

Take Home Flow 9-5-09 Yoga for Yoga Month Part 2

September is National Yoga Month. Let's challenge ourselves to practice yoga every day – 30 days of yoga! On days when you can't make it to class, here is a flow that will move your body in all directions – forward bending, back bending, side bending, twisting, heart opening, hip opening, hamstring stretching, abdominal strengthening, balance and an inversion. These are all of the components I include in my classes. Remember, though, yoga is not about the poses, but about coming to a state of being that brings you peace and clarity. Let's take on the Yoga Month challenge!

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. *I allow my breath to bring me to a calm, centered place.*

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 all fours for your flow.

Flow

1. Begin your flow on all fours. Extend the right leg back, and slowly lower your head and shoulders toward the mat. Pulling elbows in, use the strength you feel when you pull into your center to lower and lift. Feel your center. After a few with the right leg extended, switch to the left leg and repeat.
2. Coming to all fours, reach the right arm to the sky. With an exhale, slip the right arm under the left, coming to the shoulder in a twist. Relax and breathe unwind and take the twist to the other side.
3. Sitting on the heels now, take arms behind the back, roll the shoulders behind you and let your heart lift and open. Open up to make room for joy, happiness, and love in this open heart.
4. Now take hands to the floor. Spread fingers open wide and snuggle the legs onto the upper arms taking crow pose for balancing. Let crow pose be playful as you conquer the fear that holds you back, and balance with courage and focus.
5. Back onto the knees again, bring fists to the low back, rise up the back into a camel backbend.
6. Fold the backbend now into child's pose. After your back relaxes, walk hands to the right for a side bend, then to the left.
7. Walking hands back to the feet, come to sit. Extending legs forward, lift with an inhale and fold over the legs with an exhale, hinging at the hips. Linger in this relaxing, reflective forward bend a while..
8. Roll onto the back now, hugging knees to your body. Switch just to the right knee,
9. Extend the left leg into a hamstring stretch. You can use a belt or necktie to hold your foot if you wish. Switch sides.
10. Slip the right ankle over the left thigh for the reclining pigeon pose to open the hip and release stress and tension. Find your optimal legging go, relax and breathe. Then open the other side.
11. Finish this flow with a nice shoulderstand inversion.

Receive

Close your practice with a few moments in final relaxation, receiving the benefits of this short, comprehensive flow. **namaste**

My mind is clear, calm and quiet. I welcome this opportunity for clarity.

