

Take Home Flow 3-21-09

Yoga for a Deep Sleep

Restorative yoga provides deep relaxation that is wonderful to prepare you for sleep. In a restorative pose, the entire body is supported by blankets and bolsters or cushions so there is no physical effort at all. You just enter the pose, supported by the props, and breathe, relax and let go. Enjoy!!

Grab a couple of firm blankets and firm couch cushions or pillows as your props.

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 am ready to let go of anything that keeps me from being present.*

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, grab your props, dim the lights, turn on some relaxing music, and make your way to a seated position for your flow.

Flow

1. Set the cushion, or a stack of blankets, just behind your back. Bring the soles of your feet together. Tuck a blanket under each knee (blankets not pictured) so they can rest on a soft cushioning. Use the blankets and cushions to prop up any part of the body not completely supported. Gently lie back and begin to open your heart. Breathe in and out as if the breath was coming directly from your heart. Stay here a few minutes, or as long as you'd like.
2. Stretch the legs out now, allowing your hips to relax completely. Stay as long as you like, finding yourself relaxing more and more.
3. Turn your cushion or stacked blankets horizontally to your body. Lie down with the cushion behind your heart, allowing your heart to open deeper and deeper. This is a supported backbend. Feel your front body open for as long as you like it.
4. Now fold your body in the other direction, into a supported child's pose. If hips are high, you can tuck a blanket between hips and heels for more support. Turn your head one direction for a few breaths, then the other. Spend some time here, comforted... relaxed...
5. Find an unobstructed wall or closed door. Bring the cushion or stack of blankets to the wall and rest your hips on the cushion, reaching legs up the wall for this supported inversion. Adjust to make it comfortable, the distress, decompress, and let go. Ahhhh.....

Receive

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

*I release my day. I let go and surrender. **namaste***

