

Take Home Flow 3-7-09

Yoga for Core Strength

A strong core is important for keeping our back safe. Strong abdominal muscles help us stand up straight and move with ease. This flow will help you access your core of strength.

Come to your center

Sit comfortably. Begin with a few moments to listen to your breath, becoming quietly centered. As you connect with your breath, begin to let your arms flow up and down with each wave of breath, *May I connect to my center.*

Awaken your body

For a few breaths, play with a few poses to awaken your body and your connection to your movement. Release the neck, open the spine with cat/cow flows, stretch into downward facing dog, release into a standing forward bend. When you are ready, make your way to standing for your flow.

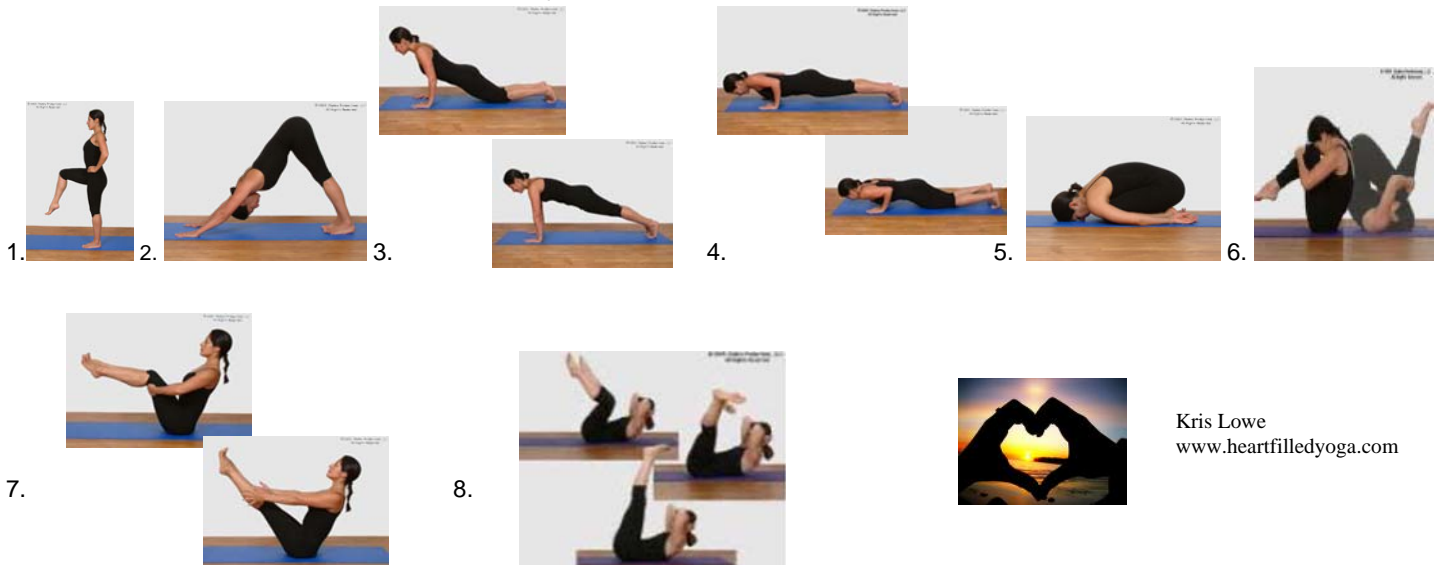
Flow

1. From standing, ground through the right leg and lift the left foot off the ground. Bring the thigh parallel to the floor. Knee can be bent, or leg can be straight. Feel taller with each breath. Feel the strength at your core. Repeat with the other leg.
2. Step the feet back to downward facing dog. Reach the right leg into the air, then slowly bring that knee into your chest as you take the shoulders over the wrists in a plank pose. The right knee and foot hover over the ground as you pull them deeper into your body. Hold a few breaths, then repeat with the other leg (*not pictured*)
3. From down dog, come forward to plank pose or kneeling plank. Hold and breathe. Getting stronger with each breath.
4. From the high plank, access your core strength, and with elbows in, lower to the low plank. Keep breathing! Hold a couple breaths if you can.
5. Lower all the way down, then push back for a rest in child's pose.
6. Cross ankles and swing hips over feet to sit. From sitting, roll back and forth a few times.
7. From rolling, roll up to a balance in boat pose. With a steady breath, stay here feeling your core for a few breaths.
8. Lower down to your back. Lace fingers gently behind the head. With leg variations (reaching to the sky, wrapped like eagle pose, wide open) keep breathing as you use the strength of your core to lift head and shoulders off the mat. When you feel done, relax.

Receive

Close your practice with a few moments in final relaxation, receiving the benefits of this core strength building flow.

My strong center supports me every day. नमोऽस्तु



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