

Daily practice of Yoga

Be more in touch with your essence

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This is time to connect clearly with your "essence". Find a clean, quiet space alone or with friends. We begin with the "SHANTI Asana" (# 1) or "Position of Peace". Lie down on a comfortable mat (not too soft) and sink into your whole body. Feel your breath as an "inner touch" and with each out-breath allow your body to relax consciously. Just "be" in neutral gear, watching inside, from your toes to your head- observing as sincerely as possible, the involuntary life moving inside your body, mind, heart, and spirit. You can easily witness your breathing, your heartbeat, your inner motions including Craniosacral rhythm and brainwaves. Now is the moment to trust and cultivate your natural ability to relax deeply into yourself without fear, guilt, or comparisons.

After one minute of non-moving, letting-go inside--the glands of your body will begin to secrete hormones that will help release any tensions that have accumulated in your bodymind system. This "peaceful, easy feeling" is potentially healing in itself – more importantly, it gradually opens up your "inner vision". The "Shanti Asana" is one of the most subtle and healing of all Yoga Asanas. Devote 3-10 minutes. It allows all the body tissues and the mind to experience a "Still Point".

Now, we start consciously "changing the angles" of the body. In the "SHOULDER STAND" (# 2), only your head, neck, shoulders, and upper arms stay on the floor. The rest of your body is "inverted" and relating to gravity in a completely novel way. All of the blood vessels, organs, and nerves are invigorated and cleansed. The neck and spinal dural membrane are stretched and the 'thyroid gland' is energised gently.

The "PLOUGH Asana" (# 3)

Is one of the best, without doubt. It may take time for the body to move into it fully, but the effort and perseverance is well worth it. This asana totally touches and helps open the entire Craniosacral System of the body. It gives juice to all the spinal joints, ligaments, and nerves. It elegantly lengthens all the posterior muscles of the body (feet to occiput), and enhances the functioning of the organs--especially the kidneys, liver, and stomach.

The accumulated awareness and flexibility generated through the Plough asana can not be overemphasized. Come back slowly into the SHANTI Asana, and rest for 30 seconds to a minute.

COBRA Asana (# 4)

Roll onto your belly and observe the body quietly in this position. Relax until you can sense your breathing relative to your spine. Allow the sacrum and middle back to 'float up' with the in-breath and fall with the out-breath. Also, notice the contact your pubic bone is making with the floor. Imagine more space and light

inside. Now, the "COBRA"... Place your palms down in front of your shoulders; the front of your neck and chin resting on the floor. Starting with the back of your head, slowly raise your spine upwards in a curve- like a cobra does. Keep the breath full and as even as possible, and feel what is happening... Now the front of the spine is lengthening and releasing hormones, tension, and stagnant energy. After 45 seconds to a minute, return to neutral and feel the life energy, without moving, until heartbeat returns to normal.

The "1/2 LOCUST Asana" (# 5),

Compliments and enhances the effects of the Cobra asana. It precisely touches and stretches the "psoas muscles" (the muscles of Hara), which are the deepest connection of the lumbar spine, pelvis, and legs. The "1/2 LOCUST Asana" also energizes and tones the deep muscles and nerves in the back of the pelvis. One side at a time... 45 sec to 2 minutes each...resting and passive observing in between. Then, repeat the "COBRA Asana" (# 6), this time adding more time and feeling the inner lengthenings and connections. Learn to relax the mind and front of your brain while the body "changes its angles". You don't need "to do" anything else- just maintain the curves within your own energy field...1 - 3 minutes.

(# 7) The "CAT - STRETCH" Asana

is a "diamond" asana that has a multitude of psychosomatic benefits. And it is so easy! Curl into it and gradually the spine lengthens, the belly softens and unwinds, and the breathing naturally moves and tonifies the organs. Especially the large intestine benefits.

8 - "FORWARD BEND" Asana.

Come up to sitting on your back pelvic bones with legs straight and toes pointing up. Bend slowly from the hips, feeling "the touch" intensify as your face comes closer to your knees, and your hands move towards the feet. Stay within your comfort zone and breathe consciously. Stay alert and available to allowing new space and sensations. If you can accept the stretch without fear or expectations, the body opens. This is a beautiful "rebalancing posture" with many positive benefits, including an enhanced sense of grounding.

The "1/2 HEAD TO KNEE Asana" (# 9)

Touches the energy lines around the kidneys and also the sides and inner tissues of the pelvis in a very clear way. The heel of the bent leg touching the "perineum" (1st Chakra) is an added healing benefit of this asana. After resting, again lie on the front side of your body, observing in the moment...The "BOW Asana" (# 10) is one of the most powerful energy releasing asanas and can relieve many accumulated physical and emotional blocks in your energy field. It clearly requires effort to stay in the position, but the positive benefits are apparent and far-reaching. All the fascia and sensory nerves of the "solar plexus" and "heart chakra" are tonified and become more conscious. Psychologically, the BOW Asana brings courage and confidence to the bodymind and releases old fears. With practice, maintain the position, breathing deeply and evenly for 1-2 minutes. [Note: It is often good to repeat the CAT - STRETCH asana after this position to relieve any tension or strain, and to allow a deeper sense of balance and flow through your spine.] Rest as long as you like...

The SPINAL TWIST Asana (# 11)

Our Spinal Column is a miracle of engineering. Its' 26 individual bones are delicately touched, stretched, and rebalanced through this somewhat 'strange looking' asana. You bring the heel of one foot against your perineum [space in the very top of your inner legs- between anus and genitals], with knee resting on floor. Place your other foot around it, with that knee up. Then, if your "right" knee is up, torsion your upper body around to your right so you can reach around your leg with your left arm and hand to your right foot. Your right hand eventually rests on the floor behind you, and the whole column is twisting to the right. Eyes close, relax, and the breathing slowly moves through your center, all the way between your hips...With practice, you can minutely direct the touch of the torsion to any and all levels of your spine. This is done most easily by using your arms, hands, breath, and letting-go inside. 1-3 minutes, each side, resting and observing life flow in between. This is another "diamond asana" of Yoga. In over 25 years of working passionately with health, relaxation, fitness and consciousness of the spinal column, I can say that this Asana, and its many variations, will help maintain and develop flexibility, strength and energy of the wholebody throughout your entire life.

We complete our 45 minute sequence where we began: "SHANTI Asana" (# 12)...Lying down, just "be" within yourself as casually and alert as possible. Don't "do" anything... just relaxing, watching inside, and feeling your body, mind, emotions, and spirit as "one, organic unity".

This is also a beautiful time to enjoy the "BUDDHA Asana", sitting with eyes closed, spine softly balanced, and breathing naturally with no effort or goal...consciously being in your center.

Anubuddha & Anasha