

# Take Home Flow 9-19-09

## Yoga for Yoga Month Part 4

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 downward facing dog for your flow.

### ***Flow***

1. From downward facing dog, step the right foot forward. Plant the back foot, reaching up to Warrior One. With each breath, drink in the powerful energy of this pose.
2. Reach arms out to the sides, then cross the right arm over the left, taking the arms from eagle pose. Now step on the right foot to wrap the left leg around the right leg to come fully to the eagle. Deepening your focus, stay here for a few breaths.
3. Release the eagle, reaching to the sky for side bending. You can drop one arm to the leg for support or keep hands overhead. Stretch out both sides of your body.
4. Reaching up, sit down into chair pose.
5. After a few breaths in chair pose, rise up and sweep the arms behind the back. Lacing fingers together, open your heart as wide as you can.
6. Fold your open heart into a forward bend.
7. (Not pictured) – step back to downward facing dog for a vinyasa, then repeat 1-4 with the left leg stepping forward.
8. On this second side, after chair pose, deepen your heart opening with a standing backbend. Hands make fists at the low back as you reach your heart toward the sky.
9. From the backbend, take hands to the hips and fold into another forward bend. Then step back for another vinyasa.
10. Step the right foot forward for pigeon pose. Bending the knee, drop the foot behind the left hand, the knee behind the right hand. Relax and breathe, easing out the stress and tension from your body. After several breaths, step back to downward facing dog and take pigeon on the other side.
11. (Not pictured) From your last downward facing dog, lower the knees to the mat and slip over onto your back. Lay hands beside your body for abdominal strengthening. Reaching both legs to the sky, engage your abdominal muscles to slowly lower and lift both legs together.
12. Now focusing on one leg at a time, stretch into your hamstrings. You can use a strap or a belt, or just take hands behind the leg.
13. Finish with a renewing shoulderstand.

### ***Receive***

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

Every day, I welcome the healing effects of yoga to my body, mind and spirit. . *namaste*

