

Integration series- belongs with 1/24/14's class

### **Child's Pose- Balasana**

Kneel on the floor. Touch your big toes together and sit on your heels, then separate your knees about as wide as your hips.

Exhale and lay your torso down between your thighs. Broaden your sacrum across the back of your pelvis and narrow your hip points toward the navel, so that they nestle down onto the inner thighs. Lengthen your tailbone away from the back of the pelvis while you lift the base of your skull away from the back of your neck.

Lay your hands on the floor alongside your torso, palms up, and release the fronts of your shoulders toward the floor. Feel how the weight of the front shoulders pulls the shoulder blades wide across your back.

Balasana is a resting pose. Stay anywhere from 30 seconds to a few minutes. Beginners can also use Balasana to get a taste of a deep forward bend, where the torso rests on the thighs. Stay in the pose from 1 to 3 minutes. To come up, first lengthen the front torso, and then with an inhalation lift from the tailbone as it presses down and into the pelvis.

### **Downward-Facing Dog- Adho Mukha Svanasana**

- 1.** From Child's Pose, curl your toes under and press up and back into Downward-Facing Dog.
- 2.** Place your hands shoulder-width apart with the wrist creases parallel to the front edge of your mat. Firm and straighten your arms.
- 3.** Keep your feet hip-width apart and the outside edges of your feet parallel to one another.
- 4.** Firm your legs: Lift your kneecaps; press the tops of your thighs up and back; press your heels down.

**Refine:** Check in with each part of your body. Root your hands evenly. Lift the forearms up and away from the mat and press the shoulder blades gently into your back. Lift your bottom front ribs up toward the tops of your thighs and firm the front of your torso. Press the tops of your thighs up and back and root your heels down. If possible, straighten your legs, firming all the muscles as if they were hugging your leg bones. Now, inhale -bend at the elbows (elbows flair out like butterfly wings) and exhale- turn and point the elbows facing down towards the mat, press and straighten the arms bringing the scapulae down the back body.

**Finish:** Feel the full length of your spine and take a few deep breaths. Shift your awareness from each of the specific muscle groups to all of them and then to every cell in your body. Steady your attention on your whole being: strong, still, and luminous.

### **Adjust Yourself**

Try these tips to get the most out of Downward Dog:

**Shoulders:** If you have tight shoulders, place your hands slightly wider than your shoulders and angle your hands slightly outward.

**Elbows:** Protect your elbows from hyperextension by pressing your inner upper arms away from each other until your biceps engage.

**Neck:** For healthy neck placement, bring your ears in line with your upper arms to align your neck and head along the same line as your spine.

**Hamstrings:** If the backs of your legs are very tight, bend your knees or try stepping your feet as wide as the mat.

### **Ragdoll-Uttanasana**

Deeply releases the back of the body. and awakens the Central Nervous System.

From Down Dog , walk your feet up to your hands and hang with your feet hip with distance apart. You can even make fists with your two hands- place them on mat- in between the two arches of your feet and measure your own hips' distance apart.

Hanging at the hips- relax forward over your thighs. Feel gravity working, hang and bend at the elbows placing opposite hand to opposite bicep. Let your weight roll to back of your feet, and lift your toes to feel the weight in the heel. drop your head completely and breathe. Spread your sit bones away from each other . Ground the feet down into the mat but soften and relax in the pose. . If your lower back feels tight, bend your knees a bit . Let the body melt into the pose and let go of all tension. Relax your face and let the blood flow to your brain. This inversion starts to wash away toxic thoughts and the focus comes deep within the body.

#### **Alignment:**

**Legs:** are strong and activated.

Upper body: relaxed and hanging with gravity

Hips: Stacked over the ankles.

Neck: Supple and free from tension.

Knees -: slightly bent to protect the back.

Modification: Bend knees as much as you may need to.

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