



Yoga is for Everyone
Newsletter

January/February 2023 Newsletter



HAPPY NEW YEAR YOGIS

Another year, make a wish.

Don't beat yourself up.

Take care with lots of self-care

Yoga, Pranayama and Meditation.

You are perfect just the way you are

A GREAT NEW YEAR IDEA...

Yoga Class Vouchers. Various prices to suit you!

What could be better?! Please see the website or email me for details.

Class News

No Classes on the 3rd January
Back at 7pm on Tuesday 10th January as normal.

Spring workshop being planned - watch the website

Any changes in your health form. Let me know please

Remember that I also do 121's and Yoga Therapy and much more.
It's all on the websites;

www.yogaisforeveryone.net

www.ukyogatherapy.co.uk



Asana of the Month - Natarajasana (Dancer Pose or Lord of the Dance Pose)

This is a deep backbend that requires patience, focus, and persistence. The pose is named after the Hindu god Shiva Nataraja, King of the Dance, who finds bliss in the midst of destruction. Like its namesake, Lord of the Dance Pose embodies finding steady calm within.

In preparation for Natarajasana, stretch your shoulders, chest, hips, and inner thighs.

As you stand on each leg in Dancer Pose, you'll strengthen your ankles and begin to correct any muscle imbalances you might have in your legs, hips, and glutes. You can use a strap to achieve greater access to Dancer Pose, and to keep your hips squared toward the front of the mat and your lifted knee in line with your hip rather than splayed out to the side.

Natarajasana (not-ah-raj-AHS-anna)

nata = actor, dancer, mime

raja = king

Basics:

Other names: Lord of the Dance Pose, King Dancer Pose

Pose type: standing balance

Targets: lower body

Benefits:

Dancer Pose improves balance and focus, posture, postural awareness, and body awareness. It can boost energy and fight fatigue, and help build confidence and empowerment.

- Strengthens your core and back muscles, and stretches your chest and shoulders
- Stretches the front of your hip (hip flexor), front of your thigh (quadriceps), and ankle
- On the standing leg, it strengthens the front of your hip (hip flexor), your thigh (while also stretching the back of your thigh/hamstring), shin, and ankle.
- On the lifted leg, it strengthens your glutes and back of your thigh (hamstring).

How to do:

1. Stand in Tadasana - facing the front of the mat. Notice the symmetry of your pelvis and your torso.
2. Press down through your big toe mounds and lift your inner arches. Rotate your inner thighs toward the wall behind and release your tailbone down.
3. Lift your sternum away from your navel and soften your front ribs.

4. Bend your right knee and bring your right heel toward your backside. Reach back with your right hand to clasp your ankle. Ideally, you will reach from the inside so that your palm faces the right.
5. Bring your right knee alongside your left knee. Pause and observe. To bring your body back into symmetry, press down with your left big toe mound, draw your left outer hip into the midline, and bring the right side of your pelvis and chest forward in line with your left.
6. Maintain the symmetry in your body as you start to press your right thigh back and up. Lead with your inner thigh and press your right big toe mound away from you. Simultaneously reach your left arm forward and up, leading with your inner upper arm.
7. Reach your sternum away from your navel to maintain the lift of your chest while you extend back and up with your right thigh. Keep your right knee in toward the midline rather than splay it out to the side.
8. Hold for 5-10 breaths, then release back to Tadasana.
9. Repeat on the other side.

Beginner tip

Many beginners, when lifting the leg, tend to cramp in the back of the thigh. To avoid this, keep the ankle of your raised foot flexed.

Dancer Pose holding onto a chair

For balance and stability, hold on to the back of a chair.

Dancer Pose at a wall

Stand facing the wall and rest one hand on the wall and grab the opposite foot with your free hand. Your knee should face downward to stretch the front of your thigh (quadriceps). If you cannot reach your foot, use a strap to extend your reach.

Dancer Pose with a strap

If you cannot reach your foot, place a strap around the top of your right foot and bring the strap over your same-side shoulder and hold it with your right hand. Bring your left hand to that hip or extend it forward and start to lean toward the wall in front of you as you gently press your foot toward the wall behind you.

Watch out for:

- Don't lock the knee of the standing leg. You can keep a micro-bend in the knee to avoid this.
- This is a strong backbend, make sure you are properly warmed up and prepared by sequencing this pose after other backbends

KING DANCER POSE**TIP**

Keep your shoulders down and away from your ears and avoid locking your standing knee.



A Winter Tea

Ginger tea is sometimes called ginger water. It is, quite simply, hot water infused with fresh ginger. It's a spicy drink that can be adjusted to taste by adding more ginger or letting it steep longer. This recipe brightens up the flavour with fresh lime juice and sweetens it with honey. It can be enjoyed either hot or cold, it's really easy to mix up a big batch to store in the fridge.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons fresh ginger root (about 2 inches)
- 4 cups water
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime (half a fresh lime) optional
- 1 to 2 tablespoons honey, to taste

To make:

Prepare the fresh ginger by peeling it and slicing it thinly to maximise the surface area. This will help you make a very flavourful ginger tea.

1 1/4- pint pot, add the water and ginger, and bring to a boil for at least 10 minutes. For a stronger and tangier tea, allow to boil for 20 minutes or more, and use more slices of ginger.

Remove it from the heat, strain, and add the lime juice and honey to taste. Enjoy your ginger tea.

Winter Season

Winter is the time to withdraw and repair rejuvenate concentrate conserve and listen it gives us time to discover a hidden depths with the source of inherited intelligence.

Element is Water

It's time to use your imagination give yourself time to think and reflect.

It's all about sleep and rest add an hour to your sleep time align avoid the tendency to overdo things and become totally exhausted

Ideal practice develop spinal flexibility through flow with each vertebrae of the entire back introduce restful practices such as Yoga Nidra

Meditate up to at least once a day for 10 minutes space still reminder the greatest castle it's the change in creativity

Winter Meditation



As you breathe, bring to mind the last time you were outside and felt a bit of chill in the air. Remember the way it felt, the way your skin prickled with the cold, and how you could taste the iciness of the atmosphere in the back of your throat.

Remember the soothing weight of your clothing, the texture of the fabric against your arms and neck, and the way it provided you with shelter from the cold. The warmth of summer has gone, taking the comfort of autumn with it, but the world has not relinquished all of its warm and comfortable things.

You can still experience the reassurance of fire as its logs crackle and pop, the beauty of snow sparkling in the sun, and the filling warmth of hot chocolate on cold nights. The world is cold, the winter is dark, but you are not without joy. You are not without peace.

Imagine for a moment, the hush of the world after a fresh snowfall. The way the snow blankets everything, muffling the loudness of all the life happening underneath it. Snow has the potential to freeze and to slick, but it also has the potential to soothe and inspire.

Imagine the snow, and accept it. Accepting snow does not mean loving snow, it just means acknowledging its presence in the world and allowing it to exist. Even, perhaps, finding some beauty in it every now and then.

As you imagine the chill in the air and the beauty of snow, bring back to mind the coziness of sweaters. Perhaps your winter storm is mild, only requiring a light layer to stave off some of the day's bitterness. Or, perhaps your storm is a blizzard and your sweater is one layer among the many required to keep you warm.

Imagine the kind of sweater you need right now, starting with how thick and solid a layer it is. As you build it in your mind, feel the weight of the fabric on your shoulders, the way it hangs off your frame or clings tightly to you.

Next, notice the way the fabric feels against your skin. Perhaps your sweater is thick wool, a little scratchy but infinitely warm. Or maybe it is cashmere, gentle and reassuring with its cloud-like softness.

You can make it any fabric you need, any texture that reassures you that there is still some calm, still some safety in the world. However your sweater fits and feels, it is more than a functional barrier against the cold. It is a reminder that you have access to good and soothing things even in the worst of crises and storms.

As you imagine the way your sweater feels, bring to mind some other things that give you a sense of comfort. The laughter of a loved one, a beloved book or movie, the way you know exactly how to get to your favourite bakery or park.

Your life has brought you many lovely and good things. This does not change the storms that your life has also delivered, just like the storms do not change the good. Both have been present and will be again and, no matter the storm, peace is available to you.

As you bring these bright and soothing moments and memories to mind, imagine each one as a strand of yarn or thread in the sweater you are wearing. They come together to bring you warmth, to bring you safety, to bring you protection from the gusts and gales of the storm.

Soak in the peace of this moment, of knowing that no storm can rid you of the peace that exists inside you. Sometimes that peace will be stronger and more present, and other times it will be softer and more of a memory, but it will always be something you can summon like the feeling of warmth from a sweater.

Feel the sweater, feel its coziness and its protection from the cold, and know that you can always bring it back to mind when you need it. Remember the memories and feelings that you have woven into its fabric, knowing that they are also always available to you.

Eventually, as you are ready, begin to bring your awareness back to the world around you. Perhaps it is cold like the winter world you have brought to life with this winter meditation script, or perhaps it does not feel like winter at all. Let your senses ground you back in the present, in the way your surroundings feel, smell, and sound.

You might stretch, flutter your eyelashes, or shake your hands or feet to solidify your presence and ready yourself for returning back to the demands of the day. But before you go, finish this meditation as you started it, with your focus on your breath.

Feel again the way your lungs expand as you breathe, the way that a deep breath wakes your mind up a little and helps ease any tightness in your chest. You are breathing, you are alive, and you have and will continue to find moments of peace in your storms.

Thanks to Courtney Archer.

Mudras - Part 2



Mudras help to link the brain to the body, soothe pain, stimulate endorphins, change the mood and increase vitality. Mudras have been an integral part of many rituals and they are used extensively in Yoga, Meditation and Dance.

Try those above:

Prana Mudra -

- You can sit comfortably on the ground or chair. Make yourself relaxed.
- Ensure that the room is well-ventilated light. You can also add calming background music while practicing this mudra.
- Stretch your hands outward and allow them to rest on the thighs, palms facing upwards.

- Now, touch the tip of the thumb with ring and little fingers. The thumb symbolises the fire element, ring finger symbolises the earth element, and the little finger symbolises the water element.
- Keep the index and middle finger extended.
- Take several deep breaths and focus on the pure revitalising energy pouring into your body as you breathe in.
- Each cell is being fully revitalised now. You can use an affirmative sentence to enhance your practice further: "I plug into the universal energy source and recharge my pranic batteries."
- Keep both hands in prana mudra. Keep your shoulders relaxed.
- Practice for 15-20 mins daily.
- Good for blood circulation and cramps.

Surya Mudra -

- First of all, sit in any comfortable seating posture and place the hands with palm pointing upwards on the thighs or the knees.
- Close your eyes and take some deep breaths with the awareness of the breathing process.
- Now fold your ring finger and press it with your thumb. You may feel some pain. But that should not last long.
- Put the ring finger of your hand in the root of the thumb.
- The rest of the three fingers should be kept extended as much as possible.
- In addition, it should be done with both hands simultaneously.
- Perform this pose for 35 minutes at a stretch every day or for 10 to 12 minutes three times a day.
- Good for reducing heat in the body

Flying Lotus Mudra -

The hand gesture associated with our body's purity and positivity is the Lotus Mudra.

- Sit down in a comfortable seating position.
- Place the hands on your knees or thighs, palms pointing upwards.
- Take some deep breaths while keeping your eyes closed.
- Make sure you are aware of the breathing process.
- Bring your hands in front of your chest, similar to namaste, while the thumbs point towards the chest.
- Now spread the middle, index and ring fingers with a look similar to an open lotus flower.
- Now only touch the small fingers, thumbs and palms comfortably.
- Focus your mind on the chanting OM while removing all the unnecessary thoughts from the mind.

- Furthermore, it is important to remember to simultaneously perform this gesture with both hands.
- Make sure to maintain the breath equally without too much of an increase or decrease in speed.
- Perform this Mudra five minutes three times a day or 15 minutes at a stretch

Vayu Mudra -

Vayu mudra is one of the easiest mudras to perform. It is performed by placing the tip of the index finger inside the base of the thumb. The base of the thumb is then gently pressed into the tip of the finger. The rest of the fingers should all remain straight, and it should be done with both hands simultaneously.

Practice for 15-10mins daily. Good for bloating and gastric issues.

Shield do Shambhala -

How to perform.

The hand positions are reversed according gender.

For females. The right hand is clenched into a fist and held palm facing down, against the area in between the xiphisternum (breast bone) and umbilicus (belly button). The left palm is pressed against the right fist. The open palm should always face upwards. This position is held for five to twenty minutes and used in conjunction with conscious breathing.

For males. The left hand is clenched into a fist and pressed against the right palm, remembering to hold the hands in the same area.

Good for reducing mental stress and anxiety.

Shoonya Mudra -

Fold the middle finger of both hands and touch them to the base of the thumb. Gently press the second phalanx (middle bone of a finger) of middle finger with the thumb. Leave the remaining fingers extended but relaxed. Stay in this mudra for 10-15 minutes.

Good for hearing and balance issues

Apan Mudra -

To practice Apana Mudra come into a comfortable position. I like to hold the hand gesture whilst walking also. Using both hands bring the tips of your middle and ring fingers to the tip of your thumb, keep your other fingers extended and relaxed.

Good for the immune system and digestion.

Prithvi Mudra -

Sit in any seated yoga pose.

Place your hands on your thighs, palms facing up. If you are able, practice the mudra with both hands.

Fold the ring finger and lightly press the tip of this finger to the tip of the thumb.

Keep the other three fingers as extended as you can.

Hold the mudra for five minutes, or for the whole duration of your meditation. You can also practice it multiple times a day.

Good for reliving fatigue and boosting growth of tissues.

Quote of the Month

" ANYONE WHO HAS
NEVER MADE A
MISTAKE HAS NEVER
TRIED ANYTHING NEW "

Albert Einstein

So, that's it for this Newsletter. I hope you've enjoyed it, and I hope you find the time each day to move your beautiful bodies, breathe a little deeper, and pause in stillness and gratitude for the many blessings we all have around us.

Having a month off the newsletters so speak in the Spring.....

See you on the mat..... ॐ 🧘

Namaste

Michele 🙏

