



Developing a Home Practice Handout week 10

The following practice should take approx. 15 minutes if you include the focus and the relaxation, or 10 minutes if you exclude these elements.

Find a quiet space where you have enough room to work on your mat and you won't be disturbed. Ensure you leave 2 hours after a meal before practicing, and follow the precautions mentioned in this handout. *If at any time you feel uncomfortable or unwell please stop immediately and seek appropriate advice.*

Step 1: Centering the mind – 1 minute

Come to a comfortable seated position and focus into the breath. Breathe in and out through the nostrils and be aware of the rise and fall of the chest and abdomen as you breathe. Observe how you feel. Do not force the breath, but allow it to come and go gently and smoothly as you concentrate on drawing in energy on the inhale, and letting go of tension on the exhale.



Step 2: Preparatory work – 5 - 8 minutes

Apanasana: lying on your back, bend the knees and draw them in towards the chest. Keep them together. Take the hands around the shins, and begin to gently circle the knees in one direction. Take the circle in the other direction. Then separate the knees and circle them in opposite directions, warming the hip joints. Reverse direction.



Hamstring Stretching: Lying on the back, take the feet and place them on the floor a little way away from the buttocks. On an inhale take the sole of the right foot up towards the ceiling. Clasp the hands behind the thigh to support it. Begin to point and flex the foot strongly, feeling the stretch in the calf and in the shin. Then take a strap or tie, and place it around the ball of the foot, or clasp the hands behind the thigh. Bring the knee in towards the abdomen and place the thigh on the abdomen. Maintaining this contact, begin to stretch the foot away over the head, gradually straightening the leg. Breathe into the back of the knee and hold. Repeat both steps on the left. Then take a strap or tie, and place it around the ball of the foot, or clasp the hands behind the thigh. Bring the knee in towards the abdomen and place the thigh on the abdomen. Maintaining this contact, begin to stretch the foot away over the head, gradually straightening the leg. Breathe into the back of the knee and hold. Repeat both steps on the left.

Knee Down Twist: Lie on your back, with your legs straight. Place the arch of the right foot over the left knee. Take the right knee with left hand and encourage it down towards the mat, allowing right hip to come up. Take the right hand out to shoulder level along the mat. Stay here if your shoulders are very stiff: otherwise, begin to make circles by tracing the right arm up and around and back again, without lifting the fingers off the mat. Repeat on the other side.

Step 3: Postures – 10 minutes

First practice Downward facing dog (see handout week 1), then Crescent moon lunge (handout week 4).

Classical Sun Salute

<p>Begin in mountain pose, spine tall and tail bone moving down towards the floor. Gaze forward, hands in prayer.</p>	
<p>Inhale arms up bringing palms together overhead, arching back gently, gaze to thumbs.</p>	
<p>Exhale, fold forwards from the hips with a flat back, placing hands to floor or shins.</p>	
<p>Inhale, look forward with a flat back</p>	
<p>Exhale hands to floor, take right leg back then left leg joins it, coming into downward facing dog.</p>	
<p>Inhale forwards to plank, shoulders over wrists, body in one line from heels to head</p>	
<p>Exhale, lower the body down to the floor</p>	
<p>Inhale to cobra, lifting chest, keeping elbows in and squeezing shoulder blades together.</p>	
<p>Exhale, push into hands and lift hips back into downward facing dog.</p>	
<p>Inhale, right foot between hands, left foot joins it, look forwards with a flat back.</p>	
<p>Exhale, folding forward to Uttanasana, hands on floor or shins.</p>	
<p>Inhale come up arms over head palms together look to thumbs.</p>	
<p>Exhale hands to prayer tadasana.</p>	

Move smoothly and rhythmically in time with the breath from each position to the next. Repeat on left side. Once on both sides = 1 round. Work up to several rounds.

Step 4: Relaxation.

Ensure you put on an extra layer or cover yourself with a blanket. Lying onto the back, take your feet mat width apart. Take the arms slightly out from the sides, palms turning upwards. Support the head and neck if desired, and ensure you are completely comfortable. Allow the eyes to close and focus into the breath, concentrating on the breath and letting any outside thoughts go. Focus on letting go with every out breath. Stay for 3 minutes, or longer if desired. Namaste.

