

Take Home Flow 7-18-09

Yoga for Cooling Down on a Hot Day

In the heat of summer, a calming, quiet yoga practice can help you stay cool. Forward bends are cooling poses, and twists ease digestion and tone the liver which will also have a cooling effect on the body. Enjoy these poses and the cooling breath when the weather is hot.

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 can keep my cool.*

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 sitting for your flow.

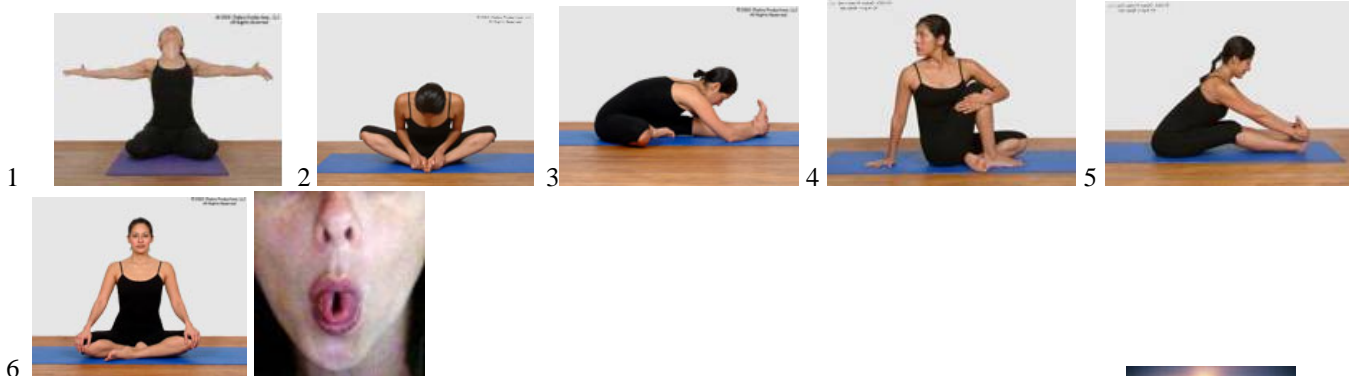
Flow

1. Begin by inhaling and reaching your arms up and out like making a “Y” with your body to say “yes” to your experience. Repeat several times with your breath.
2. Bring the soles of the feet together. Slide the feet as close as possible to your body. If you have trouble sitting tall, slip a little blanket under your hips in back. You may find your knees open easily here, or they may be tight and face more toward the sky. Wherever you are is OK. As you linger here, relax into your breath and let each breath be a chance to let go a little more. Ease into a forward bend if it feels possible for you.
3. Extend the right leg forward, left foot to the inner thigh. Inhale and reach up, exhale, tipping the hips forward as you extend into the forward bend. Stay here for a few breaths.
4. Lift the left knee up, then cross the left foot over the top of the right leg. Swing the right foot into the body. With left hand behind the back of the floor, inhale and lift the right arm to the sky. Exhale and twist to the left. After unwinding the twist, repeat steps 3 and 4 on the other side.
5. Unwind and stretch both legs forward. Inhaling, lift. Exhaling, gently tip the hips and fold forward. Melt quietly into this forward bend for several breaths.
6. Slowly come back up. Come to a comfortable seated position for the cooling breath. If you can curl your tongue, do that. If not, make your lips into an “O” shape. Inhale through the “O”, then exhale through the nose. Feel the cooling action of this breath for several breath cycles.

Receive

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

I welcome a sense of calm, cooling, peace. **namaste**



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