

Using a chair instead of the floor for the forward fold, inhale and exhale with hands on the chair.

General Class:

Supine:

Legs up the Wall

Stretches on the wall in some classes otherwise **Class Warm-UP #1** (see previous Sangha Newsletter for listing of asana)

Kneeling:

Gate/Stacking/one side in contact with the wall from knee to finger tips R/L

Gate/Balancing & Flowing

Standing:

Uttanasana

Breath of Joy

Tadasana balance Challenges (with/wo wall for balancing help)

Tree R/L

Seated:

Seated Twist Series (R/L)

to Savasana: Guided Savasana: My Safe Space of Serenity

Attune:

#3 Reframe everything negative by Jon Wortmann

The technique is called reframing. Imagine your boss just yelled at you in front of a team of co-workers. The negative thought that sparks your arm is obvious: I am a failure. The possible reframes, however, are invaluable in jump-starting the rest of your day and your brain health. Imagine immediately, even in the middle of this scene, thinking, "Well, at least he noticed me" or "That wasn't fun, but it proves I can handle being embarrassed."

When you reframe, you make an ugly thought into a positive one. It is not just positive thinking because you can't lie to yourself and think you enjoyed the yelling. What you can do is think how the experience was valuable.

When reframing becomes a habit, your alarm doesn't have negative memories of experiences to shut you down in the future.

Pranayama:

3-part Diaphragmatic Yogi Breathing

Yogic breathing helps calm the nerves, cleanses the circulatory system, nourishes the abdominal organs, and improves digestion. It also helps us feel more grounded and relaxed in the body.

The three-part breath asks us to create a wave-like motion from the pelvis to the upper chest: inhaling into the belly, drawing the same breath up through the expanding rib cage and still farther up into the chest.

1. Begin in supine on your back (you can bend your knees if that is more comfortable and use a block between the knees with the feet slightly wider)
2. Place your hands on your belly with your middle fingers touching at the navel. Exhale completely, drawing the belly inward, then inhale, letting the breath touch the front, sides and back of your belly. When you are ready, exhale completely.
3. Next, place your palms on your rib cage so that your fingers no longer touch but instead are at the inward points of the ribs (the heel of your palm should be in the vicinity of your side seam of your shirt). allow the ribs to gently widen, inhaling as if you are breathing into your palms. Sense how you are opening the front, sides and back of the ribs. As you exhale, you'll feel the fingers move towards each other.
4. Now, place one palm/or both at the center of your chest, on the upper sides of the breast)and breathe into your palm(s). Expand from your chest to the collarbones, feeling a flare but refrain from letting the shoulders move upwards (they should not become earnings). Exhale completely.
5. When your done practicing a few rounds, take a moment to notice any changes. Become aware of your side body. How well is the air broadening the ribs? This takes practice!

Breath of Joy

This is an energizing breathing practice from the Kripalu tradition, awakening the whole system with strong inhalations and synchronized arm movements. A forceful exhalation lightly detoxifies the body and helps release accumulated tension.

This pranayama has been found to increase oxygen levels in the bloodstream. It counters the shallow upper chest breathing of anxiety by inviting the breath to fill every milliliter of the lungs. Like a strong bright wind, it also sweeps away that sluggishness of depression and infuses the mind with a serene sense of clarity.

Can be used to begin the day when one wakes up and can't quite get the day started. Just sit on the corner of your bed if you don't want to stand and repeat 9 times.

Also a good warm up at the beginning of any asana practice.

When you think you need it, use it!

Precautions are high blood pressure and if you suffer from any kind of head or eye injury such as migraines or glaucoma.

If you start to feel light-headed or dizzy, instead light-hearted, stop and just breathe normally.

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Description:

1. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and parallel, knees slightly bend (can also sit)
2. Inhale one-third of yearlong capacity and swing your arms up in front of your body, bringing them parallel to each other at shoulder level and palms facing the ceiling.
3. continue inhaling to two-thirds capacity and stretch your arm out to the side like wings to shoulder level.
4. Inhale to full capacity and swing your arms parallel and over your head, palms facing each other.
5. Open your mouth and exhale completely with an audible HA, bending the knees more deeply as you sink into a standing squat and swing you arm down and back behind you like a diver.

Repeat up to 9x, don't force or strain the body or breath, simple be absorbed by the peacefully stimulating rhythm.

Return to standing.

Close your eyes and experience the effects.

Notice how quickly your heart beats (you can place your hands over your heart) feeling the sensation in your face, arms and tingling in your palm.

Variation:

For a lighter, brighter mood, add a bija/seed mantra to each arm movement.

As you lift your arms out in front of you, silently or lightly, inhale the sound of va; as your arms move to the side intone the syllable ra; with the arms overhead , the sound is ya. Finish with the exhale of HA out loud.

Essential Oil:

Passion: Cardamon, Cinnamon, Ginger, Clove, Sandalwood, Jasmine, Vanille, Damiana

Music:

Deuter: Sea & Silence

Quote:

As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind.

To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again.

To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives.

-Henry David Thoreau

Services/Suggstions/Links:

The book "Walden" by Henry David Thoreau
edited and with an afterword by Jeffrey S. Cramer

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Float Therapy Spa: <http://www.floattherapyspa.com/>

This is where I found complete silence for one hour, less than a mile from home, except for my own heartbeat.

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/>

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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