



# Yoga is for Everyone Newsletter

## December 2023 Newsletter



As the festive season approaches our days often become a whirlwind of activities and commitments. In the midst of this pre-Christmas rush, it's crucial to remember the importance of self-care and rest. Therefore, this month's newsletter is all about restoration and self-care – Season's greetings 🙏

## **CLASS NEWS**

Christmas presents - yoga gift cards for any classes, workshops, 121 - what a great gift 🎁

Check out the website or email me.

## **Classes updates - WORKSHOPS**

21st January - New Year Workshop

Check out the website or email me 🙏

Yoga Mats, Blocks and Netti's all available for sale.

**CLASSES WILL BE ZOOM FROM 19th DECEMBER TO 13th FEBRUARY (after my holiday away 13/2). Normal zoom and in person 20th February.**

**WHATSAPP GROUP NOW LIVE. LET ME HAVE YOUR DETAILS TO JOIN IN**

## **🌱 The Art of Slowing Down**

In a world that constantly rushes, slowing down is a rebellious act of self-care. Here are a few ways to integrate mindfulness into your daily routine:

- Start Your Day Mindfully: Begin with a 5-minute meditation each morning. Focus on your breath and set a positive intention for the day.
- Mindful Breaks: Throughout your day, take 'mindful moments' – short breaks for deep breathing or gentle stretching to reconnect with yourself.

## **Top Tips for Christmas 🎄**

1. Manage your expectations. Setting realistic expectations can help prevent the feeling of disappointment.
2. Set clear boundaries, Christmas is busy, make a plan.
3. Make time for you
4. Stop and breathe - deeply
5. Write down your thoughts. Then forget them.
6. Make more time for yoga, especially restorative
7. Enjoy the season but mindfully
8. When in queues - take a few breaths
9. Eat mindfully
10. Take 5 minutes to meditate before each event.

## **Sleep - The Vital Component**

The sanctuary of sleep is not merely a pause between our daily activities but a fundamental pillar supporting our well-being and vitality. An indispensable ally, sleep:

- **Restores Physical Vitality:** Aiding in cellular repair and muscle recovery, sleep rejuvenates your body, enabling it to navigate through the physical demands of life energetically.
- **Enhances Cognitive Function:** Nurturing the mind, sleep optimises cognitive abilities, including memory, decision-making, and creative thinking, ensuring you're mentally agile and sharp.
- **Bolsters Emotional Well-being:** A well-rested mind paves the way for emotional stability and positivity, safeguarding your mental health and enriching your interactions with the world around you.
- **Boosts Immune System:** Strengthening the immune function, sleep equips your body with the defences needed to combat pathogens and maintain health and vitality.

Despite its pivotal role, genuine restful sleep can sometimes elude us in our fast-paced lives, making practices like Yoga Nidra not just beneficial but essential. Yoga Nidra escorts you into a deep state of conscious rest, enhancing the quality of your sleep and, consequently, enriching every waking moment.

Remember...

Create a restful bedroom environment.

Only use your bedroom for sleep and getting dressed

Keep your bedroom cool

Avoid stimulants after lunch

Eat a light dinner only

Exercise regularly throughout the day

Get exposed to natural light every day

Go to bed at a regular time

Create a restful bedtime routine

Avoid electronics at least an hour before bed

Use of aromatherapy such as lavender can help

Read a book in bed

Try a gentle yoga flow

 sleep well

## Asana of the Month - Restorative Fish - Matsyasana



### Benefits

1. **Stretches and Strengthens:** The practice of Matsyasana Bolster helps to stretch the neck, shoulders, chest, upper abdomen, upper back, and spine while also encouraging the feeling of being relaxed and calm with the support of the bolster. The support helps students stay in the posture for longer duration, thereby strengthening the stretched parts of the body, mainly the spine.
2. **Opens and Stimulates:** Just like the benefits derived from the pose helps to open the chest and increase in the lung capacity. Supporting the upper back with a bolster helps students stay longer, connect and be aware of the body and the stretch. The upper abdominal area is stretched and with support this posture is held longer, thereby helping in stimulating the organs of the abdominal area, including the stomach for digestion.
3. **Soothing and Relaxing:** The bolster in this variation helps to support the upper back, neck and shoulders, which can benefit students who sit long hours at the desk, spend long hours driving, or riding, or even for those who jobs demand the excessive use of the shoulders and neck. This therefore helps to soothe the nerves, the muscles, reducing stiffness and heaviness around the neck and shoulders.
4. **Posture and Nervous system:** The longer hold of this pose can benefit those who have a hunched back, and rectify the spine of the upper body, thus improving in the posture of the spine, by lengthening it. It also helps to improve the functioning of the nerves connected to the spine, thereby improving the nervous system, leading to a calming effect both on the body and the mind.

5. **Insomnia and Anxiety:** The pose can help relieve the symptoms of both anxiety and sleepless nights.
6. **Thyroid Gland and Asthma:** The functioning of the respiratory system and the thyroid gland is seen to improve with the practice of fish pose. With the support of a bolster, the bronchial passages opens helping in better respiratory functions to help keep asthma under control, and an improved blood circulation in the neck where the thyroid gland is, thereby helping in any kind of ailments related to the thyroid gland.

### Using Blocks

From staff pose, slowly lower onto the blocks. (Make sure the block under your shoulder blades isn't touching your ribs below your shoulder blades.) In this position, you can let your feet fall open, as if you were in corpse pose. From here, externally rotate your arms so your palms face up. Let your shoulders drape off the block. Having both blocks at the same height will reduce strain or overstretching of the neck. Relax your face, throat, and jaw.

### Using a Blanket

Fold it in half lengthwise, and then roll the folded side over one or two times. Lie on the blanket just as you did with the block, placing the blanket roll along the lower edges of your shoulder blades. Your head can rest on the unfolded part of the blanket. This will give you a nice chest and shoulder opener—one that's less intense than the other versions. Let your feet fall open as you relax.

### Variation

Bend your knees and place your feet on the floor, mat-width apart. Let your toes turn in slightly and your knees fall together. This position is called Constructive Rest and will widen the sacrum. You can also experiment with different block heights under your head, lowering the block to receive more of a neck stretch and chest opener.

Instead of grasping for that perfect backbend, allow the earth to support you. Actually feel the parts of you that are touching the ground, along with the parts of you that are reaching up. This is the path to embodying contentment and the base from which joy grows. Without contentment, or a sense of soft grounding, you can end up with over-percolated energy instead of genuine, uplifted joy. Without the buoyancy of joy, contentment can feel flat or dull.

Stay for about 10 minutes follow with knees to chest and relaxation.

## **My Christmas Gift to you all. Happy Christmas 🎄**

### A Short Breath Meditation

Position;

Set aside some time that works. We all know it's hard to find time. Meditation works with best with regular sessions/practice

Find a comfortable place - make sure you are warm enough

Settle the body - be comfortable.

No distractions

Bring mindfulness into meditation

Start your meditation with the breath....

*Click on the link below to play the meditation*

[Play Meditation](#)

See you next year on the Mat 🙏

Namaste

Michele 🙏

