

# Take Home Flow 9-12-09

## Yoga for Yoga Month Part 3

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 kneeling for your flow.

### ***Flow***

1. Sitting on knees, begin with gentle side bends, feel the stretch up each side of your body (not pictured).
2. Once your sides feel nice and stretched out, sweep arms to the back, lacing fingers together. Breathe into the opening of your heart center.
3. Slip over your heels and rock onto your back, rolling back up and down a few times. Finally come to balance in boat pose. In boat pose, we practice balance and abdominal strengthening. Stay for a few breaths, deepening your focus.
4. Now come to sit. Bend the right knee and place the left ankle over the right thigh. Sitting up tall, feel the opening in the hip area. Breathe in and allow yourself to let go of the stress and tension in your body. (Not pictured)
5. Extend the right leg onto the floor. Slip the left foot into the right inner thigh. Inhale to rise up, then exhale and fold into a forward bend over the right leg.
6. Coming up from the forward bend, pick up the left foot and cross it over the right leg. Swing the right leg into your body. Lengthen upward, then gently twist to the left. Unwinding, repeat steps 4, 5 and 6 on the other side.
7. Roll down onto your back. Placing feet on the floor, peel your hips and spine off the mat creating a bridge with your body. Bridge is a backbend, you can feel the front side of your body stretch here. Relax and breathe here. When you come carefully down, hug knees into your body to stretch your back.
8. 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.

*I feel happier, more joyful, more peaceful and filled with gratitude. **namaḥ***

