# No Prep Inspirational Moga Plans

FOR INSPIRING YOGA TEACHERS



## Includes:

- 30 Inspirational Openers
- 30 Easy to Follow Yoga Sequences
- 30 Guided Meditations for Peace of Mind and Inner Healing

ALL AT YOUR FINGER TIPS!

GREAT FOR NEW TEACHERS!

Creating an inspirational and transformative yoga class has never been easier!

BY RHONDA JONES

www.NoPrepYogaPlans.com

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# No Prep Inspirational Yoga Plans

# Written by Rhonda Jones

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# **Getting Started with No Prep Inspirational Yoga Plans**

#### By Rhonda Jones, RYT

#### WELCOME TO NO PREP INSPIRATIONAL YOGA PLANS

Yoga has been practiced as an exercise for more than 5,000 years, increasing the mind and the body connection while achieving an overall physical and spiritual wellness. Over the last twenty years in particular, interest in practicing yoga has been on a steady rise. Today, yoga classes are one of the most popular forms of exercise with yoga schools and classes attracting students of all ages and walks of life.

When it comes time to develop an engaging and complete yoga class, you may find the prospect of knowing where to begin a little daunting. The combined teachings of both a physical practice and a metaphysical practice requires a special approach. It takes time and a great deal of planning to put together.

I created **No Prep Yoga Plan Workbooks** to address the needs and challenges yoga instructors may face while developing a solid and complete yoga class plan. This was in effort to help yoga instructors of all levels. **No Prep Yoga Plans** are a complete series of ready to use guides that provide you with an entire range of tools and structured course outlines. You can use these guides to form the basis of your instruction, or you can choose specific elements to add value to your current coursework and methods of teaching.

Whether you are new to yoga instruction, or whether you are a seasoned professional, No Prep Yoga Plans can help you!

#### Why I Love No Prep Yoga Plans

I know it's a little weird to write a testimonial for your own product, but I just can't help myself. I am totally and completely in love with **No Prep Yoga Plans**. I have a regular job in addition to teaching a yoga class or two throughout the week. Even though I love teaching yoga, I didn't always look forward to it because I spent a lot of time preparing. It was important to me to come to class with a plan in mind. This took a lot of extra time in addition to teaching the class. I understand that many yoga teachers just go with the flow, but for someone who teaches so infrequently, my flow was a little too intermittent at times.

When I created my **No Prep Yoga Plans Series,** I put everything into it that I wanted as a yoga teacher. I wanted **No Prep Yoga Plans** to be a quick reference guide to everything yoga that was easy to use. They say that necessity is the mother of invention; that is what **No Prep Yoga Plans** is for me - a tool that helps me to build a great yoga class with minimal effort.

Some might be wondering if I actually use the **No Prep Yoga Guides** during my yoga classes. The answer is a resounding YES! My **No Prep Yoga Plans Binder** is sprawled out on the floor right next to my yoga mat. No shame in my game. © Over the course of developing the guides, I actually asked students how they felt about yoga teachers using notes. One student told me one of her favorite (and seasoned) yoga teachers had her sequences listed on index cards. She went on to say how much she appreciated her time to prepare and desire to create a well-

balanced class. In fact, I did a weeklong yoga retreat in Jamaica a few years ago and the yoga teacher had her sequences and lessons in a small photo album. She just flipped through the book while teaching. I loved that idea.

In addition to ease, I wanted to provide my students with a more holistic yoga experience that included some spiritual insights, guided meditation, and lots of relaxation. Now I just grab my binder before each yoga class, picking out a relaxation script (15 from which to choose), a yoga sequence (30 plus), and a guided meditation (30 scripts & themes). My classes are so much more complete with these tools in hand, and I feel so much more confident teaching them. Many times, I will also incorporate breathing techniques (6 included) and a motivational opener (there are 30 of those too- faith-based or inspirational).

I honestly have to say that **No Prep Yoga Plans** is one of the best things that ever happened to my yoga career. I wish I had it right out of teaching school. I hope that you enjoy it as much as I do. I am also working on the **No Prep Meditation Guide for Yoga Teachers** for those who want to start a weekly meditation class or yoga nidra. This will include detailed instructions on facilitating a class as well as longer guided meditation scripts on a variety of topics. You probably already received a sample if you took advantage of No Prep Yoga Plans Pre-Launch Special.

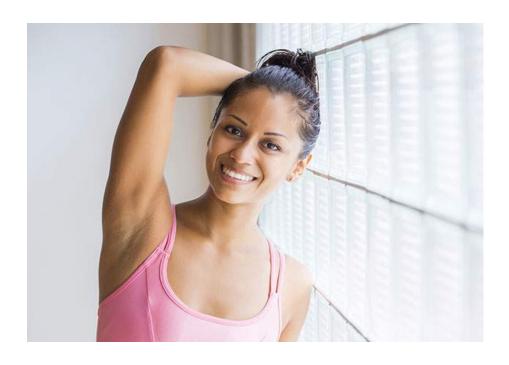
#### Your Role as Instructor

No matter what subject you teach as a teacher, you are uniquely positioned to have an instrumental role in the development of your students. This position presents both rewards and challenges and for yoga instructors some of the challenges are rather unique. Ultimately, your goal is to present a course that will provide your students with a methodical and practical approach to the body-centered physical aspects of yoga while at the same time, offering your students the means to understand and embrace the deeply spiritual aspects of yoga. It is only through this complete mind-body approach that the true benefits of yoga plus the essential element of mindfulness can be realized.

#### **Getting Started as a Yoga Instructor**

As a yoga instructor, your role is of special significance. You have the potential to help heal, to inspire, to educate, and to instill a passion for this spiritual and potentially life changing practice in your students. Your yoga students are like vessels who have opened their hearts and minds to a deeply restorative practice. It will give them a greater sense of wellness and an enhanced awareness of self. It is up to you to fill them with the guidance and knowledge that you have been taught, and to develop this physical and spiritual mindfulness so that they too, can receive the maximum benefits that yoga has to offer.

Many of you may also be new to the instruction of yoga in which case you may have additional fears and insecurities especially when it comes to creating your course plans. Don't worry! It's perfectly natural to feel some trepidation, and even to feel a little overwhelmed at times, as you begin to develop your classes and as you start to teach. Remember that this is something that all teachers go through when they are starting out; so, you are definitely not alone! The right array of sequences and a class plan allows your instruction to flow; your confidence, poise and self-assuredness as a teacher will grow naturally over time.



#### **Giving Your Students a Little Bit More**

Not long ago I was talking with a relatively new yoga instructor who wasn't ready to start teaching yoga. When I asked her why, she said it was because she wanted to teach more than just yoga (the poses) but wanted to speak to the heart of her students with words of wisdom, encouragement, inspiration, and healing. However, she didn't feel like she was capable or even equipped. Yes, there are plenty of spiritual and inspiration books galore, but searching for and adapting them to a yoga class along with the other preparations can seem a bit overwhelming, if not down-right daunting - especially if you're a new instructor.

As a Faith-based Yogi, for years I have often begun my classes with biblically-inspired devotional openers and ended each class with a guided meditation. To be honest, these are what I get complemented on the most. My students appreciate the little extra that goes into my classes. Not only have they worked out their bodies, but their souls were ministered to or feed as well.

We struggle with so many issues, sometimes on a daily basis. These can range from life in general, fear, worry, self-esteem, and down-right busyness--the list goes on and on. Your yoga class may be the "only" place of respite each week where your students take a time out to nurture themselves and restore their peace of mind.

This creates a wonderful opportunity to instill principles that promote mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being right at a time when their minds and hearts are most open to it. We know that in yoga, when we subdue the body, our minds are more open to receive the deeper things of spirit. It's much like when fasting. The less food we eat, the more in-tune we are to spiritual matters. Our understanding is increased and our ears more sensitive to the still small voice within our own hearts.

By incorporating spiritual insights into your yoga practice, as well as guided meditation, you provide your students with bite-sized chunks of inspiration. They can meditate on these to promote inner healing or help them make small changes that will enhance their overall lives.

For the most part, yoga in its western adaptation is a secular exercise. It increases flexibility, strength, and tones the muscles, but it's so much more. Study after study exalts yoga, as well as meditation, for its ability to heal across the mental, emotional, and physical spectrums. Yoga and meditation can reduce stress, alleviate symptoms related to common illnesses, heal emotional wounds, and maintain peace of mind. In a society that creates disease through its constant bombardment of activity, processed foods, sedentary habits, negative messages, and constant overstimulation, we need spaces and places in our week to break away and hear those messages that encourage us to support our very heart and soul. We need to learn and make time to come back to ourselves and the wisdom we possess from within.

Even though yoga and meditation go hand in hand, most yoga classes and centers don't include ongoing meditation practices. I believe this is due to the fact that most yoga teachers really don't know a whole lot about teaching meditation. In addition to that, meditation is not as heavily promoted as yoga. In yoga training programs, while meditation is briefly covered, it doesn't really give a solid enough foundation to make students comfortable with adding it to their classes. However, the two modalities when brought together create even a greater force for healing. Most yoga teachers learned in training that yoga was developed to prepare the body for meditation; yet, we've deleted that important piece for the most part. Whether you are meditating on your breath, a passage or mantra - or guided through a meditation that promotes inner healing - meditating or stilling the mind is imperative to living with more peace, joy, contentment, and authenticity and the studies back this up.

You can further transform the lives of your students by integrating inspirational, uplifting, and relevant messages in the beginning or throughout your yoga practice, one class at a time.

Best of all, everything you need is right at your fingertips! No searching or writing commentary or messages, developing sequences, or creating your own guided meditations. It's all been done for you, so that you can put your energies into creating the ultimate yoga experience in no time at all with **No Prep Inspirational Yoga Plans**.

#### What You'll Get!

As a certified yoga and meditation instructor, I know first-hand the time it takes to prepare for a quality yoga class - especially if you are new to this platform. Teaching that first class can give you a case of the jitters. You may still not feel quite confident in the craft. Having tools, which supply you with you to need to make a smooth transition into the yoga profession, can be more rewarding or freeing. That is why I created this book. Essentially, I personally wanted a tool to be able to flip through the pages while having a variety of resources right there. I began creating one yoga class per week; and, I continued to make more when I would continue to get great feedback from my students. This amounts to 30 yoga classes that include an inspirational openers, 30 days of yoga sequences targeting different body parts or ailments, and 30 days of guided meditation scripts to quiet the mind through relaxation. Having this tool makes my joy

of creating a great yoga class so much easier. It is as simple as choosing from the three categories, practicing them once or twice (if necessary), and then showing up for my classes.

I personally see my yoga classes as more than just a physical exercise program. These are an opportunity to plant and encourage spiritual growth as well. Therefore, I want to include these elements in my classes that not only promote strength, flexibility and toning, but inner healing and a greater ability to deal with the challenges of life. Yoga, as I often refer to as a moving meditation, provides a wonderful opportunity for your students to nurture their mind, bodies, and spirits. Many yoga students find yoga as a respite to their busy week. It's a place of restoration in the midst of busyness and chaos.

**No Prep Yoga Plans** makes it easier than ever to integrate all three within minutes. You can design a class that will keep you ministering to the whole person and keep your students coming back for more by using 30 inspirational messages that include affirming statements, 30 ready-made yoga sequences, and 30 inspirational guided meditations.

#### **How to Use this Book**

One of the best parts about the **No Prep Yoga Plan Guides** is the ease of use and immediate accessibility of the course work.

As you prepare for each class session, you can simply flip through the guide while using the included organization table to select your class theme. Choose your inspirational opener, yoga sequence, and guided meditation for each particular class. You can feel free to mix selections from any of the provided components, dependent on your preferences or specific class goals.

# Sample of NPYP Themed Chart

Use to create your classes quickly!

#### No Prep Yoga Class Quick Combinations Table (Faith-Based) Sample

Themes	Related Topics	Devotional Opener	Guided Meditations
Detox	Releasing Cleansing Letting Go Worry	#5- What Do I Need to Dig Up? #8- Choose Your Emotion #12- Releasing Attachments	#2- Covered by Love #5- Wash Away #6- The Garden #23- Cultivating Trust
Fearless	Courage Overcoming Trust	#11- Living with Intention 16- Pause & Breathe #29- Embracing Uncertainty	#7- Stepping Out #8- I Am Enough #23- Cultivating Trust
Joy	Uplifting Happiness Gratitude	#4- The Joy of a Pure Conscious #15- Finding Joy in Your Journey	#3- Rain of Blessings #15-Goodness of God

It is usually helpful to familiarize yourself with the class outline that you have chosen. Still, it is not necessary; the materials will give you everything you need to immediately and easily put them to use in the classroom. With the complete guides, you will have the proper and essential

tools and methods to feel confident and excited. Therefore, you can start your instruction as a successful and well-prepared yoga teacher.

As a yoga instructor, having your own personal practice is essential to becoming an effective and experienced teacher. You can't share with your students what you haven't personally experienced or internalized. Consequently, one of the best ways to prepare for classes is to do them yourself beforehand. You'll find the article "Becoming an Authentic Yoga Teacher" in the inspiration section of the book. In this section, you'll find some questions that you can ask yourself to help you go deeper with the lesson, relating it to your own life first. This helps you share the inspirational opening with more confidence, comfort, and authenticity.

Through doing this, I get the lessons right down in my spirit as well as create some muscle memory with the sequences. By the time I teach the lesson, I am able to take ownership of it and my lesson flows with ease and comfort. I am also able to ad-lib the important points in the lesson, although reading is just as powerful. Often, I'll add my own story or personal touches using the lesson as my foundation. Usually before class I will read the inspirational, flow through the sequence rather quickly (in about 10 minutes), and then do the guided meditation in my own quiet time. You can record the meditations in advance or listen to them as you present them to your class.

I have been using this format to teach my yoga classes. My students constantly tell me how much the inspirational messages and guided meditations relate to their needs. Individual students will tell me frequently after class that it was exactly what they needed to hear. By including the inspirational and meditation into the practice, we give the spirit or love an opportunity to touch the hearts of students.

#### **Beginning of the Class**

A typical class, whenever incorporating all three sections, will last approximately 75 minutes. This includes a 55-minute workout (including motivational opener) and a seven-to-10-minute meditation. Generally, I begin my classes starting the students with some deep breathing or a progressive relaxation (see 15 relaxation scripts.) While students are seated or lying down, I announce the title of the motivational (inspiration or faith-based) and read it.

#### **During Class Workout**

I will read one of the affirmative statements when students are restful or stationary. You can also have the students repeat them in unison or quietly to themselves.

#### **End of Class**

At the conclusion of the workout, after shavasana or final resting pose, I may briefly summarize key points in the message. This encourages the students to hold what resonated with them in their hearts.



#### **Preparing for Guided Meditations**

After about a five-minute shavasana, I give students the option of coming back up to a seated position or staying in resting pose for the meditation (if it's in the evening). It is best that they do it as conscious practice if you want to teach students meditation. For me, this means sitting up erect on the edge of a blanket or pillow. Otherwise, students may drift off to sleep. They may not use this time to watch and detach from the mind. The guided meditation scripts begin with a few minutes of breathing and relaxation. Generally, students are pretty relaxed already at this time; so, I don't spend too much time on this before the guided meditation. If students are lying down after the meditation, then I instruct them to wiggle their fingers and toes. They then come up to a seated position and we close out the practice.



# **No Prep Yoga Quick Start Instructions**

**The No Prep Yoga Guide** gives detailed instructions, but below is a quick-start version. It gives you an overview and lets you get started in no time at all.

#### **How to Use the Inspirational Openers**

- 1) Students are settling into class on their backs or in easy-seated position.
- 2) Read or share your thoughts on the opener at the very start of class or before the practice begins. This creates a focus for the class and mindful-awareness to a particular life situation.
- 3) Integrate the parts of the message throughout the class as students are in stationary poses like Warrior One or Tree Pose.

#### **How to Use the Guided Meditations**

The guided meditations come in varying lengths, but the majority are 10 minutes or less. Therefore, you can easily include them in a 75-minute yoga class. Longer guided meditation scripts can be used for meditation class, yoga nidra, or even restorative yoga classes. You can shorten or lengthen the guided meditations by restricting or extending your pauses. This may also be completed by reading more slowly or quickly. You will see that the meditations incorporate places to pause throughout.

#### **How to Use the Sequences**

The sequences include many varieties. They are also labeled by topics, themes, or areas of the body. The best part about the sequences is that you can personify them through modifications, durations or exclusions. I rarely get through every sequence (from start to finish) for the typical Hatha Yoga class since I tend to hold the poses longer. Therefore, I will often just skip one of the section series. You will notice that the sequences are broken up so that you can easily adjust them to your class. If you are teaching a more fast-paced vinyasa class, then you can probably complete all the poses. I give more information about all these topics in the complete No Prep Yoga Plans Guides.

#### **More About Meditation**

Many instructors do not include a meditation piece at the end of their yoga practice. Basically, it includes an additional piece of preparation. Learning how to teach meditation, along with a variety of tools and resources, generally only fills several hours within most training programs. Yet, the practice of meditation is so vital to not only our mental and emotional well-being, but in providing a sacred space for inner stillness, healing, and awareness. The guided meditation time you include may be the only time during the week that your students take to just "be still." In my classes, I know that this is one of my students' favorite moments; they crave it. Being absorbed in the present moment while being guided through an inspirational or uplifting message helps them to quiet and possibly reset their minds. It allows them to focus on what's happening in their bodies, which is so precious. I am so grateful to be able to provide them with a variety of guided meditations and techniques that they can use to extend the practice. This keeps it going at home or on the days I don't offer any classes. Before we begin, I will share with you some meditation basics. These will help you to be more confident while teaching meditation to your students.



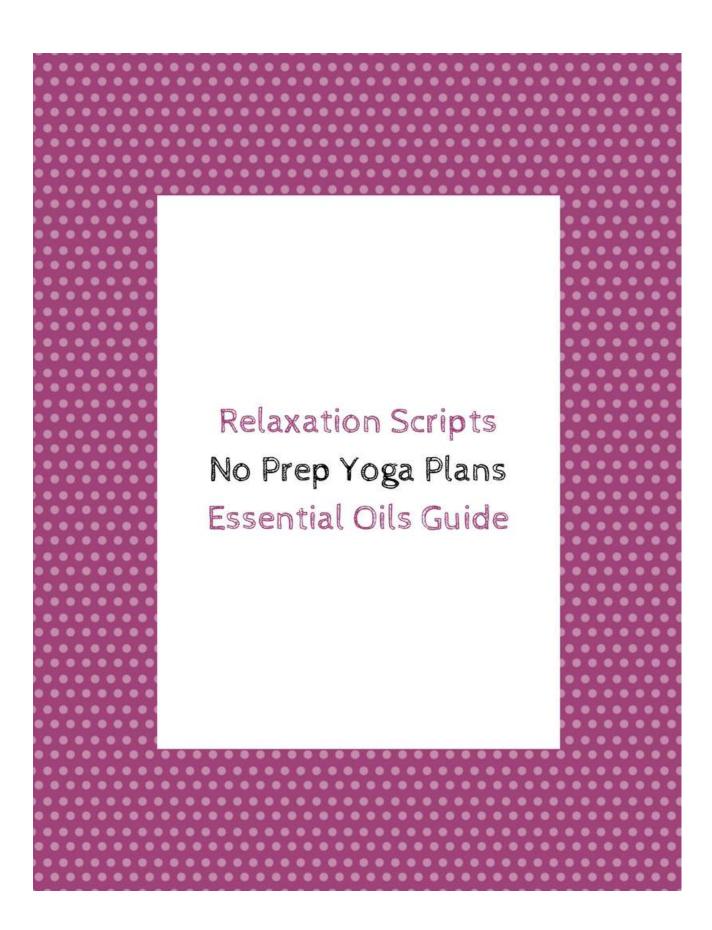
# No Prep Yoga Class Quick Combinations Table

Use the inspirational chart below to pick your yoga theme, devotional openers, and guided meditation.

Themes	Related Topics	Devotional Opener	Guided Meditations
1. Detox	Releasing Cleansing Letting Go Forgiveness	#3- Release Negative Emotions #18- Forgiveness Make You Whole Again	#2-Releasing Negative Emotions #6-Letting Go of Fear #12-Forgiving the Past #19-Sweeping Your Heart Clean #21-Overcoming Depression #27-Living Without Regret #31-Evening: Letting Go of the Day
2. Trust	Courage Overcoming Faith Surrender	#21- You Are Not Powerless #29-Don't Fight the Feelings #28-Are You Listening?	#6-Letting Go of Fear #23-Cultivating Trust
3. Joy	Uplifting Happiness Gratitude	#6-What Brings You Joy? #8- What are you Thankful For? #25- Give Thanks	#8- Be Happy #7- Floating on a Cloud

		#26-What Brings Your Joy	
4. Awakening	Spirit Wisdom	#1- Growing from the Inside Out #14-We Can't Put the Divine in a Box #15-Whatever You Do, Do it Mindfully #16-Seeking Through the Eyes of Love #28-Are You Listening?	#18-There is Nothing Wrong with You #29- I AM Mantra
5. Heart	Love Self-Love Forgiveness Acceptance	#1- Growing from the Inside Out #2- Divine Self- Expression #4-Becoming the Best Version of Yourself #5- Embracing Yourself Fully #17-Open Your Heart to the World #19- Seeing Through the Eyes of Love #22-Finding Your Barriers to Love	#4-Self-Love #5-Manifesting Your Ideal Self #13-Spiral of Love #16-Opening the Heart #18-There is Nothing Wrong with You
6. Balance	Grounding Emotions Stability Peace	#10- Keep Life Simple	#7-Letting Go of Fear #31-Evening: Letting Go of the Day
7. Purpose	Clarity Direction Vision	#7-What's Important in Your Life	#11-Changing Season in Life #26-Divine Guidance and Direction

	Wisdom		#30-Setting an Intention for Your Day
8. Mindfulness	Present Moment Breath Centering	#11-Embracing the Moment #15-Whatever You Do, Do It Mindfully #27-Where Do You Spend Most of Your Time?	#14-Three Part Breath Meditation #20-Observing the Breath #22-Mindfulness #24-Mantra #29-I Am Mantra
9. Healing	Pain Health Comfort	#20-Lovingly Working with Yourself	#21-Overcoming Depression #25-Body Sensation to Alleviate and Manage Pain
10.Unity	Connection Harmony	#23-Focus on the Simple Things #24-Bless Others with Your Presence	
11.Abundance	Blessings	#25-Give Thanks #26-	#9-Abundance Fills My Life
12.Peace	Calm Stress Relief	#9-What Does It Mean to Be Peaceful #30-I Could See Peace Instead of This	#7-Floating on a Cloud #10-My Secret Place #15-Peaceful Memory #17-Meditation to Reduce Anxiety #28-Visualizing Mediation for Peace





# 16 Yoga Relaxation Scripts & Essential Oils Guide

Use these if you'd like to open or close your yoga class with a brief guided relaxation. You'll find relaxation scripts on focusing on the breath, cultivating mindfulness, in addition to relaxing the mind and/or body. Just a few of the relaxation scripts may include the word "God," but can easily be interchanged with Divine, Love, Spirit, Inner Witness, Inner Spirit or whatever else you prefer.

At the **start of class,** use these to help students settle into the practice. At the **conclusion of your class,** you can use these if you don't have time for a longer guided meditation. You can shorten or lengthen these by adjusting the extent of the pauses.

# Being Free Relaxation # 1

Be present with yourself, be present in your body, and be present with this moment. Let go of all thoughts and memories, both the good and bad; therefore, you can still and calm your mind.

Gather all your thoughts as you breathe in; then completely breathe them all out. Allow the full weight of your body to sink into the mat. Imagine an invigorating and healing breath circulating through your body each time you inhale, bringing tranquility and ease.

Let any thoughts that appear become white, puffy clouds. Imagine them being blown away by a gentle breeze or wind.

Feel your mind and body become lighter. Breathe out all worries or concerns; just let them go. Let the soft winds blow away anything pulling your focus from this moment. Enjoy a few more moments of calmness and peace. Relax and be at peace.

#### Be Still Relaxation # 2

Take a few moments to settle in, letting go of the outside world. Quiet all thoughts and agendas.

Begin to tune into your breath. Notice your belly rising and falling with each inhale and exhale. Allow your breath to usher you into a deeper relaxation. Breathe in peace; breathe out tension.

Allow the full weight of your body to sink into the mat as every muscle in your body softens. Surrender all to the stillness and the quiet within this present moment. Take a few moments to just bask in the stillness of your own space.

#### **Breath Relaxation #3**

Let's take a few moments to unwind. To ease into [or out of] our practice today, let go of anything that might be weighing you down; release whatever might be binding you. Escape from the busyness of life and tune into yourself for the remainder of our session.

Become aware of your breath. Feel your belly rise with air. Soften your face; soften your shoulders. Follow the rhythm of your breath, paying attention to its duration. Lengthen and deepen your breath to a rhythm that is comfortable for you. Now, take a few breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth.

Soften your arms, your legs, and your feet. Surrender every muscle to your mat. Take more time to appreciate the stillness and serenity around you.

#### Relax Relaxation # 4

Take a few moments to relax. Begin to focus on your breath. Feel the fullness of the air as you inhale; the warmth of the air as you exhale. Allow the air to reach every corner of your body and mind, sweeping up your thoughts and then letting them go.

Now, notice the rhythm of your breath. Allow your breath to fall into a soft and gentle wave; inhaling peace and joy while exhaling worry or tension. Connect to this present moment.

In a moment, I am going to say *relax* four times. Each time you hear it, allow your body and mind to sink into a deeper level of relaxation, peace, and calm.

Relax (pause), relax (pause), relax (pause).

Allow the full weight of your body to sink into the mat; let every muscle in your body relax. Continue this for a few more moments, breathing soft and smooth breaths; in through the nose and out through the nose.

## **Purifying Relaxation #5**

Let your body relax and be at ease. Drift in a perfect place of mental and physical relaxation. Become aware of how calm and silent your mind feels. Notice your breath, easily floating in and out in a natural wave bringing peace, calm, and rest. Take a deep inhale through the nose and hold it. Feel your chest and abdomen rise as fresh air enters your lungs. Now exhale. Eliminate all heaviness and worry.

Breathe in slowly again. Imagine your breath cleansing and purifying every cell of your body. Exhale. Feel relaxed. Take a moment to tune into your body, allowing yourself to become fully present. Notice any thoughts that show up, letting them go.

Let the full weight of your body ground into the mat. Every muscle should appear yielded, comfortable, and at ease. Take a few more moments to appreciate the stillness, silence, and this present moment. You are blessed!

## **Progressive Relaxation #6**

Let's begin by taking in three deep cleansing breaths. Breathe in deeply; exhale fully. Keep your attention on your breath. Follow the rhythm of your breath as it enters in and out of your nose. In a few moments, you will follow along with me as you begin to take inventory of your body. Softly tighten up that spot as you become aware of any pockets of tension or tightness. Then, breathe into the area, dissolving and releasing all discomfort. Notice any physical sensations you may feel. Allow yourself to become completely relaxed and heavy as we move together through each body part.

Become aware of any tension you might be holding in your forehead: tighten, breathe, release and relax. Tighten, breathe, release and relax around your eyes. Tighten, breathe, release and relax through your jawline. Along your neck, shoulders, arms and fingers: tighten, breathe, release and relax. In your stomach: tighten, breathe, release and relax. Down your legs and to your toes: tighten, breathe, release and relax. In your back: tighten, breathe, release and relax. Feel the tension dissipate and stress leaving every inch of your body. Let all your muscles soften and sink into your mat. Take a few more moments to just bask in your internal and external stillness.

#### **Relaxation Opening #7**

Settling into our practice, take a few moments to release the outside world. Focus on yourselves fully and completely, in addition to your own needs for peace and silence.

Bring restfulness into your mind and body with each new breath. Let your muscles soften and relax. Ground your entire body into the mat below you. Feel safe and supported. With each exhale, feel yourself falling deeper into tranquility and relaxation. Surrender every thought to this present moment.

Take a few more moments to immerse yourself in the stillness, the quietness, and the majesty of this present moment. You are blessed!

#### Be Still in Love's Presence Relaxation #8

Be still in love's presence. Allow love to transform your heart from within. Breathe in peace, relaxation, and calm. Exhale stress, heaviness, and worry.

Feel as though you are floating in a placid pool of tranquility. Surrender the weight of every muscle to the soft buoyancy of the water. Notice every area in your body that is relaxed. Spread that relaxation throughout.

Bring your attention back to your breath. Gentle breaths in and out. Become conscious of the rise and fall of your belly. Nothing is more important than spending this time to just be. Take time to bask in the light of love. Let peace fill the garden of your heart. Open your heart to receive all the blessings that flow from love. Give your inner spirit permission to remove any weeds that may be hindering or obstructing love in your life.

Take a few more moments for yourself in this present moment.

## **Everything is As It Should Be Relaxation #9**

Become aware of your breath. Inhale a deep breath through your nose, exhaling deeply through the mouth. Follow your abdomen as it rises and falls with air.

Let go of all that may be pulling on your spirit or weighing you down. Relinquish control of all that is on your mind and place it in on a mental shelve, outside of yourself. Fully and completely trust that all is as it should be. Feel a soothing peace wash over your body on your next inhale. Allow your back to sink further into your mat.

Take this time to simply be yourself. There is nothing more important for you to do right now. Relax and meditate on cultivating a thankful heart. Let it lift you above all your circumstances.

In this moment, you have everything you need. Let go of all striving and doing; rest in divine presence.

#### Rest in the Presence Moment Relaxation # 10

In silence and confidence shall be your peace. Trusting and living in this present moment are the only antidotes to fear and worry. Let go of all heaviness as you begin to deepen your breath. Let go of all muscle tension. Let go of all thoughts that pull you from this moment.

Rest in this moment, this time, and space. Let all your fears and worries fly away like a tree full of Monarch butterflies. As you see them fly away, far into the sky, your mind quiets down and your body relaxes, even more.

Maintain slow and steady breaths. Gradually fill your lungs with air, exhaling anything stealing your peace of mind. Delight yourself in being in love's presence. Let every muscle unwind. Feel your body becoming heavier and heavier as you sink into a deeper level of relaxation.

Release everything to love's care. Let go of all pushing and striving. Open your heart fully to receiving and trusting. All that you need is showing up at just the right time. Take a few more moments to relax and just be.

## **Tuning-in Relaxation #11**

So often we focus on the noise in our surroundings, but are completely obvilious to the inner chatter that constantly bombards our minds. Take a few moments to listen to the noise outside of you (pause). Now turn inward. Take a few moments to listen to the inner dialogue. (pause) Can you just notice it without being caught up in it? Can you see the stories without becoming a part of the scene? (pause)

Just watch and notice. Take a few moments to anchor every thought in love and trust. Let all thoughts of fear, worry, or doubt fade away. (pause) Breathe in peace and serenity. Exhale tension and stress. If you are feeling disconnected from yourself, tune in now and embrace all that is wonderful about yourself now. You are worthy. You are deserving of all good things. You are loved.

Receive this love that flows eternally from the heavens. Feel as though you are resting on clouds of peace and joy. You are so light and carefree.

Let your mind and body sink deeper into restfulness and divine peace. Bask for just a few more moments of blissful silence and calm.

#### Rest in the Silence Relaxation # 12

Stay in the present moment. Feel yourself rooted and grounded on your mat. Let go of everything with each exhale.

As you breathe in, fill your heart and mind with the essence of joy, love, and peace.

As you breathe out, release stress, worry, and anxiety.

Relax your fingers and arms. Relax your face and jaws. Feel every bit of tension leaving your body.

Stay with your breath. Feeling your breath nourishing your body - every organ, every muscle, every cell.

Rest in the stillness; rest in the silence. Rest within yourself. Rest within this moment. All is well.

#### Calm the Mind Relaxation # 13

Begin to settle into your breath, allowing it to flow freely and naturally. Let your thoughts flow in and out, just allowing them to be. Look at them with detached awareness. Faintly bring your attention to the sounds around you. Without analyzing or contemplating, notice the sounds

outside this room. Notice any sounds that inside the room and near you. Maybe you hear movement, breathing, or a soft hum. Notice the surface of your body. What sensations do you feel? Notice the physical sensations in your body. Just observe them with present awareness.

Allow your body to restfully settle into your mat. Feel grounded and supported by the earth below you.

Continue with your slow and steady breaths. Allow whatever thoughts showing up in your mind to surface. Gently release them and let them go as you exhale.

Let your mind flow freely with each inhale and exhale. See your thoughts as the waves flowing toward the ocean shore. Then, with each out-breath, allow them to wash away and back towards the sea. Whatever thoughts arise, let them surface without judgment and without attaching any stories or emotions to them.

Try not to ponder them, get caught up with them, or let them weigh you down. Just observe them. Let them gently go with each exhale - out with the waves and into the sea. As your thinking goes, so does your entire being. As you become more restful and peaceful, notice how your thoughts begin to slow down and dissipate.

Inhale and Exhale.

#### Calm the Mind Relaxation # 14

Find your comfortable position and close your eyes. Inhale deeply; hold it in for a few seconds and then release. Observe the rise and fall of your belly with each round of breaths. Breathe in peace; breathe out tension. Be with your breath. Keep it steady and smooth.

Now be in your body. What do you feel? Where do you feel it? Notice any sensations. Notice them with loving acceptance. Breathe into any areas of discomfort. Allow yourself to be with whatever comes up. It's all a message.

Relax your mind. Become aware of your thoughts. They could be thoughts about your body, thoughts about this moment, or thoughts about the future or the past. Whatever the thoughts, look at them as if you're watching tree branches blowing through a window. You see them, but you realize they aren't you. See them moving around, swaying back and forth. Watch your mind and your thoughts. Notice them with gentle detachment and then bring your attention back to this present moment. As you do, imagine the trees outside the window slowing down and becoming still. Feel your breath travel in and out. Let everything else fall away.

#### Calm the Mind Relaxation # 15

In your easy seated or lying position, place your hands in your lap or down by your side. Allow your breath to flow in and out. Steady, slowly, and long. Pay attention to the rise and fall of your belly.

You may notice your thoughts beginning to surface as you focus on your breath; allow them to drift in and out your mind. As they float in, try not to create stories or drama around them. Let them float away as you exhale. See them without becoming them.

Simply follow breath. Surrender every thought and sensation to this present moment. Relinquish your control of them. Just notice them and let them go. When a thought pops up, gently exhale it - blowing it away like gentle breeze or a ship passing through the night.

Follow, watch, and observe your breath. Feel grounded, supported, and complete. Lovingly embrace this present moment, even if everything in your life isn't just the way you want it to be.

You are completely relaxed. Bask in the stillness around you; the silence within and outside your body. Deeply rested in this present moment.

## **Death of Self-Corpse Pose Ending #16**

You expand as you breathe; your consciousness is the breath of life; you cease to exist without this divine breath. Practice expanding. [pause] Feel your whole body stretch. Let every cell in your body vibrate with the full expansion of your breath. Feel grateful that your life is extended with each breath. [pause]

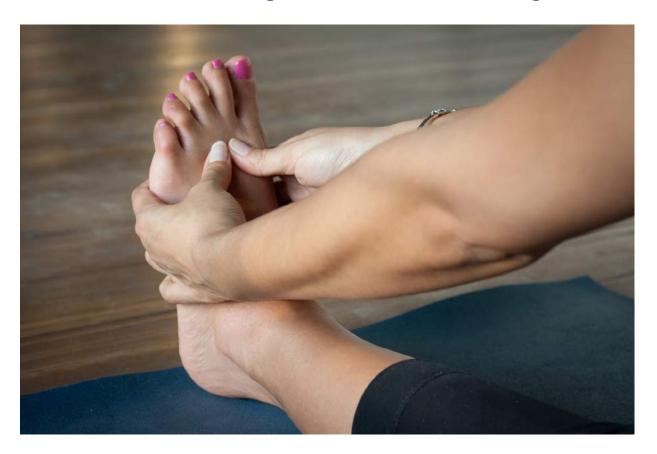
Entering into shavasana or corpse pose can also symbolize the death and burial of the self or the ego. This is the part of us that wants to be in control and often struggles with surrendering to the present moment. Our time of shavasana, can also resemble a sort of death and letting go of what no longer serves us, leaving old ways behind, embracing something new, and then rising into newness of life.

What can you choose to let go of today? (pause) Every time we enter into our final resting or corpse pose, we can release old weights, fears, and problems. With your inner eyes, notice where you might be holding onto any impediments in your body. Give them a visual color and texture. Now imagine them, floating from your body, down through the floor and into the earth, being reunited and transformed by nature. Whatever comes up, choose to release it and let it go. [long pause]

As you begin to rise from shavasana, come up with a new sense of freedom and well-being. Leave the old ways, habits, and destructive mindsets behind. Rise up and be free from worry, negativity, and fear. Leave these things be buried into the ground where they can be absorbed and neutralized within the earth.

Bring both feet into your chest, roll over unto your right side coming into a fetal position. With your eyes closed, use your top hand to push yourself up to seated. Bring both hands in front of the heart. Namaste.

# Quick Guide to Using Essentials Oils in Your Yoga Practice



Did you know that using essential oils in yoga classes is becoming increasingly more popular? Yes. Aromatherapy can be incorporated into yoga so that you can enjoy spiritual, mental, and physical benefits. The beautiful aroma of essential oils can awaken your senses so that you can focus on your yoga poses. A yoga instructor will carefully select an essential oil depending on the theme of the yoga class. Essential oils for yoga can be used for muscle aches, energizing your body, relaxation, or balancing hormonal fluctuations (among other benefits).

Essential oils are known to boost your energy levels, relieve your stress, and enhance your immune system protection - among other benefits. Aromatherapy can be used to enhance body-mind experience of yoga practice. Each scent offers a different yoga experience. Therefore, depending on your moods and the energy by which you want to cultivate, it will determine which essential oil you should use. For instance, lavender oil can be used to help students relax in a therapeutic class. In this particular class, you can have yoga poses for back pain, such as: bridge pose. This can be rejuvenating, making it ideal to use with lavender oil. Other yoga poses that can be used with lavender oil in a therapeutic class include cobra pose, downward facing dog, and child's pose.

# Various Ways of Incorporating Essential Oils in Your Yoga Class

1. **Diffuser or Inhale** - Purchase a diffuser online or at your health food store. Just add water and one to two drops of essential oil. Then, turn it on. The whole room will smell heavenly within a few minutes.

- 2. **Neck or Foot Massage** (done by teacher) Place essential oil with carrier oil (coconut, grape-seed, almond oil) in a larger bottle to make a massage oil. After class, while students are in the corpse pose, give each student a brief neck (shoulder and face too) or foot massage. Do as many students as you can if you have a large class.
- 3. **On Eye Towel** You can purchase inexpensive cotton hand towels at your local discount store and then infuse them with an essential oil. Keep the towels in a large plastic bag or plastic shoe box. At the end of class, place an eye towel over the eyes of each student. This is a relaxing and wonderful way to end class.
- 4. **Water Spritzing** You'll need a water bottle with a spray nozzle, water, and five-to-10 drops of essential oil depending on size of the bottle. During a class where you've generated lots of heat, or at the end of class, walk around the room and spritz students with the scented water. This is great for cooling off or relaxation.
- 5. **Rub above the wrist or behind the ears** (done by student) Place essential oil(s) with carrier oil (coconut, grape-seed, almond oil) in a small dark spray bottle or roller bottle. You can find these at your local health food store in the essential oils section. At the beginning or end of class, spray or roll a little on each student's hand. They can then dab it above the wrist or behind their ears.
- 6. Have your students massage on the **bottom of their feet-** During part of your yoga class, use a larger bottle with a spout containing a carrier oil and your essential oil. Place some in a student's hands and have them rub their feet as a loving and self-nurturing exercise.

# **Preparing and Blending Oils**

**Carrier Oils:** You never want to put essential oils from the bottle onto the skin. Essential oils are concentrated and strong; so, they can easily cause irritation. Instead, you'll need a carrier oil like almond, liquid coconut, MCI oil, or even grape-seed oil. Basically, fill your bottle with the carrier oil and anywhere from 10-30 drops of the essential oil depending on the size of the bottle. For a three-ounce bottle, 10 drops should be fine. You can find bottles online or in your local health food store. They are made of glass and come as roll-ons or spray bottles. You can go online and find recipes or purchase a book on essentials oils and learn even more about them.

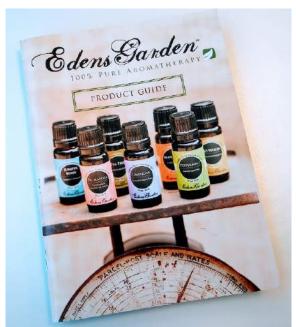
**Blending Oils:** You can blend complimentary essentials oils to make synergy oils. Synergy oils can be a combination of essentials oils that address specific issues like depression, anxiety, or even pain. If you decide to make synergy oils, you can find lots of information online. Just Google the best essential oils for a particular ailment or mood. Students may even want to purchase synergy oils from you. Some popular synergies could be oil blends to relieve, menopause, pain, wrinkles and aging skin, colds and flu, and more. There are essential oils for everything under the sun. Below are just a few essential oils and suggestions on how they can be used. This is a very small sample of ideas.

**Lavender** oil is known for its relaxing effect on the body. You can rub two to three drops of this essential oil into your palms. Inhale the scent so that you can calm your brain. To calm the body, you can rub on the feet, wrist, or temple.

A few drops of either **frankincense** and **myrrh**, can be added to an eye towel. Then, inhale it or use a diffuser. Diffusers are used in aromatherapy to diffuse aroma to the room. Frankincense and myrrh can also be massaged on the skin to relieve body pain.

Depending on the yoga theme, **rosemary** oil can be used differently. To improve memory, mix three drops of this essential oil with half a tablespoon of coconut oil. You can diffuse or rub it on your neck. For pain relief, mix two drops of this essential oil with two drops of **peppermint**, rubbing it on your skin.

There are different ways you can apply **sweet orange.** You can choose to use a diffuser, inhale it, or as a compress. Sweet orange is known to have a phototoxic effect. Hence, it should be diluted before use and not used just prior to going out into a bright sun. You can use several drops of sweet orange in your palm and inhale it to clear your mind.



List of More Sample Oils Favorites You Can Use

Not all essential oils referenced in this section are listed below. I would recommend purchasing a book that can be referenced when introducing new oils to your class. A few I like are "DIY Aromatherapy." "Essential Oils Guide." Eden's Garden has a small and compact product guide that will give you an overview of a large variety of oils and blends. Allow students to browse these materials before and after class.

**Lavender** – (relaxation) Lavender has a perfectly balanced floral-herbaceous aroma. It is known for its calming, relaxing, and refreshing effects. Caution: Avoid if you have epilepsy.

**Frankincense and Myrrh** – (spiritual, immunity, healing) Frankincense and myrrh has a woody, earthy and slightly fruity scent. This essential oil can be used to improve your immunity, help you relax and for spiritual awakening. Caution: Avoid if pregnant.

**Rosemary** – (clarity, alertness) Rosemary has a camphorous smell; it can be used for mental clarity and to improve circulation. Caution: Those with hypertension or epilepsy should avoid rosemary.

**Sweet Orange** – (positive, warmth, immunity) Sweet Orange has a wonderful calming and uplifting smell. It can help to improve your immunity, while promoting a feeling of warmth and happiness.

**Sandalwood** – (insight, uplifting, inspiring) Sandalwood has a sweet, woodsy smell; it's used for love and sensuality.

**Bergamot** – (refreshing, uplifting) Bergamot has a citrus-like smell. It is used to calm the body, soothe the nerves and reduce anxiety and stress.

**Grapefruit** – (refreshing, uplifting) Grapefruit has a lovely citrus scent. It is known to reduce depression, cleanse the body, and stimulate the immune system.

**Peppermint** – (refreshing) Peppermint has a pleasant and minty scent. It is known for soothing digestive problems, calming the body, and relieving sore muscles. Caution: Avoid peppermint if you are pregnant, as it can increase the risk of miscarriage.

**Jasmine** – (sensual, uplifting, stress) Jasmine has a seductive smell and is known for improving your moods, while helping you sleep better or improving with stress. Caution: Pregnant women should avoid it since it can stimulate menstruation.

**Eucalyptus** – (purifier, immunity, breath) Eucalyptus has a pine, minty scent. It's known for boosting your immunity, purifier, and joint pain relief. Caution: Those with estrogen-dependent cancer should avoid it.

**Basil** – (emotional lift, energize, stimulate) Basil has an herbaceous mint smell and can be used to energize your body, while lifting your emotions. Caution: Should not be used by those who are pregnant, have cancer, epilepsy, or those with sensitive skin.

**Ylang Ylang** - Inhaling ylang essential oil helps in producing positive impacts such as: releasing negative emotions- anger, and low self-esteem! Caution: May act as sedative and cause nausea in sensitive individuals.

**Ciary Sage** – (uplifting, hormones, balance) Ciary Sage has an earthy, herbaceous and slightly floral aroma. It is known for uplifting the moods and balancing the hormones. Caution: Avoid if pregnant as it can stimulate menstrual flow.

**Lemon** – (detox, alertness, mood) Lemon has a refreshing citrus scent. Sweet and less sweet It improves mood alertness and detoxes the lungs. Caution: Avoid lemon if you have sensitive skin because it may cause irritation.



## **Creating the Best Experience for Your Students (Precautions)**

- 1 Some essential oils may have a strong smell, which can be unpleasant. It would be a good idea to try the essential oil prior to class.
- 2. Consider where to place the oils. If you apply the essential oil to the student's wrist, it could rub unto the mat. This could leave a stain or a permanent smell. To avoid this, students can roll essential oils an inch or two above the wrist or behind the ears. This may not be a big deal, but it is worth mentioning. There is nothing wrong with a pleasant-scented yoga mat.
- 3. Get used to essential oils prior to yoga class. You can become familiar and experiment with oils outside the class. There are many books and online information regarding oils. Jot down a few more details on an index card, sharing this information with your class. Consider typing up a fact sheet for students to take home.
- 4. Essential oils can be distracting if these are applied too much. Don't add too many drops into a diffuser, for a little goes a long way. It's best to test the oils at home first. For example, lemon essential oil can give you a headache if you use too much. Only a drop or two in a diffuser is enough.
- 5. Not all students prefer the smell of certain essential oils. Always ask permission before applying essential oils to a student.
- 6. Essential oils should ALWAYS be used with a carrier oil. They are not to be put directly onto skin in pure form since this can be irritating or sting.

7. Know all of the contraindication associated with each oil you plan to use. Those who are pregnant, have epilepsy, or high blood pressure should not use certain oils.

#### **Creating a Theme for Your Class Using Essential Oils**

Creating themes for your yoga classes is a fun way to incorporate the different types of essential oils. Below I've put together a table of different yoga themes and essential oils you can use for each class. After determining the yoga theme and essential oil, you can also decide yoga poses that are applicable for each (see table below). Or, just select a sequence in **No Prep Yoga**. The next step is to prepare for your yoga aroma practice. The following is a list of 25 yoga themes and related topics. This includes 10 best yoga poses for each yoga theme and the best essential oils to match. It is not necessary to blend all the oils listed together. You can select just one or more from the list to use in your class. In the **No Prep Yoga Guide**, also check out the **At-A-Glance Ailments and Yoga Poses Table** that suggests additional yoga poses for common illnesses and conditions.

# **Essential Oils & Yoga Themes Chart**

Yoga Themes Detoxification	Related Topics Releasing Letting Go Worry Elimination Past	Essential Oils  Ginger, Orange, Peppermint, Grapefruit	Yoga Poses  Heroes, Seated Spinal Twist, Chair, Cat/Cow, Sphinx, High Lunge Twist, Boat, Bridge, Three-Legged Dog, Supine Twist, Forward Bend Twist
Depression	Sadness Grief	Lemon, Lavender, Jasmine, Ciary Sage, Frankincense, Wild Orange, Chamomile, Basil, Patchouli, Grapefruit, Bergamot	Child's Pose, Bridge, Eagle, Forward Bend, legs up the wall, Puppy Pose, Cat/ Cow Pose, Head to Knee Forward Bend, Dolphin, Easy Seated Pose
Fearless	Power Courage Self- Confidence Purpose	Bergamot, Juniper, Myrrh	Warrior Two, Mountain Pose, Warrior One, Upward Facing Dog, Camel, Bow, Crow, Side Plank, Warrior Three, Dancer, Boat, Supported Headstand
Digestion	Indigestion Bloating IBS	Ginger, Fennel, Peppermint	Half Lord of the Fish, Gate, Supine Twist, Supported Bridge, Head to Knee Pose, Hero, Seated Forward Bend, Reclining Bound Angle, Bridge, Shoulder stand, Child's Pose
Stress & Anxiety	Joy Worry Peace Gratitude	Sweet Orange, Ylang Ylang, Lemongrass, Frankincense, Lavender, Vetiver	Corpse Pose, Child's Pose, Supported Headstand, Cat/ Cow Pose, Extended Puppy Pose, Head to Knees, Forward Bend, Seated Forward Bend, Bridge Pose, Eagle Pose, Legs Up the Wall Pose
Uplifting	Energy	Sweet Orange, Lemon, Bergamot, Peppermint, Sandalwood	Boat Pose, Dolphin Plank Pose, Side Plank Pose, Eagle Pose, Chair Pose, Bridge, Archer's Pose, Warrior One Pose, Warrior Two Pose, Full Wheel

Balance	Grounding Harmony	Sandalwood, Lavender, Geranium	Tree Pose, Mountain Pose, Chair Pose, Half Moon Pose, Handstand, Dancer, Side Plank, Supported Headstand, Warrior Three Pose, Supported Shoulder Stand
Relaxation	Calm Peace	Chamomile, Geranium, Lavender, Mandarin, Marjoram, Patchouli	Child's Pose, Easy Pose, Thunderbolt Pose, Seated Forward Bend Pose, Corpse, Puppy Pose, legs up the Wall Pose, Headstand, Tree Pose, Standing Forward Bend
Physical Pain	Healing	Thyme, Eucalyptus, Peppermint, Lavender, Chamomile, Clary Sage, Cypress, Wintergreen	Bound Ankle Pose, Lizard Lower Lunge, Pigeon Pose, Happy Baby, Goddess Pose, Garland Pose, Cat/Cow Pose, Child's Pose, Downward Facing Dog, Standing Forward Bend, Cobra Pose
Immunity	Colds Flu	Oregano, Lemon, Cinnamon Leaf, Eucalyptus	Chair Pose, Mountain Pose, Tree Pose, Big Toe Pose, Fish Pose, Triangle Pose, legs up the wall pose, Bridge Pose, Prow Pose, Bow Pose
Awakening	Spirit, Purpose	Frankincense, Sandalwood, Chamomile, Ylang Ylang	Camel Pose, Boat Pose, Goddess Pose, Tree Pose, Supported Shoulder Stand, Forward Bending Pose, Bridge Pose, Plow Pose, Eagle Pose, Boat Pose
Clarity	Memory Direction	Rosemary, Bergamot, Ginger, Ylang Ylang, Peppermint, Lavender	Cobra Pose, Tree Stand Pose, Shoulder Stand Pose, Thunderbolt Pose, Open Legged Forward Bend Pose, Plow Pose, Standing Forward Bend Pose, Seated Forward Bend Pose, Plow Pose, Reclining Hero Pose

Inflammation	Arthritis	Wintergreen, Peppermint, Eucalyptus	Forward Bend, legs up the Wall, Supine Twist, Seated Twist, Revolved Chair, Half Lord of the Fish, Revolving Side Angle, Warrior One, Chair
Hormones	Menopause PMS	Ciary Sage, Ylang, Ylang, Chamomile	Pigeon Pose, Plank Pose, Side angle Pose, Triangle Pose, Fish Pose, Headstand Pose, Meditation, Bridge Pose, Rabbit Pose, Seated Forward Bend Pose
Fatigue	Tiredness	Lemongrass, Basil, Lemon	Warrior Two, Child's Pose, Cat/ Cow Pose, Savasana Pose, Supine Twist, legs up the wall Pose, Butterfly Pose, Standing Forward Bend, Standing Side Stretch, Downward Facing Dog
Heart Opening	Love Warmth	Sweet Orange, Ciary Sage, Ylang Ylang, Patchouli, Geranium, Sandalwood, Rose	Downward Facing Dog, Cow/ Cat Pose, Big Toe Pose, Bridge Pose, Boat Pose, Cobra Pose, Half Frog Pose, Garland Pose, Noose Pose, King Pigeon
Anger	Liver	Bergamot, Lavender, Chamomile, Ylang Ylang, Vetiver, Patchouli	Downward Facing Dog, Cow/ Cat Pose, Big Toe Pose, Bridge Pose, Boat Pose, Cobra Pose, Half Frog Pose, Garland Pose, Noose Pose, King Pigeon Pose
Breath	Asthma Allergies Lungs	Peppermint, Eucalyptus, Lemon, Rosemary	Bridge Pose, Cat Pose, Big Toe Pose, Cow Pose, Cobra Pose, Extended Puppy Pose, Handstand, Locust Pose, King Pigeon Pose, Half Frog Pose
Meditation	Stillness Tranquility	Frankincense, Myrrh, Cedarwood, Sandalwood, Vetiver	Easy seated, Corpses,

Headaches	Tension	Lavender, Peppermint, Rosemary, Chamomile	Downward Dog, Seated Forward Bend, Upward Facing Dog Pose, Head to Knee Pose, Twist, Standing Forward Bend, Head to Knee Pose, Corpse Pose, Bridge Pose, Legs Up the Wall
Sleep	Insomnia	Lavender, Chamomile, Geranium, Jasmine	Cat/ Cow Pose, Hero Pose, Child's Pose, legs up the wall, Supine Spinal Twist, Happy Baby, Reclining Goddess Pose, Corpse Pose, Reclining Big Toe pose, Bridge Pose
Communication	Thyroid, Authenticity	Peppermint, Rosemary, Lemongrass, Frankincense, Lavender	Bridge Pose, Boat, Plow, Supported Shoulder Stand, Wheel Pose, Plough Pose, Fish Pose, Cobra Pose, Camel, San salutation.
Joy	Peace Gratitude Contentment	Sweet Orange, Ylang Ylang, Lemongrass, Frankincense, Lavender, Vetiver	Corpse Pose, Child's Pose, Supported Headstand, Cat/ Cow Pose, Extended Puppy Pose, Head to Knees, Forward Bend, Seated Forward Bend, Bridge Pose, Eagle Pose, Legs Up the Wall Pose
Forgiveness	Kidneys	Fennel, Juniper, Chamomile	Half Moon, Cat, Cobra, Sphinx, Seated Forward Bend, Bridge, Boat, Seated Half Spinal Twist, Child's Pose



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### **Becoming an Authentic Inspirational Yoga Teacher**



Inspirational Yoga teachers have an awesome opportunity to influence the lives of students beyond the physical aspects of the practice itself. Many people seek out yoga classes for many reasons, but frequently it's a desire to release, relax, and draw closer to spirit. I was grateful to hear during my Yahweh Yoga teacher training that most students aren't looking for the most talented or even experienced yoga teacher. Instead, they are looking for a space that provides acceptance, love, and the ability to let go of the outside world. They come to restore balance in their lives and to let go of toxic thoughts. They release emotions that may have been plaguing them for most of the day.

On many occasions, students often come into yoga class one way and leave another. For me personally, I have never left a yoga class the same. I may enter the class battling with fear, anxiety, or stress; by the end of class, however, these feelings have often dissipated and been replaced with a sense of peace. Your students come with a variety of mindsets as well, and your class can become a true place of healing. We can be a conduit for healing. This is possible by creating a class environment that invites the presence of love and acceptance. The inspirational messages in this guide will help you to do just that!

It's also important that we, as inspirational yoga teachers, are both genuine and authentic. We can't give knowledge that we don't possess or share wisdom that we've never embraced. Knowledge becomes wisdom when we have used it to gain new understanding. We have

learned and embraced new life lessons. We have become more mentally, emotionally, or spiritual mature. We all know those wise sages who we can listen to for hours on end because their words are filled with depth, truth, and insight.

That's why it is important that we maintain our own spiritual practice and personal self-care routine. It is from our own personal quiet times that we gain the wisdom and insights to influence the lives of our students; it allows us to come from a place of authenticity. It is a gift to our students to allow our hearts to expressed through us. This is based upon our own personalities, experiences, characteristics, talents, and gifts. We are all unique. We all have something to offer; it is a gift to allow others to see our vulnerabilities and share our stories.

That being said, I want to encourage you to read through each inspirational opener prior to your classes, making your own connections to the lessons. Jot down any inspirations, promptings, or ah ha moments that the rise up within you. Reflect on any stories, lessons, or personal experiences that bring the lesson to life for you. Share these personal insights as you read the openers to your students or summarize them. This will help them to personalize the lessons for themselves. You can also use some of the questions in "*Bringing Awareness to Your Students*" in order to help them go deeper with the lessons and make their own connections. Healing is an inside job that requires first awareness and then the desire to change or be healed.

Below are some life lesson questions that you can apply to each devotional in order to dig a little deeper. Jot down the answers in your journal that you can read from during class. Also, don't worry about repeating openers again and again. It often takes more than once to really embrace a message. In addition, as we grow, change, and have different life experiences - we (and your students) will see the openers in a new light, gleaning new information from them.

#### **Being Open About Your Own Struggles Encourages Others**

Before sharing the inspirational opener, it's best to read in advance and make your own connections to the life lessons. Use the questions below to help you personalize the message. By adding your own stories, experiences, and personal insights to the topic, you authenticate the message, making it more relatable to your students. In addition, people love stories. They love to hear how you overcame struggles, conquered your fears, and navigated your own personal paths towards mental, emotional, physical, spiritual health and well-being. It encourages others and it gives them hope when facing similar or challenging circumstances. Many times, students will inwardly think, "Well if she (or he) can do it, so can I." This can be very empowering and often leads to transformation.

#### **Making Connection to Life Lessons Questions**

**For Yoga Teachers**: Take a few moments to answer the questions below after reading through the quotes, passages, and affirmations. You can write the responses in your journal. So that you can find it later, I would encourage you to write down the number and title of the opener. Keep a record if you'd like to use it again.

**1.** Did anything in the passage, quote, or affirmations resonate with you personally? If so, write it down.

- **2.** Do any past stories, situations, encounters, or thoughts come up that personally connect you to any aspect of the text?
- **3.** Jot down any additional highlights, notes, or comments that you'd like to share with your class.

#### **Another Quick Tip**

### **Jot Responses & Thoughts on Sticky Notes**

Before teaching each lesson, jot down a few insights on a sticky note. Add in any experiences that relate to the topic.



# **Creating Mindful Awareness in Yoga Classes**



#### Bringing Mindful Awareness to Students – Ask at different intervals

#### **Body Awareness:**

- O What's happening right now in your body?
- o Is it resisting? Fighting with you? Surrendering to the pose?
- o How does this response often show up in your daily life?
- o Is there something you are right now?
- o Is your mind and body in agreement?
- Notice what's happening in your body right now.
- Notice where you might be feeling tightness. How can you ease up but still embrace the pose?
- o Modify the pose to make it work for you.

#### **Thought Awareness:**

- O What thoughts have crept into your mind?
- o Can you bring your mind back to the present moment?
- o Is it present, in the past, or future, or somewhere else?
- o Can you notice the thoughts without judgment and let them go?
- o Try to separate yourself from your ego. The "I" in all of us. Can you let it just be?
- o Notice what drama, daydream, or mind pattern you've in which you've been drawn.
- O What's going on with your inner dialogue?

#### **Emotional Awareness:**

- o What emotions are coming up?
- o Can you sit with them, feel them, and let them go?
- O How might this be showing up in your daily life?
- o Where are you feeling tension?
- o Can you breathe through it?
- Our breath to dissolve it?
- o Breathe into it? Move towards it.
- O What emotions are coming up?
- o Can you sit with them, feel them, and let them go?
- o From where might they be coming?
- o Is there a message in them for you?

#### **Breath Awareness:**

- Notice your breath.
- Notice what your breath is doing right now.
- o Is it shallow? Deep?
- o Are you holding it?

#### **Planting Affirmations:**

# Say these affirmations at different points during the practice, usually while students are holding poses.

- It's always more important to ask the questions than to know the answer. The answers show up at just the right time.
- Let those words sink deep within your spirit (subconscious mind, heart, or soul).
- Notice or acknowledge any inner resistance in the form of anxiety, negative self-talk, or sensations rising up.
- Could you be holding unto any limiting beliefs in this area?
- Open your heart to greater wisdom and insights about yourself (your life).
- How are you honoring yourself with this truth?
- Does this seem completely out of your grasp?
- What do you need to: heal; to gain greater balance; to honor yourself more; to live your truth; to be at peace; to learn?
- It's more important to ask the questions than to know the answer.

The following mindful awareness prompts can be printed and added to index cards for easy use in class. I laminated my cards for greater durability. See below:

#### Planting Affirmations # 1:

# Say these affirmations at different points during the practice, usually while students are holding poses.

- It's always more important to ask the questions than to know the answer. The answers show up at just the right time.
- Let those words sink deep within your spirit (sub-conscious mind, heart, or soul).
- Notice or acknowledge any inner resistance in the form of anxiety, negative self-talk, or sensations rising up.
- Could you be holding unto any limiting beliefs in this area?

#### Planting Affirmations # 2:

# Say these affirmations at different points during the practice, usually while students are holding poses.

- Open your heart to greater wisdom and insights about yourself (your life).
- How are you honoring yourself with this truth?
- Does this seem completely out of your grasp?
- What do you need to: heal; to gain greater balance; to honor yourself more; to live your truth; to be at peace; to learn?
- It's more important to ask the questions than to know the answer.

#### **Breath Awareness**

- O Notice your breath?
- Notice what your breath is doing right now.
- o Is it shallow? Deep?
- o Are you holding it?

## **Body Awareness**

- O What's happening right now in your body?
- o It is resisting? Fighting with you? Surrendering to the pose?
- O How does this response often show up in your daily life?
- o Is there something you are \_\_\_\_\_ right now?
- o Is your mind and body in agreement?
- o Notice what's happening in your body right now.
- Notice where you might be feeling tightness. How can you ease up but still embrace the pose?
- o Modify the pose to make it work for you.

#### **Emotional Awareness**

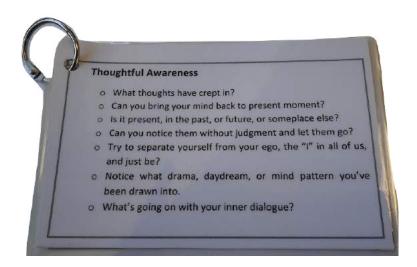
- O What emotions are coming up?
- o Can you sit with them, feel them, and let them go?
- O How might this be showing up in your daily life?
- O Where are you feeling tension?
- o Can you breathe through it?
- Our breath to dissolve it?
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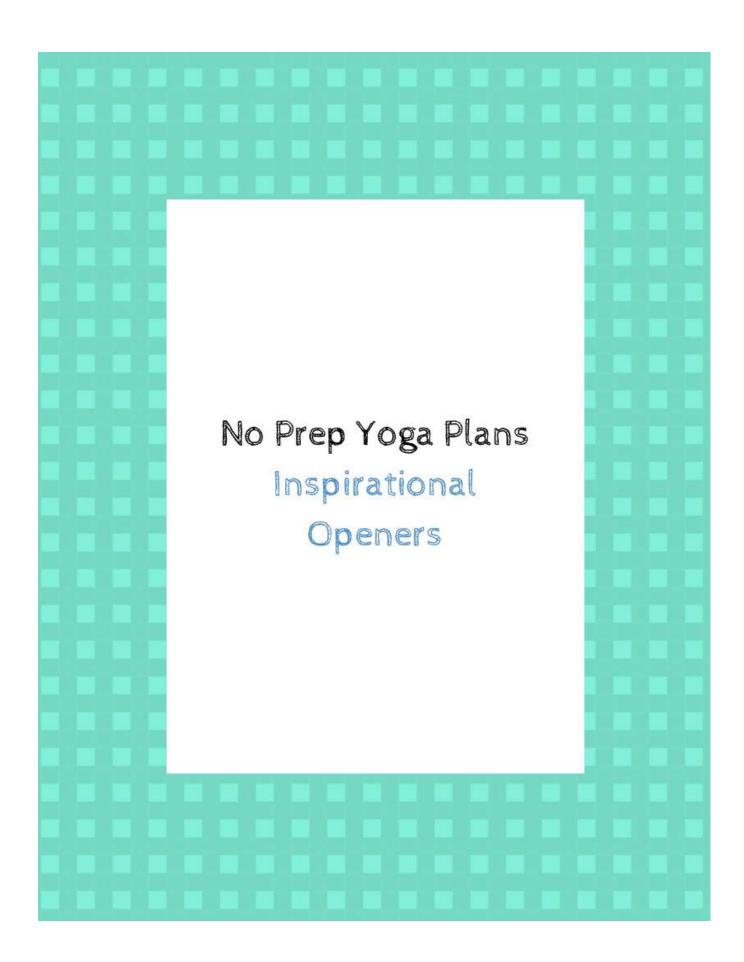
# **Thoughtful Awareness**

- O What thoughts have crept in?
- o Bring your mind back to the present moment.
- o Is it present, in the past, or future, or somewhere else?
- o Can you notice them without judgment and let them go?
- Try to separate yourself from your ego, the "I" in all of us, and just be.
- Notice what drama, daydream, or mind pattern in which you've been drawn.
- o What's going on with your inner dialogue?

#### **Create Mindful Awareness Cards & Put on a Ring**

Jot down a few mindful awareness questions that you can ask students during the practice. This will connect to the lesson; or, make mindful awareness cards and put on a ring. Laminate for durability.







### 1. Growing from the Inside Out

"When I loved myself enough, I began leaving whatever wasn't healthy. This meant people, jobs, my own beliefs and habits – anything that kept me small. My judgment called it disloyal. Now I see it as self-loving." – Kim McMillen

How does your life feel? Are you at peace with your decisions, with your thoughts, and with the people that cross your threshold? Many of us confuse self-love with being always available. We believe that loyalty and responsibility mean repeatedly putting someone or something else first. We want to be healthy and prosperous, but we hold onto things that weigh us down. We believe such life is normal. We think we have no other option. As we take a step back from the busyness and gaze within, things become simple. The world quiets down as we naturally reconnect. It's difficult to find yourself in the midst of emotional roller-coasters, toxicity and learned behaviors. Break the inertia of always going in the direction of stimulus by returning to yourself. You don't need to change all your habits at once. Just internalize whatever is going on outside yourself and witness what happens.

**Set an intention:** During our practice today, allow yourself to be fully present with whatever you perceive in your space. Use your breath to connect with the Higher Power or spirit. Notice how you start to grow from the inside out.

- Self-love depends on me being loyal to myself to feel what I need to feel to heal.
- I frequently take a step back from busyness to look within and to make sure I'm really okay.
- I witness how my inner-self responds to outside circumstances without getting caught up in the drama of it all.



#### 2. Divine Self-Expression

# "You're always with yourself, so you might as well enjoy the company."— Diane Von Furstenberg

The feeling of being loved for who we are is deeply transformative. You naturally become the best version of yourself while with people who see your light and darkness. The key word is "see." When someone actually understands you, it makes it so much easier for you to express and explore yourself. Hiding our personal truth is a mechanism for which we have developed. So, we can survive in a world that promotes perfection. This perfection is nothing but an illusion by which we have chosen to live. People will mirror self-restraint and judgment as long as we desperately try to escape how we are, while denying our thoughts or emotions. No matter how much we try to appear something that we are not, it will eventually backfire. Then, we make the conscious choice to accept and love ourselves. The better you will feel once you see it in yourself.

**Set an intention:** During our practice today, open your heart to getting to know the mind, body, and spirit. Befriend your thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. Ask your inner wisdom to guide you into divine self-expression.

- I mindfully hold my own hand on this journey towards completion.
- Today, I am taking a step back from self-defeating thoughts. I am embracing the uniqueness of my being.
- I am connected to my heart space in such a way that no outer circumstance can steal away my peace of mind.



#### 3. Release Negative Feelings

### "Beauty begins the moment you decide to be yourself." - Coco Chanel

We are all used to mirroring beauty standards. Society's ideals in men and women are intoxicating to the lives of everyone, including children. We want to look and behave the same way as other people. Still, we haven't any clue how it feels to walk in someone else's shoes. The deeper you bury your beauty with the more you disown yourself. In fact, your personal expression is the best accessory you can wear. Your positive light is greater than everything when you become a channel for truth and the embodiment of your potential. Hiding yourself is actually a sign of self-hatred. How can you fully embrace your being if there are aspects of yourself that you cannot stand? No matter your physical shape, emotional state, mental baggage, background, or decisions - you have the divine right to gracefully show yourself as you are. You are both whole and a work in progress. You were born for a purpose, and you can't know your mission until you discover your authentic self.

**Set and intention:** For our practice today, look at yourself from the outside. Scan your body, thoughts, and emotions. Breathe in self-acceptance and breathe out any negative feelings you might have about yourself.

- I choose to honor my authenticity every step of the way. By doing so, my life overflows with peace and joy.
- I am abundantly beautiful in thought, emotion, and action.
- I consciously tap into the uniqueness with which I've been blessed, whenever I am in doubt about myself.



#### 4. Becoming the Best Version of Yourself

### "A flower does not think of competing to the flower next to it, it just blooms." - Zen Shin

The foundation of competition is false. How can you be better than someone else if everyone on this Earth is unique? Yes, your project may be better than your co-worker's, or your friend's driving skills may top your own. On the contrary, your work, knowledge, talents, and vision are not who you are. No two people are the same. Not even identical twins. You lose sight of what's important when you strive to be better than someone else. The more you honor where you are right now, then the greater your personal and spiritual growth will be. You may see people that radiate self-commitment and peace. You may want to experience such an empowering state. Nevertheless, there is a huge difference between learning from others and wanting to be better than them. You can become the best version of yourself if you naturally connect with your heart and with others. There is nothing natural about competing. Take a step back from yourself and look at nature. The plants and animals, as well as the stars and dust, all know their place. They thrive because of that.

**Set and intention:** For our practice today, focus on your natural skills and beauty. Invite love into your heart and rejoice in a state of peace and divine fulfillment.

- I am thriving because I know I am on my path. Each day I am choosing what's right for myself.
- Things are naturally falling into place in my life because I allow them to do so.
- I am responding to whatever comes, in my own natural rhythm, therefore I am blessed with peace and light-heartedness.



#### 5. Embracing Yourself Fully

"The reason why we struggle with insecurity is because we compare us behind the scenes with everyone else's highlight reel." - Steve Furtick

When do we take our masks off? When we are with our loved ones? When we are alone? The majority of us are so used to pretending; we forget how to be honest and raw. Our society promotes the illusion of complete happiness and accomplishment. The truth is that no one feels complete and joyous all of the time. The world we live in is based on contrast. The more restricted you are, the more you crave liberation. The more shut down you are, then the greater your search for validation and recognition. There can't be light without its opposite of darkness. However, people like to parade on social media, on the streets, or during cultural events and gatherings. They show off their false strength; their inauthentic selves. This is what makes them feel warm on the inside. This makes them feel normal. We've all experienced painful events and traumatic situations. We didn't come here to be perfect, but rather we came here to be human.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, look at all the hidden aspects of yourself. Observe the things that you don't want anyone else to see. Ask your inner wisdom to guide you into embracing yourself fully.

- Today I choose to embrace my vulnerabilities fully, and by doing so, I am stronger than ever.
- I am looking at myself with care and detachment, as the play of existence harmoniously unfolds.
- I inquire my mind, but I do not doubt myself.



#### 6. What Brings You Joy

"When you recover or discover something that nourishes your soul and brings joy, care enough about yourself to make room for it in your life. "- Jean Shinoda Bolen

We spend most of our days neglecting the simple things that keep us in balance. We leave our passions for later, we don't get enough rest, or sometimes we forget to drink enough water. We tend to look far away in the distance and back into the past, without realizing that we are here now. Sometimes we get in contact with someone who makes our heart sing; or, we allow ourselves to play with a stray cat. Then something fabulous happens: it's like we are alive again. We are so used to our old habits that making room for something new, even if it benefits us greatly, is out of the question. Leaving the comfort zone is difficult; it requires courage and self-discipline. Ask yourself: "How many things am I doing for the sake of others? How many of my decisions are influenced by society, co-workers, neighbors, friends, family, and marketing?" Moreover, most importantly, ask yourself: "Where am I in my life?"

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about the things that matter to you. Ask your inner wisdom for strength of autonomy and self-actualization.

- I am naturally developing the healthy habits that align me with my highest good.
- I purposely remove all negativity from my life, thus making space for the things that expand my heart.
- I choose to abide in awareness as I open myself to the gifts my life has to offer.



#### 7. What's Important in Your Life?

# "Once you embrace your value, talents and strengths, it neutralizes when others think less of you." - Rob Liano

Validation is essential for emotional health. When we feel seen and heard or when we have like-hearted people surround us, it's easier to express the light we have within. But what happens when we are continuously judged? How do we cope with coldness and rejection? As much as we desire to be around loving and tolerating people, life most of the time puts us in situations that strengthen our sense of self. When no one understands you, the only way to heal those wounds is to accept yourself fully. You become an inspiration as you begin to embrace your vision, your wants and needs. You develop the natural capacity to rest within your body. You are at peace; you walk your path with grace. When you embrace your authentic self, then you remain confident and committed to your goals. People say a lot of things about each other, but you are the only one who knows and feels what benefits you.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about how you see the world. Ask yourself: "What do I believe is important in my life?" Ask your inner wisdom to align you with your truest vision.

- I am connected to the elements that bring joy and growth into my life; therefore, nothing can undermine my self-worth.
- I am using my skills and talents to design a world that over pours with gratitude, unconditional understanding, and peacefulness.
- As life continually inspires me, I am no longer looking away from myself.



#### 8. What Are You Thankful For?

"If a fellow isn't thankful for what he's got, he isn't likely to be thankful for what he's going to get."- Frank A. Clark

Gratitude has one of the highest vibrations in this universe. Gratitude is the portal towards blissful and divinely guided manifestation. When you are thankful, you are full of appreciation for others. We live in a world that encourages going in the direction of more. Following your dreams and passions is what expands your horizons. Going in the direction of joy is your purest mission. Nevertheless, as long as you are pursuing your goals from a space of lack and despair, what will come your way is what you are trying to avoid. Look at your life. There are reasons to be grateful in spite of the occasionally unpleasant circumstances. Your heart is beating, the sun shines each day, you can nourish your body, read a good book, see someone who cares about you, and so on. Give up the glasses of negativity that you have been wearing; let life greet you on your path. The more you focus on what you have, then the greater your experience will be.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about the small things for which you are thankful. Connect to your inner wisdom and express your gratitude for being.

- Gratitude is my master whenever I am at ease or caught in my personal story.
- Existence is divinely abundant, and gratefulness aligns me with the most wonderful and unexpected experiences that life has to offer.
- I fill my heart with gratitude each time my mind finds fault in others or myself.



#### 9. What Does It Mean to Be Peaceful?

"Happiness means being at peace with ourselves, wherever we are, whomever we're with, whatever we feel, whatever we're going through, with whatever we have or lack."

No matter what happens outside yourself, no matter the painful circumstances you might be going through, there is always a place within where you can go to seek shelter. Life originates inside yourself. Therefore, chasing happiness outside will exhaust and disappoint you. Indeed, some beautiful people and events bring you joy. However, those experiences are not random. Something inside yourself created them so that you can get closer to the life of your dreams. Whenever misfortune strikes, return to yourself and observe what you are thinking. More often than not, it's not a situation that causes us pain. Yet, what we think of the situation matters. Yes, some circumstances might be really painful, but mastering the art of letting go is what creates a happy life. Happiness starts in your heart and mind, while it overflows in the physical reality. When you are at peace with yourself, people and situations lose their power over you. Peace is the medicine.

**Set and intention:** For our practice today, sit quietly and notice what's going on inside your body. Feel the feelings, notice the sensations. Ask yourself, "Is this what it means to be peaceful?"

- No matter what happens on the outside, I am in charge of my happiness and peace of mind.
- I center myself in the cradle of Spirit, each time I am faced with conflict or drama.
- I come to terms with everything that feels off-track, as my intention always leads me in the direction of harmony.



#### 10. Keep Life Simple

### "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated." — Confucius

Life is so simple, but we make it complicated. The holy scriptures tell us that we should find contentment with food, water, and shelter. However, every few minutes we are bombarded with advertisements that tell us that simplicity is not enough. We are being led to believe that we need more and more. We may feel the need to constantly upgrade what we have, causing many to work harder and longer in order to obtain these gadgets that we think will simplify our life. Consequently, reality weighs us down even more. When our life is complicated and out of balance, we don't spend the necessary time on the simple things that bring true happiness: self-care, sunlight, friendship, a good meal, spirituality, and laughter. There is a movement today to return to the basics. Many people are realizing the false narrative of having it all.

**Set an Intention:** During our practice today, think about ways in which you can simplify your life. What can you modify or even delete that might be weighing you down? What can you do to bring more simplicity in your life?

- I use my breath as an anchor and return to the present moment, whenever I feel overwhelmed.
- I choose to set myself free from the subjectivity of the mind and rest in the objectivity of spirit.
- I honor the simplest of things because I know they abound in sacredness.



## 11. Embracing the Moment

"Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things."

Live your best life now. Don't talk about it or write about it, but simply live from day to day. Embrace every moment of your life whether you are cooking a meal, talking with a friend, or playing with your child. Too often, we are not present in our bodies. We may be there physically, but our minds are off in a distant future or living in stories of the past. All we truly have is this moment. We can make it the best moment ever by giving it our full attention and squeezing every bit of joy out of it as well. If we let it pass us by, we may wake up one day regretting the precious times lost in self-pity, discontentment, or preoccupation.

**Set an Intention:** During our practice today, meditate on any ways that you may be losing out on your best moments by peering into the future or dwelling in the past. Ask your inner witness to help you embrace the joy of each and every moment of your life.

- I appreciate each moment, as I understand the preciousness of everything manifested.
- Here and now, my heart fills with joy as I look around myself and witness the flow of life.
- I see things with the eyes of a child and the simplest of things appear as miracles.



#### 12. Is There a Lesson?

"Imagine that every person in the world is enlightened but you. They are all your teachers, each doing just the right things to help you learn perfect patience, perfect wisdom, perfect compassion."- Buddha

Nothing in your life has ever been random. Your parents and lovers, friends and coworkers, your school and projects – everything that entered your life has responded to your personal intention for growth. In this world, everything is connected to everything else. Each step of the way, you meet people and you experience situations that deepen your understanding about yourself and the universe. Before judging someone or something, ask yourself: "Why am I a match to this?" Things start falling into place as you become the observer of what happens inside and outside yourself. Your sorrows and teachings become less personal. You begin to see yourself in everyone else. You criticize less because you learn that reality is subjective and sometimes hilarious. When you no longer seek perfection in yourself, you're dropping out of judging. Everything and everyone with whom you connect becomes your teacher. You can find yourself in solitude, but it is not enough. You should also learn how to be yourself among others.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about the difficult people in your life. Ask your inner wisdom to help you understand the lessons you need to learn in their presence.

- I am grateful for everyone in my life, as I know their presence responds to my inner calling for healing and fulfillment.
- As I come in contact with someone who mirrors aspects of myself, I am mindful of the message Spirit is sending through them.
- I hold in my heart the space and the spiritual teachings from everyone that has influenced my life.



#### 13. Notice Your Divinity

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience." -Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

It's easy to see life and spirituality as two different things. We go to work, we take the kids to school, or we write that paper – this is the real world. We sit with ourselves, we meditate in nature, we pray or chant – this is the spiritual practice. We believe we have a spiritual awakening when we experience sudden changes in consciousness. We fail to see that cooking food, taking a bath, buying a backpack, or walking the dog is more than meets the eye. Nothing we do is outside the laws of nature. Nothing we become a match to is random or pointless. The more you get to know yourself, the better you become at noticing synchronicities. The more you sit in your presence, the more the veil of illusion and separation dissolves. Then, you see the force that drives the world. The mystical power that opens your eyes each morning. Life can't be anything else other than spiritual.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, let's speak of the image you have about yourself. Notice your body, thoughts, and emotions. Realize that you are so much more than you perceive. If only inwardly, experience your divine vastness. Rest in it. You are that.

- The deeper I go within, the clearer my purpose appears, as I navigate the waters of this world, in my human body.
- I deeply embrace my humanity as I naturally reach the blissfulness of my true self.
- I rest in the spaciousness of my soul whenever my mind and body feel tired.



#### 14. We Can't Put the Divine in a Box

"The moment God is figured out with nice neat lines and definitions, we are no longer dealing with God." - Rob Bell, Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith

Our minds are limited. When we are dealing with soul-touching vibrations and experiences, the mind has no place there. What the thinking process does is to put the unexplainable in small boxes. These boxes contain what we have already lived. The mind cannot independently stand outside of these boxes. It just wasn't designed that way. Our thoughts perish when we experience compassion, acceptance, thankfulness, and divine restfulness. We cannot think outside the mental body. Trying to describe the indescribable brings misunderstanding. Life is to be felt, rather than to be judged and analyzed. And so is the divine. Imagine a time in your life when you felt completely free of the constructs of life: walking your dog, looking at a sunset, or just sitting quietly near a river. Only through pure experience can we feel the divine. Moreover, no words and explanations are necessary.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, find the silent space within yourself and observe it. Breathe deeply into it and relax. There is an aliveness there, waiting for you to experience it. If you desire, invoke and honor this presence.

- Outside the dimension of the mind lies divine and infinite wisdom and love.
- As I am figuring myself out, my love of life flourishes in every corner of my being.
- Beyond words and thoughts, I have found absolute liberation in divine presence.



#### 15. Whatever You Do, Do It Mindfully

#### "The spiritual life does not remove us from the world but leads us deeper into it." -Henri J.M. Nouwen

The values of this world keep us away from the peacefulness of the soul. We no longer live in the present. We forget to appreciate the simplest of things; we take so many things for granted. We always want more, failing to see that we are infinite. Because spiritual practice is not as spectacular as owning the newest car, or as winning that amazing trip to Costa Rica, we tend to focus less on spiritual discipline and more on immediate pleasure. Marketing has taught us that happiness and completeness are just around the corner. However, this world has no corners. Spirituality says that happiness is here now. Nevertheless, we don't see it when we look around. So, what can we do? Making space in your life for spiritual ritual and discipline helps you remain in the present. It shows you what you are missing by constantly looking elsewhere. It deepens your confidence and insight. It puts you right on track and it guides you towards your goals.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, train your mind to be in the present. Whatever you do, do it mindfully. If you desire, invite divine presence into your body, mind, heart, and home.

- As my life graciously unfolds, I know that there is no distinction between the physical realm and the spiritual dimension.
- As I call Spirit into my life, I witness how the world responds to my needs and desires.
- As I do the work within, things miraculously fall into place in the outside world.



#### 16. Seek Blissful Awareness

#### "Your life is your spiritual path."

Everything you experience comes to you in accordance with the universal laws. Your business, the interaction with your co-workers and friends, your family and your pets. They all are designed to help you grow. You may say that there's nothing spiritual about driving your car to the office each morning, but if you are doing it mindfully, then your daily journey becomes a meditation. When you are shopping for the newest gadgets, this act becomes spiritual. Time will make things clear, even if you follow your impulses and don't really understand why you react in a certain way. You cannot live a non-spiritual life. Atheists, rational people, non-believers, skeptics - they all conform to the laws of the universe without knowing it. Miracles happen all around you, even if you are too busy to see them. You walk a conscious path when you practice awareness and discipline of the mind. Even then, there are things you cannot grasp. Even if meditation is not your cup of tea, or even if you don't see a point in doing yoga or chanting, there is a mystery that breathes life into your being.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, slow down and take time in doing your chores. If you desire, ask your inner wisdom for blissful awareness and celebrate life.

- I live my life in accordance with the spiritual laws; hence, I know that nothing random ever happens.
- Awareness keeps me rooted in self-honesty, as I take care of my needs on a regular basis.
- Self-inquiry and unconditional attention drive my personal experience.



#### 17. Open our Heart to the World

"I sought to hear the voice of God and climbed the topmost steeple, but God declared: "Go down again" - I dwell among the people." -John Henry Newman

Our spiritual practice calls us within. We look around and see all the things that are wrong with the world: poverty, dishonesty, fear, suffering, illusion, the struggle for power. Moreover, we feel overwhelmed; we feel tired and powerless. We need time to find balance, and we take a step back from whatever is going on in our lives, but this is just a phase. Indeed, there are people out there who thrive in solitude. They are monks, teachers, and disciples. This is their path and mission. However, for the rest of us, we came here with a different intention in mind. We came here to master the art of balance among others. No amount of hiding will make things better. Because you cannot continually avoid your lessons. The people at whom you look - the ones who are lost or miserable - need more love and support. Your presence matters; it always has. You are an inspiration and a teacher for everyone with whom you connect. We all learn from each other.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, open your heart to the world. Instead of running away from the collective, embrace it in your own terms. If you desire, ask your inner wisdom to gently guide you towards reconciliation with the world.

- I open myself to the experience of others, as they are the mirrors that reflect what I cannot yet see within myself.
- I am no longer avoiding other people, as I know that they are one with me and I am one with them.
- I am learning how to remain balanced amongst other people, as hiding is no longer an option for me.



#### 18. Forgiveness Makes "You" Whole Again

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you." -Lewis B. Smedes

An old Zen tale speaks about anger and resentment as follows: when you are furious that someone has hurt you and you can't forgive or forget what was done to you, then it's like holding a burning charcoal in your bare hands. You have the intention of throwing it at the oppressor. You burn your hands, but you just can't let go. It's not your oppressor who suffers from the injuries; it is you. Forgiving doesn't mean validating other people's meanness or confusion. In fact, forgiveness has nothing to do with the other; but it has everything to do with you. When you have been hurt, it's like a piece of you was stolen. You experience injustice and betrayal. You are in pain. Moreover, no matter how many times you think about the unfortunate situation, you cannot change it. Forgiveness represents accepting yourself and your circumstances fully. It means becoming whole again. Stop carrying the weight of someone else on your shoulders. Let the past take what is rightfully theirs. Forgiveness is the only way to be at peace here and now.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, keep in your heart all the people you cannot forgive. Notice their presence. If you desire, ask your inner spirit to fill your being with understanding and compassion.

- I am leaving behind the emotional weight I have been carrying for so long.
- My heart is strong enough to handle the past experiences at which I was so afraid to look.
- I am no longer missing pieces of myself, as forgiveness and compassion have made me whole again.



#### 19. Seeing Through the Eyes of Love

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." -Martin Luther King, Jr.

When someone treats us poorly, our first reaction is to respond the same way. Anger births anger; pain invites more pain. Why is that? Because we all have our wounds that still bleed from time to time. We are all carrying the baggage of past trauma. Most of the time, we just don't know how to let go. Therefore, we internalize the pain; we repress it. During conflict, what we hide inside comes out to play. Not because we want to, but because we have a hard time managing our emotions. The mask of goodness and balance falls off. What remains is what was always there: a mind that is suffering. If you are in harmony, whenever someone comes at you with an offensive and disturbing attitude, you can take distance from it. You see from where the other person is coming. You realize that you were there too. More than often, your self-acceptance and inner peace drives the wrongdoer away.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about the times you fought fire with fire. Remember how that felt like. If you desire, ask your inner wisdom for clarity and insight.

- I choose love over despair, peace over conflict, and compassion over neglect.
- As I center myself into the light, the cracks of my being are filled with divine love and goodness.
- Kindness is my teacher as I envision a peaceful world in which all of us thrive together.



#### 20. Lovingly Work with Yourself

#### "Forgive yourself for your faults and your mistakes and move on."-Less Brown

As adults, we all have some things of which we are ashamed. There are hidden aspects of ourselves that we want no one to see. We're desperate to be faultless and to cover up our vulnerabilities. What we are doing is attuning to a social program. There is nothing raw, natural, and gentle about appearing perfect. The more you fear mistakes, then the better you'll become at failing. This is the way life works. You cannot run away from yourself forever. We waste an enormous amount of energy when we identify with the things we did in the past with incorrect judgments and assumptions, or when we cannot get over ourselves. Ignoring your traits is not the answer; however, lovingly working with yourself is the remedy. When you are stuck in guilt and shame, you refuse to see all the wonderful things you've done. Remember, your mistakes do not define you. What you think about yourself, does!

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, write down all the things you don't accept about yourself. Think about the outcomes of your mistakes. How did they transform you? If you desire, call upon your inner awareness to deepen your insight.

- I have come to terms with myself, as I continually hold space for my inner child to heal.
- I no longer listen to the inner critic, as my focus is on being the best version of myself that I can be today.
- Self-forgiveness has unified my soul and connected me with the boundless love of spirit.



#### 21. You Are Not Powerless

"Never forget the three powerful resources you always have available to you: love, prayer, and forgiveness. -"H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Our daily busyness can keep us away from the things that matter the most. The simple gestures and rituals become unimportant in a world that values competition, aggression, and judgment. We say that we want better lives, but we expect improvement from the outside. We look for peace anywhere else than within ourselves. We desperately try to find love and acceptance, again, in others. Nevertheless, until we practice self-love, or until we fully embrace the way we are, then everything else is a story that keeps us even busier. You cannot control how people see you or talk to you; you cannot control the weather or the next meeting. What you can do is to love yourself in such a way that no one can make you feel unworthy. You can pray with such faith and passion that nothing can bring you down. You can enjoy your company so much that guilt and shame can never put you off track. Self-soothe with love, prayer, and forgiveness. They are the medicine.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, meditate on self-worth and self-love. Focus on your heart and breathe compassion into it. Rest in divine presence.

- Prayer is my medicine when I sometimes find myself back in doubt and confusion.
- Forgiveness silences the mind and enriches my human experience, as I naturally break free from self-imposed restraints.
- Self-love is the universal remedy that pulls together all the pieces of myself that I have been rejecting.



#### 22. Finding Your Barriers to Love

"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it."- Rumi

When have you stopped searching for love? We always think that our lives will turn around with the next partner, the next holiday, or the next date. We believe that self-acceptance is easier if there is someone out there ready to make us a part of their lives. How many times have you played the game of relationships and marriage? There is an inner calling for communion deeply embedded within ourselves. Still, we don't know what to do with it. We don't know where to find love; because inside, we feel empty. During our upbringing and adulthood, we have unconsciously created walls around our hearts; because we felt sad, because we've been through a lot, because we couldn't make sense of what was going on. So, in turn, we become disconnected from our soul. Love comes from the inside. It has always been this way. People on the outside cannot love us more than we love ourselves. As you work towards freeing your heart from self-imposed constraints, people will come to you. These people are ready to accept and love you exactly the way you are.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, work with your heart. Dive deep within and look at whatever is holding you back from love. If you desire, ask divine presence to ease your aloneness.

- I am a vessel through which love pours into this world.
- I am no longer empty on the inside, as I know that love is not something I can find outside myself, but the breath of life itself, that keeps me going from within.
- I no longer need walls for protection, as I am love and divine perfection.



#### 23. Focus on the Simple Things

# "Love is being able to view a situation without adding duality to it." -Alaric Hutchinson, Living Peace

We live in a world that is based on contrast. There cannot be light without darkness, compassion without criticism, or acceptance without rejection. We learn our lessons through polarity, while we let go of the past and walk in the direction of what makes us feel good. Love, on the other hand, is unity. When we lovingly look at each other, all separation fades away. There is no pain in love. Pain comes out of fear, confusion, and ego. The only thing that hurts us is our view of the world. Love doesn't originate in the mind. It is the essence that gives birth to all that is; it is the most powerful remedy for the illness of the heart, mind, and body. When we are in love, we don't just experience a higher state; we transform. We return home into a space of blissful awareness. To be awakened is to be love. We become one with the world the moment we deeply love ourselves.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, notice the world around you. Focus on the simple things: the sunrise, the grass, and the noises in the background. Don't put any labels on what you perceive. If you desire, connect to your inner awareness and observe what happens inside.

- I am in harmony with everything that I perceive and feel, as I consciously answer my heart's desire for oneness.
- Love is my mantra as my intention takes me in the direction of divine wholeness.
- The loving thoughts that I am thinking have the power to heal, restore, and uplift.



#### 24. Bless Others with Your Presence

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."- Maya Angelou

The best gift you can give someone is your attention. No matter what you are going through, being fully present with the feelings of another is deeply healing for both you and them. Although we may often find ourselves in a rush, or our minds drifting to seemingly pressing issues, things change when we decide to let people in completely. When we fail to connect with people on a deeper level, inevitably, we are choosing to live in isolation. When we truly listen to people, seeing past their words and into their hearts, we may discover aspects of ourselves that we didn't know were there. Words come and go. Gestures are sometimes forgotten; but being there for another soul, and validating their worth, is what keeps love flowing. What your presence awakens in the people around you is magical.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about the people who influenced your life - the ones whose compassion and understanding filled you with love and positivity. If you desire, invoke your inner spirit and use this energy to send blessings all around the world.

- My practice is unconditional attention towards myself and others, as I choose to be present each step of the way.
- The seeds I plant in others will grow into either weeds or flowers, and my intention is to beautify the experiences of everyone around me.
- I choose to expand my heart by being around other people and consciously interacting with them.



#### 25. Give Thanks

### "Doing what you love is the cornerstone of having abundance in your life."-Wayne Dyer

Who doesn't want a fulfilling life? Ultimately, all we do is to seek pleasure. Some may find pleasure in a partner, while others seek pleasure in spirituality, recognition or money. In trying to avoid suffering and lack, we go towards things that we think will make us feel better. We work 9-5 jobs, we sacrifice our spare time, or we look into the future just hoping that one day our luck will change. This is what we've learned. This is the system that keeps us in check. Abundance seems to avoid you no matter how much time you invest in the things you believe will make you prosperous. Why is that? You cannot expect your life to improve if you are deficient on the inside. When you connect to your passion, you fill an inner void. As a result, you become energetically abundant. This abundance flows into the outer world and aligns you with money, fame, security, people who influenced you, and the ones that are inspired by you.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, meditate on abundance. Think about the things for which you are grateful. Moreover, the things to come. If you desire, give love and life thanks for your experiences, thoughts, and emotions.

- Abundance is a state of mind that I purposely cultivate each moment of my life.
- I am no longer starving on the inside; therefore, abundance is a reality that I experience day by day.
- Joy is the internal guidance system that aligns me to the world I wish to live in.



#### 26. What Brings You Joy

#### "Not what we have but what we enjoy, constitutes our abundance."- Epicurus

Life is anything but stagnant. No matter how much we try to hold onto things, surprises always await around the corner. Therefore, we learn to go with the flow. One day, you are in a relationship while this is not the case the next day. Tonight, you're sleeping in your bedroom; tomorrow night you might be on the beach or looking at the stars. The greater the pressure you put on your shoulders, the more you want to control your circumstances. You didn't come here to be rigid or scared of loss. You came here to have faith in yourself and your intention. Divine abundance starts within then pours out. Neither your car and home, nor your clothes and cards, define you. One day you'll replace them without even thinking. However, the memories you made, the people that touched your heart and that are no longer here, or that moment when you felt one with nature – these are the experiences that make you abundant. This is what you came here to do.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about all the things that bring you joy. What keeps you alive? If you desire, ask your inner spirit to help you connect to the abundance within.

- I am abundant from within, as the spaciousness of Spirit dwells inside myself.
- I am no longer scared of loss, as magic lies in the smallest of things and my eyes are now trained to see simplicity.
- What I have comes and goes, but how I feel about myself and the world, remains with me forever.



#### 27. Where Do You Spend Most of Your Time?

# "It is through gratitude for the present moment that the spiritual dimension of life opens up."-Eckhart Tolle

How much time do you spend in the present moment? Past experiences and future goals are just stories with which we identify. These stories make up a false sense of purpose. Real life happens right now. The now is already gone as you think about it. The mind cannot function in the present moment; the mind always needs more, for it likes to label situations and people. When you bring the mind into the now, there is nothing for it to do. You become aware as you begin to practice presence and remain for longer periods of time into what is. You understand at a heartfelt level that things are not as you perceive them, but as they are. The present moment allows you to breathe, to deeply connect with yourself and others. As a result, you become thankful for the space that you just found inside yourself. Life gives you more because you are grateful.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, use your breath to bring your awareness into the present moment. As you are in the now, effortlessly connect to the stillness. Let the thoughts come and go; just observe.

- I open myself to life as I mindfully carry on with my day and practice presence every step of the way.
- As I breathe here and now, my body, mind, and spirit become one.
- The vastness inside myself makes everything feel alright, no matter the outer circumstances.



#### 28. Are You Listening?

#### "Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens." -Jimi Hendrix

What is the difference between being knowledgeable and being wise? Knowledge comes from interpretation and information. We learn things through our senses, through people, books, and voyages. Wisdom represents an entirely new dimension of being. The ego might be knowledgeable, but it is never wise. Wisdom is the privilege of being connected to the heart space. To be wise is to be objective, whereas knowledge is subjective. When we know that we know, we also want to show others what we've learned. Knowledgeable people adore repeating themselves. Wise people tend to let others speak. Each interaction is new and pure for the wise. In wisdom, you do not know that you know things. Rather, you are simply attuned to a more refined state. A state of loving understanding. The wise man knows that silence brings insight. Moreover, in quietness, he finds himself and the world. Well-informed people duplicate what was already spoken and this repetition adds to their sense of self. In wisdom, the sage finds something entirely different.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, quiet your mind and learn how to listen. The body speaks, the trees speak, the rivers sing. The earth has its own music. If you desire, ask your inner witness to help you receive the wisdom of existence.

- I can finally listen to what the heart has to say when the mind is silent.
- I can access my inborn wisdom by temporarily leaving knowledge aside.
- I choose not to speak, but to listen, as spirit flourishes in quietness.



#### 29. Don't Fight the Feelings

"When deep change begins, whether it's a miracle or a loss, expect to feel uncomfortable for a while."

Most of us are spending our time trying to avoid uncertainty and the unknown. Familiarity brings the illusion of control; therefore, we feel safe. Because we don't trust life, we have a hard time going with the flow and embracing the things that, for the moment, make no sense to us. But life is always moving, always taking away and bringing more. No matter how much we hold onto the warm, comfortable space we have created around us - there comes a time when everything shifts. We might experience something uplifting, such as the birth of a child; or, it may be something painful - such as the passing of a loved one. Avoiding suffering is not possible, but there is always a gift of awareness and openness each time we feel grief. We feel fear when something fundamental changes. Now we are facing the unknown and we tend to fill this unknown with worrisome thoughts.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, think about the major shifts in your life. If you desire, ask your inner wisdom to support you in holding the space for the painful events. Remember how you changed after each phase of your life ended.

- As I feel safe within my heart space, I can handle my life's teachings.
- Life transforms continually, and I am one with life.
- Breaking out of the comfort zone is never easy, but it is the path towards enlightenment.



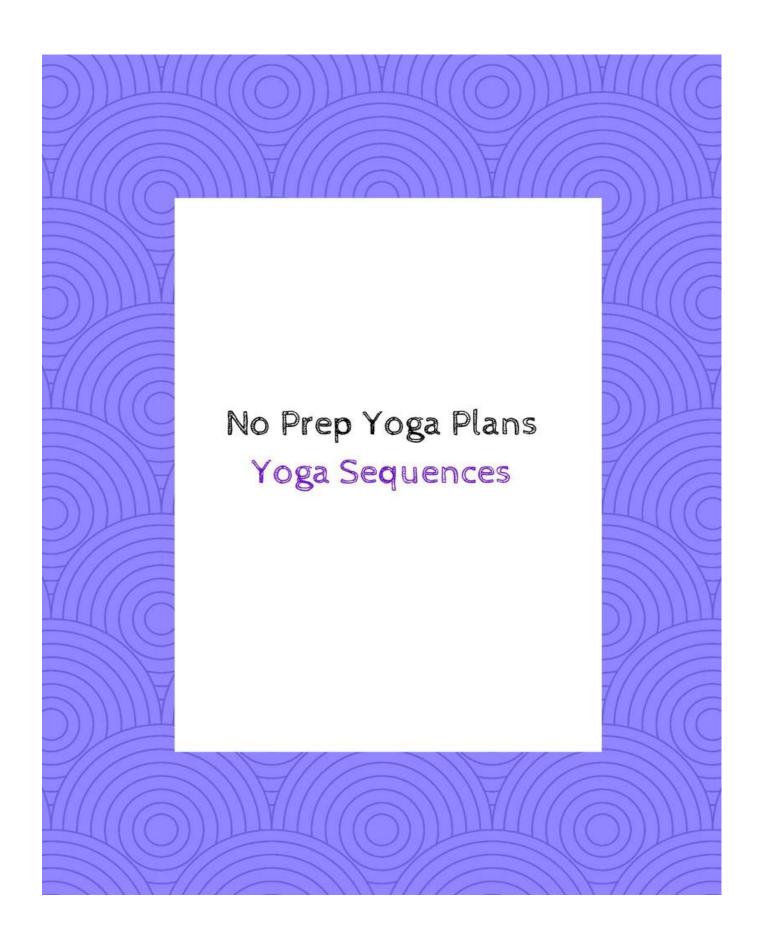
#### 30. I Could See Peace Instead of This

"Learning to distance yourself from all the negativity is one of the greatest lessons to achieve inner peace." -Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart

What do you see when you look around? Civilization tends to celebrate negativity and powerlessness. People are eager to see others fail and always think that grass is greener on the other side. It's hard to maintain a space of inner quietness in the midst of collective drama. Finding the balance between being there for people and keeping your emotional hygiene is an art. Meditation and mindfulness help you preserve your peacefulness in the toughest of situations. It takes time to master stillness and inner harmony. Removing yourself from gossip and reducing contact with people that only talk negatively about one another is the first step. Learning to abide in silence also comes handy. Return to nature when you feel out of balance. Respect your peace more than you respect other people's opinions. Serenity will always bring the best out in you.

**Set an intention:** For our practice today, look at all the negative people and scenarios that you'd like to remove from your life. Focus on what you can do to be more at peace. If you desire, allow your inner wisdom to show you how to sit completely still.

- Other people's spectacle no longer affects me, as my intention is to walk my path in peace.
- Negativity dissolves in presence and prayer. Therefore, I know where to go whenever my mind is not at ease.
- I let people in and I connect with them fully, but their personal drama remains outside my intimate space.



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# 36 Yoga Sequences and Guide



#### IT'S YOUR CLASS MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Included in this section of No Prep Yoga Plans are a variety of yoga sequences for standard classes, flows, restorative, and more! If you're interested in engaging in our online No Prep Yoga "Membership" Community, then head on over to the No Prep Yoga Membership page and sign up for \$10.00 per month. Here we can keep the No Prep vibe going! If you have a favorite yoga sequence, guided meditation, yoga nidra, techniques or more, send it to me and I'll format it. I will add it our growing database of NO Prep Yoga materials!

#### Leave Perfection at the Door

I am far from being a yoga expert, but as a beginning yoga teacher, I knew what I wanted- a quick and easy way to teach my classes. I got tired of making up new sequences each week or creating classes from online services. I just wanted a quick go-to guide to support me and help me remember all that I had already forgotten. I wanted to be more present in my classes, instead of stressing on doing it perfectly or hyper-focusing on the asanas. If you are looking for perfection within these pages, then you won't find it. But what you will find is a large variety of yoga sequences that will make your yoga job so much easier. So, you can teach with more confidence while growing as a yoga teacher. Practice makes perfect. I believe you'll appreciate

this easy no prep guide to planning your classes, even if it's not just how "mama yoga teacher" taught you!

#### That's Not How "I" Learned!

I am not the yoga nazi, nor have I ever taught a yoga teacher training class. But after having attended two of them, I always thought it would be nice to leave with a manual that included just what you're reading now. Therefore, I created one for me, and now for you! I hope that you will take all the great stuff you learned in your yoga training and use this guide as a supplemental support. All trainings are different, and we learn how to set up our classes in a variety of structures and ways. It's impossible to create a one-size fits-all yoga class plan, as there are as many yoga techniques and styles. Therefore, use what you know. Adapt, modify, and match to your style of teaching. Whether that includes adding props, straps or no straps, or including additional modifications, make it your own. This is just a basic guide to help you feel more comfortable getting started and to utilize what you already know more quickly and easily, not take the place of it.

#### Speed It Up or Slow It Down

Depending upon the speed of your class, you might find that you don't get through all the poses. No worries! Just cut out a series or section. You will notice that most of the series is divided by either a vinyasa or a sun salutation. Just skip a section or series if you run short on class time. Have more time? Repeat a series or two. No problem.

#### Don't Forget to Repeat on the Other Side

It's all about balance in yoga, right? Therefore, if you do one series of poses focusing on one side, be sure and repeat on the other side. You will find that sometimes the sequences will show poses in reverse for you, but generally, you will just repeat each series on both sides. It shouldn't be too difficult to determine which series need repeating.

#### Practice Ahead of Time or Just Go for It

You may want to go through the sequence a few times or just wing it. This is dependent upon your level of confidence, experience, training, memory, or comfortability as a teacher. In my opinion, it's okay to have the No Prep Yoga Plans book open during the class. Some may frown upon this; make you feel like you're using a crutch, or that you just won't look professional enough. So, what! Your students love what you provide for them and they don't care if you're using a few props to help you out unless they're a part of the yoga nazi clan. Hopefully, you don't have any of those in your classes. I just spoke to a student recently who told me that her favorite teacher, who has been an instructor for over 10 years, uses notes! Instead of looking down on her, this person told me how much she appreciated her being organized and prepared before starting her class. I'm just saying!

What I have discovered by using the sequences (in class) is that I have started to rely on them less and less. Over time, using the sequences has created a broad foundation on which I am

able to grow and expand. Because there is so much variety, I get a chance to try out a lot of different poses and routines and that only helps my practice. This will happen naturally if you teach many classes. However, if you only teach occasionally or one or two classes a week, it may take a while before you reach that internalized yoga class planning level. Why stress out about it when it's unnecessary? Just grab the book and go teach your class!

In addition, as yoga instructors, we should all have a personal practice. What better way to memorize the sequences than to use them in your own personal practice and then just reteach to your students.

#### Transitions

Within the sequences, you will notice that I use the vinyasas and sun salutations to transition from one series to the next. Feel free to skip these or use them as you like. On some occasions, I may leave some obvious transitions mostly due to lack of space. However, as yoga instructors, I'm pretty sure you'll figure it out quite easily. For example, following a sun salutation the next pose might be a Warrior two. You can stop and set up your next pose any place within the vinyasa or sun salutation. For me, during or after doing the sun salutation, I'd just stop at Downward Facing Dog and then step into Low Lunge. Afterwards I set up for Warrior two.

#### Modify, Skip, Add or Extend Poses

As I stated early, we all come from different trainings, styles, and class structures. Take what you know and use the basics in this book to create your class. If you use props, add them. If you like to modify or set up poses differently, then do that. Skip sections/series or repeat the ones you like. Sneak in your own poses in-between the ones listed. No one will know but you. Just have fun with it. Yoga is about embracing peace and loving yourself and others. You're already ahead of the game if you keep those as your ideals.

Sometimes what I will do when repeating a series is change it up a bit. I may exchange a pose with something similar. For example, I might replace a wide-legged forward bend with a wide-legged twist. Other times I may add something. For example, if I did a standing forward bend the first time around; then, I may add a twist to it whenever repeating on the other side. This can work well, especially if you plan to speed up the second round a bit. I basically go with what feels right and have no problem deviating from the sequence from time to time. The more familiar I have become with the poses, I find I may modify a bit.

Now go ahead and teach that class with fun, presence, inspiration, and all of you! I'm just here to support your great efforts! Next, we'll discuss creating yoga themes for your classes.

#### Selecting a Sequence

Selecting a sequence can be the hardest part teaching your class. You can pick a theme (see below); or, what I like to do is just select a number between one and 30. That's the class I teach. That way I'm not creating more stress for myself by overthinking the whole process.

#### Yoga Class Themes

I've tried to add a theme to many of the sequences, so you can concentrate on different areas in your classes. Use the Theme Combinations Table in the Getting Started section to quickly select and put your components together. As yoga instructors, most yoga classes are going to give our students an overall full body workout. Other poses are great for toning, strengthening, detoxifying, balancing, relaxing, and creating flexibility in specific joints and body parts. It's fun announcing what areas my class will be focusing on and then sharing a little tidbit as to why. For example, "twists help to detoxify the body by squeezing our internal organs like a sponge and helping to eliminate toxins through the body and even the breath."

Below is a quick overview of the most common types of poses and what they do. You can find more details in the Yoga for Ailments Section.

Yoga Pose Types and Benefits (Cheat Sheet)



Benefits of yoga poses are numerous, and they differ from type to type. Here's a little cheat sheet for you to remember and can share with your students.

#### **Seated poses**

Seated poses are great for creating inner peace and calmness as they promote deeper breathing. They are also good for increasing lower back and hip flexibility as well as strengthening back muscles.

#### **Standing poses**

Standing poses (like mountain pose) create stability and help to ground us physically (spiritually and emotionally too) by creating support for the rest of our body. Standing poses are the foundation of our yoga practice and help to focus the mind and body. Many standing poses (like Warrior one) strengthen and tone the legs, core, and glute muscles – all which help to build

stamina. They also help to improve posture.

#### Core poses

Core poses (like boat and abdominal yoga bicycles) help to strengthen the muscles on the front and center of the body that give support to the spine and pelvis. Creating dynamic movement with core poses can be a fun and effective way to build core strength.

#### **Forward bends**

Forward bends help you to feel deeply calmed and relaxed. They stretch your lower back and hamstrings (which can reduce lower back pain and prevent injury). They release tension in your upper body, as well as increase spinal flexibility. Spiritually and emotionally, forward bends allow us to fold into ourselves leading to deeper internal reflection and connection.

#### **Back bends**

Back bends can create an emotional response in the body by opening the heart center, chest, belly, and groin areas. They are great for strengthening your arms and shoulders, relieving muscle tension, and improving spinal flexibility. Back bends should generally be followed by forward bends to maintain balance in the spine and avoid injury. Spiritually and emotionally, back bends promote freedom and healing of internalized fears - especially when incorporated with strong breath.

#### **Arm Balancing**

Arm poses are great for cultivating self-confidence and humility as many have the fear of falling. Arm balancing poses can be done with an air of fun and light-heartedness. They strengthen the upper body, arms, shoulders, core, and wrists. However, people with wrist issues should avoid poses that put full pressure on them. Using hand wedge props can help.

#### Balancing

Balancing poses help to tone muscles, develop coordination, and promote focus and agility. They also help improve posture by elongating the spine.

#### **Hip Openers**

Supple hips create mobility and create a strong foundation for other poses like forward and back bends. Usually seated, supine, and prone (belly down) poses make the best hip openers. Hip openers can put pressure on the knee ligaments so be careful.

#### **Twists**

Twists penetrate deep in the body's core, toning, and stimulating internal organs primarily the liver and kidneys. Twists also release tension through lengthening and stretching back muscles, keep the joints of the spine healthy, increase shoulder and spine mobility and resilience, while helping to maintain our spinal range of motion. Twists can also aid in digestion by activating the peristalsis process and are known for their detoxifying effect on the body through squeezing organs like a sponge that push toxins out of our tissues and cells. Always be sure to twist both sides of your body to ensure proper balance.

#### **Supine poses**

Back poses stretch your abdominal muscles, open your hips, and increase spinal mobility. They release tension and strengthen the limbs and back.

Stomach or prone poses strengthen your arms and back and open up your hip area. They relieve tension and increase flexibility in your spine.

#### **Inversions**

Inversions are any poses that put your head below your heart. Inversions promote strength and stamina (especially in your upper body). They also stimulate the brain through increased blood flow that helps to clear the mind, calm the nerves, and relieve stress.

#### **Relaxation poses**

Relaxation poses like Corpse Pose, calm your mind, body, and encourage a deep feeling of relaxation. They can be used at the end and start of your yoga practice, as well as in the middle of it. Despite seeming easy, relaxation poses are often really challenging because of our inability to relax fully.

#### **Plank poses**

Plank poses are helpful in building strength in the arms, wrists and spine, which prepares you for inversion poses. To reap as much benefit as you can from a plank pose, try holding it for up to one minute. Side plank poses additionally work your shoulders.

#### Labels/Codes/Acronyms \*

Warm Up
Transition
Core
OS- Other Side
Repeat
ROS- Repeat Other Side
Floor Series
Cool Down

• **Please note:** Not all sequences contain Repeat, ROS, or OS labels or acronyms. It is best to look over the sequence to see where you'll want to repeat pose sets or series. Often sets or shorter series end with a vinyasa flow, but not always.

# **Vinyasas, Sun Salutations, Pose Series, & Dynamic Movements**



About Sun Salutations- Sun salutations come in many varieties. I have included just a few. Salutations can be used as warm-ups, to increase energy, or as a transition when moving to another series. You can determine the number of times you'd like to do salutations. Just make sure you balance out by doing each side.





About Vinyasas- Vinyasas are shorter than sun salutations and can be used as transitions when moving from one series of poses to the next.

They may also indicate where to repeat the series or set on the other side. With vinyasas, it may not be necessary to do on both sides, but you can. You can stop the vinyasa wherever you need to set up the next pose.





**Poses in a Series-** When there are striped lines around a series of poses, this may indicate to do each pose consecutively as in one unit. Then generally repeat on other side.

**Dynamic Movements**- When there are striped lines around a series of poses, this can also indicate to do series as one repeated dynamic movement, usually at a faster pace. You may do dynamic movements multiple times. For example, 6-combined movements of the Sunflower 2 and 1, as shown.



# No Prep Yoga Plans # 1- Core Strength/Inner Thighs (Balance)





Repeat series on other side.



# No Prep Yoga Plans # 2- Full Body Flow (Abundance)



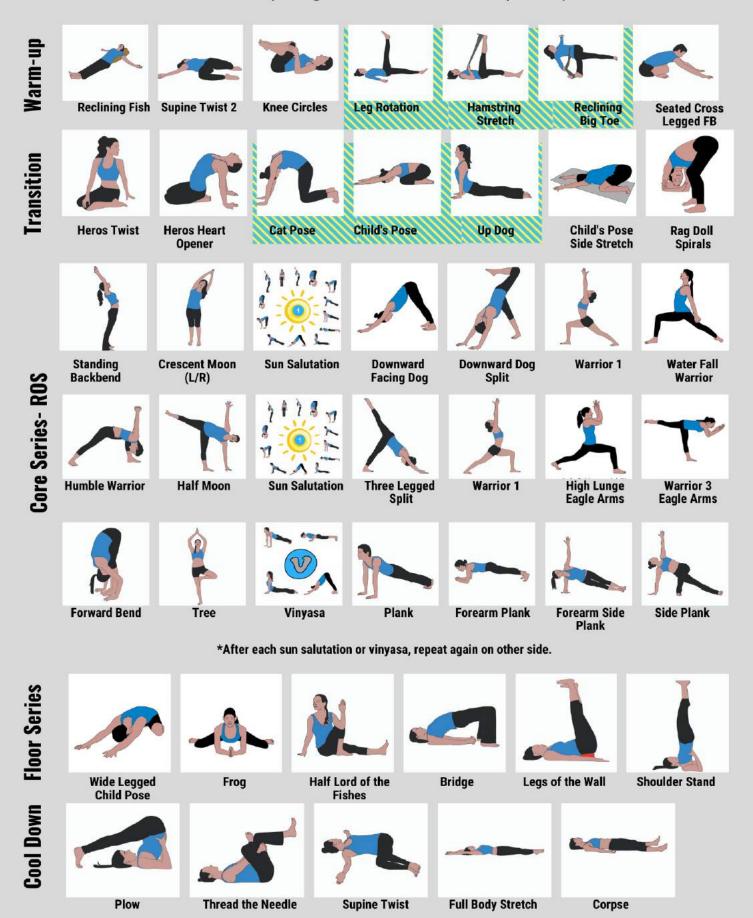
\*After most \*Sun salutations or Vinyasas, repeat again on other side.



# No Prep Yoga Plans # 3- Balancing /Lower Back (Grounding)



# No Prep Yoga Plans # 4- Twists (Detox)



# No Prep Yoga Plans # 5- Leg Strength (Trust)





Cool Down

# No Prep Yoga Plans # 6- Energizing Flow (Joy)



# No Prep Yoga Plans #7-Inner Thighs & Balancing (Purpose)



\*After most \*sun salutations or \*vinyasas, repeat again on other side.



#### No Prep Yoga Plans #8-Balancing Flow (Peace)





**Cool Down** 

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 9- Hip Openers (Courage)



\*After \*most sun salutations or \*vinyasas, repeat again on other side.



#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 10- Upper Body (Overcoming)



Half Lord of the Fish



Half Lord of The Fish 2



**Reclining Knees** to Chest



**Supine Twist** 

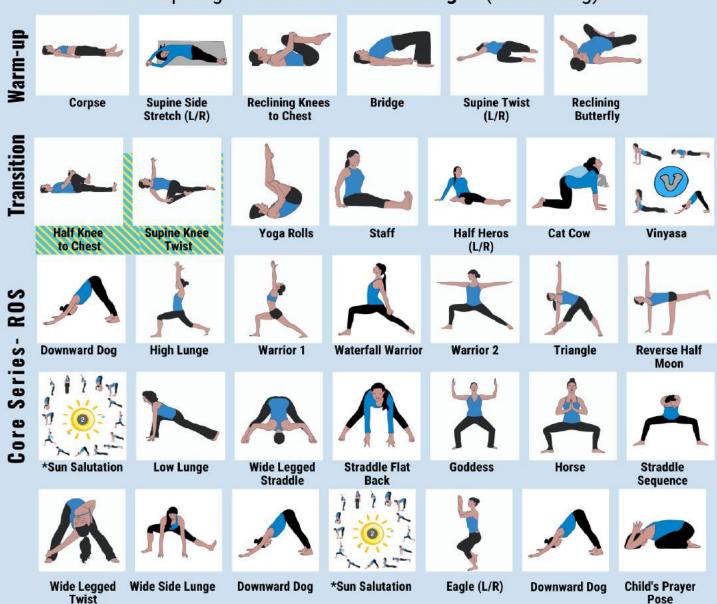




**Full Body Stretch** 

Corpse

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 11- Core & Thighs (Awakening)



\*After \*sun salutation or \*vinyasa, repeat again on other side.



#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 12- Full Body Flow (Unity)



**Happy Baby** 

**Full Body Stretch** 

**Seated Side Stretch** 

**Reclining Knee to** 

Chest

Corpse

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 13- Thighs & Hips (Mindfulness)



**Supine Twist** 

**Full Body** 

Stretch

Seated FB Twist

**Reclining Knee to** 

Chest

Corpse

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 14- Arms & Twists (Releasing)

Warm-up



Legs Up The Wall



**Butterfly Up** The Wall



**Spinal Twist** 



Seated Open Angle



**Back Twist** 



Hero's Twist



**Hero Heart** Opener



**Cat Cow** 



Thread the Needle



**Downward Dog** 



**Forward Bend Twist** 



**Forward Bend** 



**Sun Salutation** 



**Waist Rotating** 



Standing **Backbend** 



**Side Stretch** 



Chair



Thunderbolt **Twist** 



**Downward Dog** 



**Downward Dog Side Stretch** 



Side Plank



Side Plank Variation



\*Sun Salutation



**Downward Dog** 



**Downward Dog Splits** 



**High Lunge** 



**High Lunge Twist** 



Waterfall



**Low Lunge** 



**Hands to Heart** 



**Half Lotus** 



**Balancing Side** 



Star



Horse



**Shoulder Dips** 



Wide Leg FB



Wide Leg FB **Twist** 





\*Vinyasa Staff

\*After \*Sun Salutation and Vinyasa repeat again on other side.

**Twist** 

**Cool Down** 



Seated Forward Bend



Leg Raise **Ankle Rotation** 



**Boat** 



**Boat Twist** 



**Knee to Chest** 



**Reclining Eagle Twist** 



Corpse

# No Prep Yoga Plans # 15- Energizing Flow (Healing)



Rabbit

**Locust Arms** 

Extended

Bow

**Half Boat** 

Supine Twist

**Full Body Stretch** 

Corpse

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 16- Forward Bends (Depression & Calm)





**Bound Angle** 



Modified

Bound Angle **Forward Bend** 



Seated Forward Bend



Modified

Seated One Leg **Forward Bend** 



Stretch

Circles



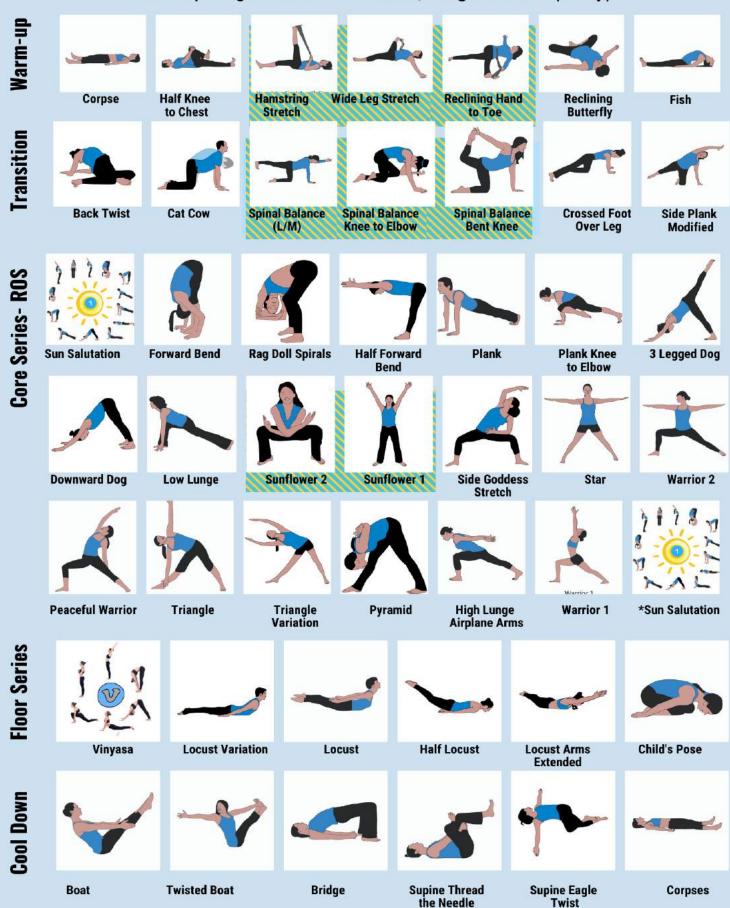
Reclining Knee Full Body Stretch



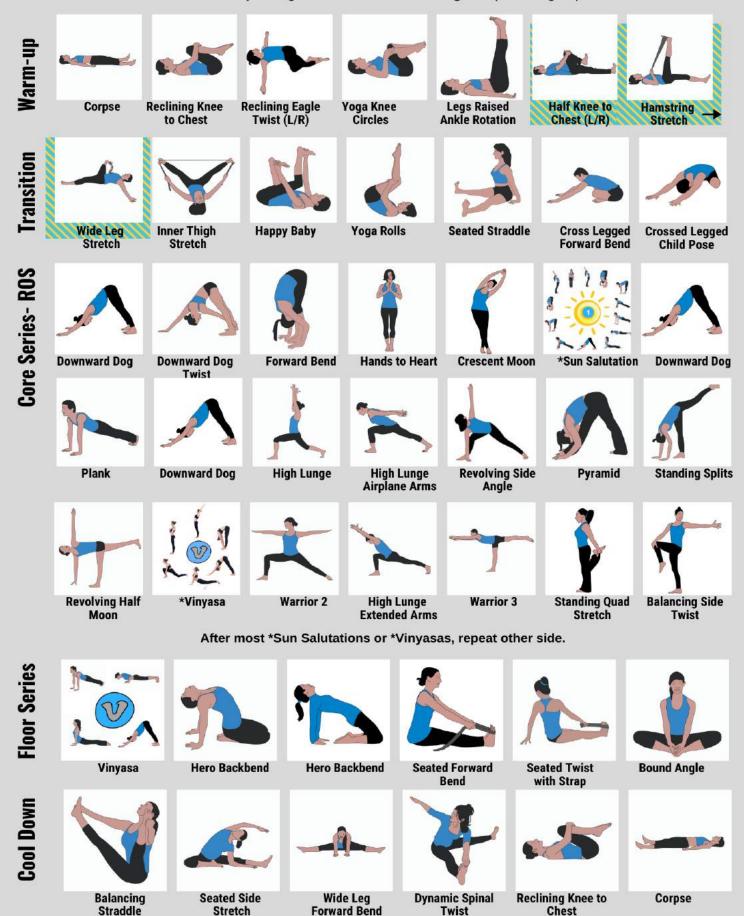


Corpse

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 17- Back, Legs & Core (Unity)



#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 18- Thighs (Strength)



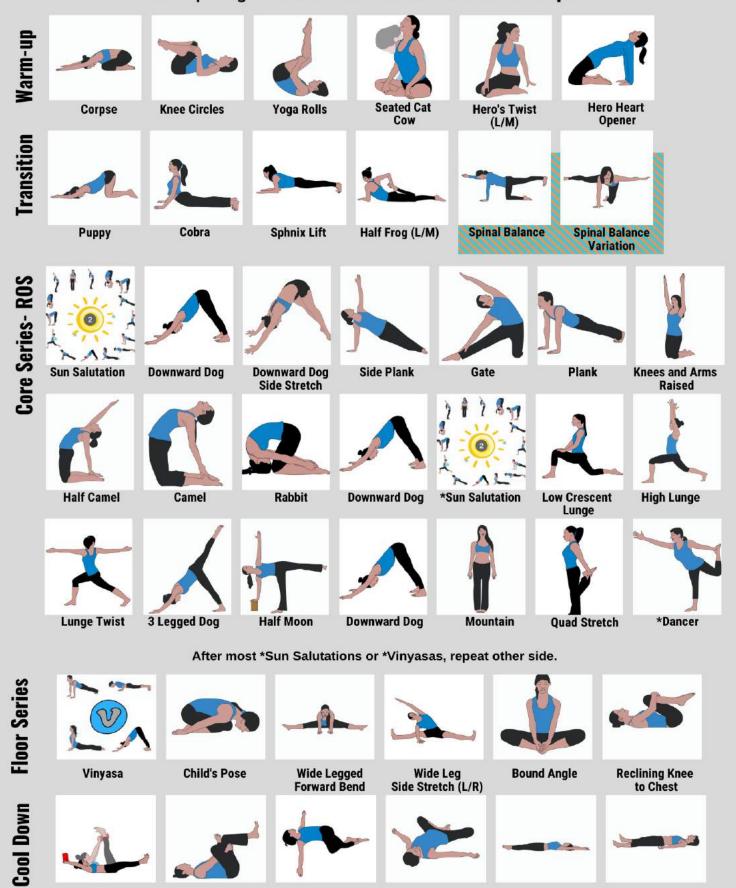
# No Prep Yoga Plans # 19 - Slow Flow (Centering)



After most \*Sun Salutations or \*Vinyasas, repeat other side.



#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 20- Gentle Flow Heart Opener



Yoga Abs

SupineThread

the Needle

**Reclining Eagle** 

**Twist** 

Reclining

Butterfly

**Full Body Stretch** 

Corpse

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 21- Restorative

Restorative poses can be held for several minutes or much longer. Some classes may only do 4 poses for an entire class. If using bolsters and blankets, you will want to reduce the frequency of moving from one posture to the next. You do not have to use these in the order listed but can pick and choose those you'd like to teach. Restorative Class (with or without blocks)

Restorative Series (Some Blocks) **Supported Legs** Seated Forward **Full Body Stretch** Lying Side Corpse Leg Rotation Up the Wall Bend Savsana **Bound Angle Yoga Knee Circles Child Pose Side** Supported Head Child's Pose Reclining Knees Forward Bend to Knee Stretch to Chest Crocodile **Butterfly Up** Supine Twist **Reclining Butterfly Supported Bridge Supine Side Stretch** the Wall **Restorative Series with Support Side Lieing** Restorative **Supported Spinal** Supported **Restorative Twist** Supported Final **Resting Pose Reclining Twist Reverse Twist Twist** Relaxation Restorative Supported **Resting Half Forward Forward Resting** Restorative Child's Pose Forward Straddle **Resting Swan** Butterfly **Forward Bend** Moon

Supported

Bridge

Supported Legs

Up the Wall

Supported Knee

to Chest

Supported

Mountain

Supported

**Bound Angle** 

Supported

Fish

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 22- Core & Arms (Purpose)



After most \*Sun Salutations or \*Vinyasas, repeat other side.



#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 23- Leg, Hips, & Toes (Stability)



Cool Down



#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 24- Full Body Flow (Gratitude)



After most \*Sun Salutations or \*Vinyasas, repeat other side.





Heros Twist



Seated Forward Bend



One Legged Bridge



Reclining Butterfly



Full Body Stretch



Corpse

#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 25 Twist & Inversions (Purpose)



After most \*Sun Salutations or \*Vinyasas, repeat other side.



#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 26- Full Body Flow (Self-Love)



L&R

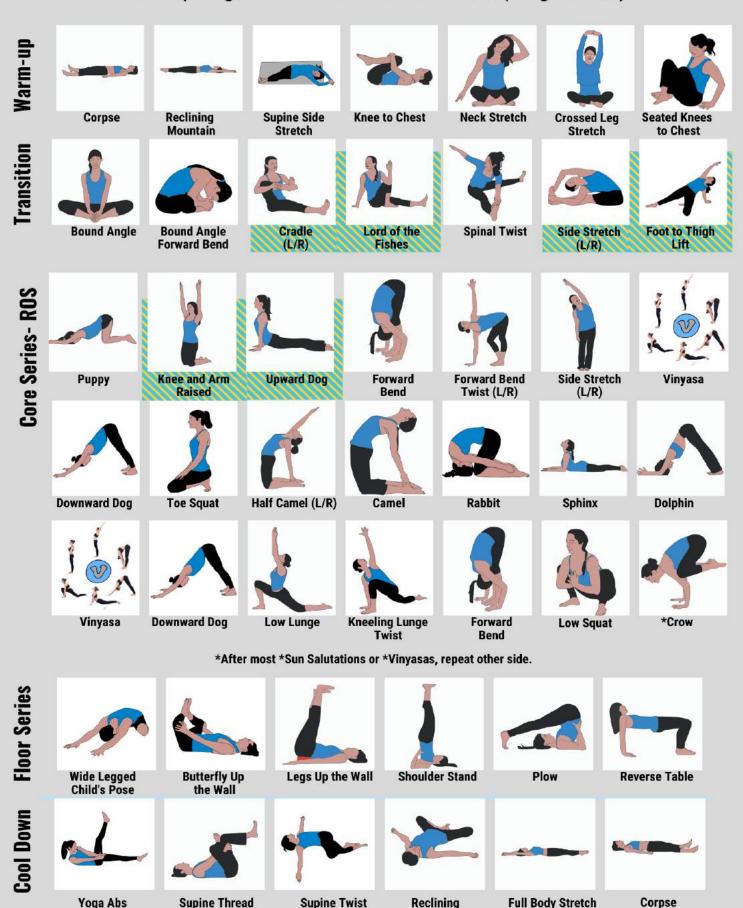
(L/R)

128

# No Prep Yoga Plans # 27- Relaxing Twists & Heart (Acceptance)



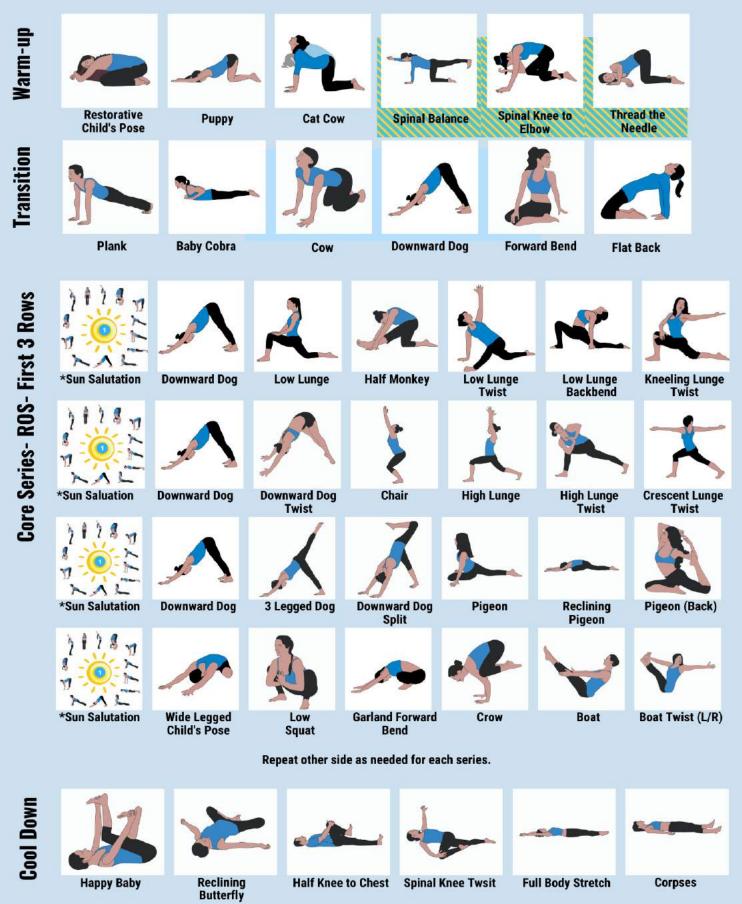
#### No Prep Yoga Plans # 28- Back & Twists (Forgiveness)



Butterfly

the Needle

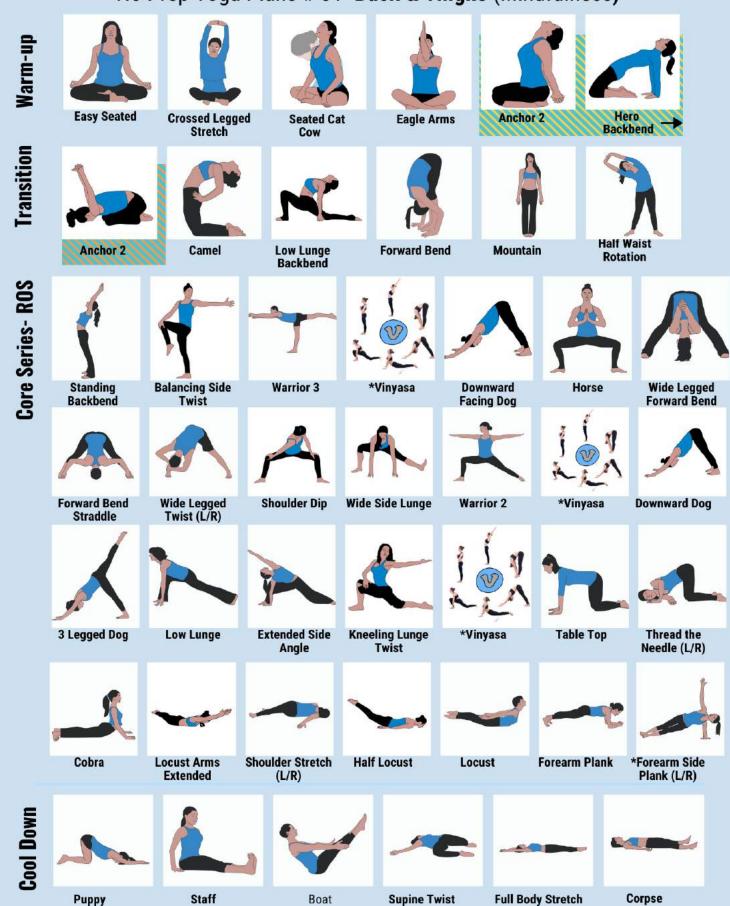
### No Prep Yoga Plans # 29- Energizing Flow (Harmony)



# No Prep Yoga Plans # 30- Full Body Flow (Connection)



#### No Prep Yoga Plans #31-Back & Thighs (Mindfulness)



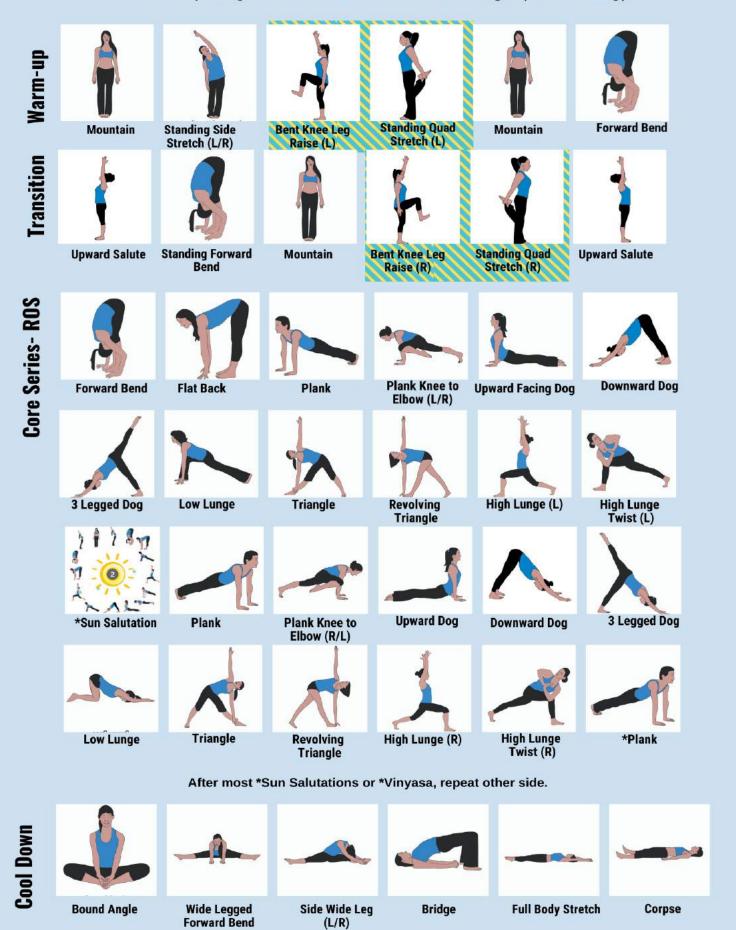
### No Prep Yoga Plans # 32- Stretch It Out (Peace)



Stretch

Rotation

### No Prep Yoga Plans # 33- Balance & Legs (Grounding)



# No Prep Yoga Plans #34 - Thighs & Hips (Forgiveness)



# No Prep Yoga Plans #35 - Shorter Class

Mountain **Upward Salute Crescent Moon Crescent Moon** Vinyasa Vinyasa Right **Transition** Vinyasa **Forward Bend Low Squat Forward Bend** Cat Cow Lion Core Series- ROS **Half Frog Left Half Frog Right** Frog Plank **Downward Dog Seated Hero Heart Opener Seated Eagle Boat with Straps Half Knee to Supine Knee Puppy** Half Knee to **Chest Left Twist Chest Right** Arms **Cool Down Full Body Stretch Supine Knee Twist** Leg Raise Ankle Bridge Reclining Corpse Right Rotation Butterfly

# No Prep Yoga Plans # 36 - Shorter Class













**Core Series** 











Standing Backbend

Standing Backbend

Rag Doll

**Forward Bend Twist Left** 

Rag Doll

**Forward Bend Twist Right** 













**Downward Facing** Dog

**Downward Dog Split** 

**Low Lunge Crescent Left** 

**Kneeling Lunge** 

**Kneeling Lunge** Twist Twist

Vinyasa













**Downward Dog** 

**Downward Dog** Split

**Low Lunge Crescent Right** 

**Kneeling Lunge Twist** 

**Kneeling Lunge** Twist

Vinyasa













**Half Boat** 

**Twisted Boat** (L/R)

**Seated Forward** Bend Twist (L/R)

Reclining Knee to Chest

**Full Body Stretch** 

Corpse



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#### **Meditation Overview for Yoga Teachers**



For years now, meditation has been lauded for its amazing ability to promote mental health, inner balance, stability, and physical health. I learned that the asana practice as a yoga instructor. The physical aspect of yoga was actually created to prepare the body for meditation. With this in mind, it's a wonder more yoga teachers don't incorporate some form of meditation into their classes. I believe there are several reasons for this: 1) Lack of time. Whether you are teaching a 60-75 minute class, cutting it short to lead your students through a guided meditation can be difficult; 2) Although meditation may be covered in teacher trainings, some students aren't receiving enough training and practice to really feel comfortable teaching it to others; 3) To be a truly successful meditation teacher, just like with yoga, you must maintain a personal meditation practice of your own. It's difficult to teach something with which you have little experience. Therefore, in this section, before you engage in conducting a guided meditation with your students, below is an introduction to some common questions that you want to understand. You can share with your students as well. Let's get started!

#### Q: What is guided meditation?

**A:** Meditation is the practice of concentrating the mind on one or more objects, words or phrases, images, deity, or thoughts. It benefits a person's spiritual growth, mental or physical health, and/or emotional well-being.

Guided meditation is a meditation that is narrated by a teacher (you) who guides students into a state of tranquility, relaxation, calmness, release, and/or clarity. Guided meditations are great for new meditators. The teacher tells them what to do and how to make the most of their experience. Many people think that meditation is just sitting quietly and emptying their mind. They do not know or understand the various techniques, methods, or important details on how to meditate. Therefore, many give up prematurely and believe they are unable to meditate. As a yoga teacher, you have a wonderful opportunity to share this life-changing practice with your students and instruct them in the proper way to meditate, so they can develop a practice both on and off their yoga mats.

#### Q: Why meditate? What are the benefits?

**A:** If you have been practicing meditation yourself, you have already experienced its innumerable benefits.

Here are the main ones:

First of all, it is a natural cure for depression and anxiety. In fact, one study stated that it only takes about 20 minutes a day to achieve incredible results.

Another common problem alleviated by meditation is stress because it actually lowers cortisol (the stress hormone).

A consistent meditation practice helps to improvement concentration and memory. Again, just 20 minutes a day can be enough to see improvements in both mnemonic and focus capabilities.

Guided meditation is definitely a wonderful way to be alone with yourself and reflect. Those who meditate have a better understanding of who they are, where they are going, and consequently can make better choices for themselves and others. They can also manage their emotions better, which leads to overall happiness and well-being.

These are just a few of the benefits, but there are many others, such as: increasing productivity, being happier by living in the present moment, enhanced immune system, and reduction of physical pain. I would encourage you to do a little more research on your own to learn about additional benefits you can share with your students.

#### Q: What to do when your mind wanders off during the meditation?

A: Our minds wander off during meditation without exception. You may think about what you need to do after class, or even random thoughts that lead to more random thoughts. This is absolutely normal. When this happens, the best thing to do is just notice the thought and return to your meditation anchor. This can be your breath, a mantra or sacred word, an object or image, or even the voice of the teacher. Having something that anchors your mind during meditation is at the heart of the practice. Your mind will continue to pull you many directions without an anchor. Sometimes, during mindfulness types of meditations, you will observe and notice your thoughts without judgment and let them run their course. Just notice them like words on a chalkboard, until they melt away. Remember that meditation is a journey that you must take one-step at the time. Be patient and caring with yourself and be open to exploring every single facet of your mind and emotions. It's truly fascinating.

#### Q: How do I know if I'm doing it right?

**A:** There is no right or wrong when it comes to meditation and every meditation experience can be very different. Sometimes your mind may rage and seem to never settle down. Other times you will feel so blissful that you never want to leave this state. The only wrong meditation is the one you don't do, so commit to a practice and let the process work for you. You really don't need to do anything more than show up and follow the techniques.

#### Q: I love the guided meditations in class, but how can I keep a daily practice going?

**A:** Commitment is the key to a very successful and meaning meditation practice. In order to keep your daily practice going try to find even 5/10 minutes a day and recreate the meditation you loved in class. Remember that you can customize your meditation session according to your emotions and your feelings of the moment. The most important thing is to keep going, making it a habit, a sweet calming caring moment away from crazy everyday life.

#### Q: How long before I will reap the benefits of meditation?

A: Some will reap the amazing benefits of meditation right away, but for others it may be a matter of time. It's not easy to give an exact answer, as everyone is different. Some people are naturally calmer, have less to worry about, and find it easier to get in touch with their internal self. It also depends on your openness to meditation, the challenges you are facing, and how strong your commitment is to the practice. Naturally, if you fully immerse yourself into the discipline with devotion, an open heart and mind and trust in yourself and your journey, it will be easier to make the most of meditation and you will reap the benefits in a shorter amount of time. Meditation is a wonderful tool that if done regularly it can help you to feel better, connect with your heart and inner life, and live healthier and happier.

#### Question: What do I do when encountering strong emotions when meditating?

Answer: This is the main reason that I believe that working with a skilled meditation coach is so important when learning how to meditate. Depending upon the level of pain, hurt, or denial that a person possesses, when they become still and quiet, these experiences begin to surface. It is much like going on a physical fast. As we stop or limit our food intake, toxins that have been lying dormant within our issues begin to enter into the bloodstream. For many, this may cause flu-like symptoms and discomfort. We are mindful of the limitations we are putting on our body during a fast; therefore, we can take the necessary precautions to complete the fast without harm. During times of meditation and stillness, emotional, mental, and spiritual toxins come to the surface. If we aren't expecting them or don't know how to handle them, fear can creep in or we might attribute these experiences to meditation itself. All meditation does is reveal what is already in a person's mind, body, and heart. If a person has suffered a lot of trauma and needs healing, they made need additional support to work through the feelings that come up. Typically for most people, coaches will encourage beginners to become aware of the feelings, the pain, or the sensations and breathe into them. They may gather them all up with the inhale and releasing them on the exhale. Knowing that these feelings can't hurt you or that it's not some outside entity frightening can restore peace of mind. It is important to understand that what is surfacing is showing up for a reason. It wants you to be healed, to process the pain, and then let it go.

#### **Top 12 Reasons to Meditate**

(Background information that can be shared with your students if desired.)

Meditation is increasing in popularity as many people discover its many benefits. At its most basic level, meditation is the habitual process of training one's mind to redirect and focus the thoughts. The practice has been commonly used to increase people's awareness of their body and their surroundings. Most people think of meditation as a way to develop concentration and reduce stress.

People also practice meditation to develop other forms of beneficial feelings and habits such as positive outlook and mood, healthy sleep patterns, increased pain tolerance, and even self-discipline. In this article, we will take a look at the top 12 health benefits of meditation.

#### 1. Boosts Self Control

Meditation has been proven to be one of the best tools for strengthening self-control. By loose definition, self-control is the ability to control one's emotions, behaviors, thoughts, and actions. This means that the participant has the inherent ability to do things that aren't reactionary or instinctual.

A recent study published in the Current Directions in Psychological Science by Rimma Teper reveals that mindfulness meditation helps participants become much more aware and accepting of the emotional signals, which in turn enable them to better control their behavior.

#### 2. Changes Your Brain

Using modern technology such as MRI scanning, researchers have gained a deeper understanding of what happens in our brains when we meditate. The general finding is that our brain stops processing information and the surroundings as actively as it normally would when we meditate.

The changes that happen in the brain have collective benefits such reduced anxiety, improved focus, more creativity and compassion, better memory, less stress and depression, and emotional stability and positive emotions.

### 3. Enhances Immunity

Meditation has been shown to boost immunity in a number of recovering cancer patients according to a study by Ohio State University. The research revealed that progressive meditation when practiced daily, reduced breast cancer recurrence risk.

A number of other studies have shown that different types of meditation including mindfulness and yoga can strengthen the immune system and make the body resistant to infections and viruses. A 2003 research published in the Psychosomatic Medicine revealed that individuals who practiced mindfulness meditation significantly increased immune function compared to the control group.

### 4. Controls Stress and Anxiety

Reducing stress and anxiety is one of the most common reasons people practice meditation. Physical and mental stress normally causes an increase in levels of a stress hormone known as cortisol. This, in turn, produces the many harmful effects of stress including the release of cytokines, which is an inflammation-promoting chemical. These effects can promote anxiety and depression, disrupt sleep, contribute to cloudy thinking and fatigue, and increase blood pressure.

An eight-week study on "mindfulness meditation" revealed that indeed meditation can reduce inflammatory response triggered by stress. Different studies have also shown that meditation can help improve symptoms of stress-related conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder, irritable bowel syndrome, and fibromyalgia.

Meditation can also be used as a tool to combat anxiety and its related symptoms such as social anxiety, phobias, paranoid thoughts, panic attacks, and obsessive-compulsive behaviors. A study carried out on 2,468 participants also revealed that different forms of meditation strategies might reduce levels of anxiety.

#### 5. Meditation improves memory

Research has revealed that meditation can improve the ability to memorize things and consolidate and store new information. Improved clarity of thinking and attention may keep one's mind young thanks to the type of meditation that combines chant and mantra with repetitive finger motions. Multiple studies have shown that meditation can improve the performance of tasks and even slow down age-related memory loss.

A review of 12 meditation studies also showed that a number of meditation styles can increase memory, mental quickness, and attention in older volunteers. Additionally, meditation can partially improve memory in participants with dementia.

#### 6. Meditation improves focus

Those who would love to acquire razor-edge focus will be happy to learn that meditation can improve cognition and the ability to perform activities that demand enhanced focus. A research tested a number of different types of meditation including Vipassana, Transcendental Meditation, Tibetan Buddhist Meditation, and Hindu Meditation Sufi Meditation, and showed that they all improve mental focus by varying degrees.

Since meditation is the practice of focusing our attention and noticing when it shifts, the practice can actually improve our focus when we aren't meditating as well. The lasting effects can be realized from regular sessions of mindfulness meditation.

#### 7. Decreases Depression and Negative Thoughts

A review study at Johns Hopkins investigated the relationship between mindfulness meditation and one's ability to reduce depression and stress-related symptoms. The research showed that the effect of meditation was at 0.3, which is surprisingly equal to the effect of using antidepressants. As a form of mind training to increase awareness, meditation has been used as a supplement tool in treating patients with chronic depression and stress symptoms.

### 8. Helps Control Pain

Our perception of pain is linked to our state of mind, and this can be elevated during stressful moments. For instance, one research used MRI techniques to monitor the brain activity as volunteers experienced a painful stimulus. One group went through four days of mindfulness meditation while the other acted a control group. The meditating volunteers showed increased activity in the centers of the brain known to control pain. Additionally, they reported reduced sensitivity to pain.

Multiple studies also seem to validate the fact that meditation can reduce the brain's perception of pain. For this reason, meditation has been successfully used to treat chronic pain when practiced as a supplement to physical therapy or medical care. In fact, meditation's ability to reduce physical and mental pain is more powerful than morphine, which is pretty incredible.

#### 9. Makes You Wiser

Meditation allows participants to study their minds and learn ways of controlling their minds and thoughts instead of letting their minds control them. It can be thought of as some kind of mental hygiene that allows participants to clear out the junk, get in touch with their inner self and tune their talents. By clearing their minds, participants get a greater perspective and improve their decision-making framework.

### 10. Improves Heart and Arteries

Meditation has been found to be helpful for the heart in a number of ways. It improves blood circulation and lowers the heart rate, both of which reduce the demand on the heart. A study published in 1998 in the Psychosomatic Medicine Journal revealed that individuals who consistently practiced transcendental meditation (TM) developed lower levels of lipid peroxide compared to those who did not. Lipid peroxide is known to contribute to a variety of chronic diseases such as atherosclerosis.

Another study published in 1999 in the same journal revealed that people who regularly practiced TM showed lower blood pressure right after meditating compared to the control group.

### 11. Increases Happiness and Positive Emotions

Numerous studies have revealed that meditation activates the left side of the cortex responsible for positive emotions while decreasing activity on the right side, which is associated with negative emotions. Some forms of meditation can indeed be used to reduce depression, improve self-image, and cultivate a more positive outlook. Ensuring a consistent habit of meditation is a good way of maintaining these benefits of positive emotions and increased happiness for longer.

## 12. Encourages Healthier Lifestyle

Holistic meditation as a practice promotes a healthy lifestyle and requires a change in some habits. For instance, holistic meditation discourages harmful habits such as alcoholism and smoking. In fact, it has been used by many people to fight alcohol and other forms of addiction with impressive success. On the flip side, meditation encourages eating healthy foods and using natural medications and cosmetics. The overall outcome is a healthier and happier lifestyle.











# 1. Being Grateful Meditation

Length: 8-10 minutes

**Description:** This mindfulness meditation teaches us to be aware of our thoughts and experience gentle detachment. Learning how to maintain a natural rhythm of breath infuses us with gratitude.

Themes: Gratitude, Joy, & Mindfulness

**Meditation Script:** Let's take a couple of moments to focus on deepening the breath as we go into the final phase of our time together today. We start by noticing our breathing and then we allow it to deepen. Breathing profoundly puts us in a beautiful state of relaxation. Noticing the cycle of breath effortlessly attunes us to the natural flow within. As we become aware of the cycle of breath, let's bring ourselves into the present moment. Today, for the next several minutes, let us focus on gratitude.

First, let's all take time to think about what gratitude means to us. Let the thought process here be effortless; allow your thoughts to come and go as they please. Know that if a thought arises, all is well. Notice how thoughts come and go in the field of awareness. [pause]

As you think of what gratitude means to you, know that this word can have different meanings for everyone. You can choose to focus on the things for which you are thankful, on the experiences, people, moments, or places. It would also be nice if you could show some gratitude to yourself. Be thankful for being here, for allowing yourself this time on the mat, and for allowing yourself to be relaxed. Take a few moments to think about what gratitude means to you. [long pause]

As you continue, think about the things you are grateful for today. Take some time to think about the experiences, the people and places that you are thankful for now. Thank yourself for being here in the name of self-love. [long pause] Feel the joy that arises in you with each conscious inhale. As you exhale, permeate your experience with gratitude. Notice the warmth that arises in your body and allow yourself to be at peace. Feel the wholesomeness this reflection has brought to you. [pause]

Take time to be aware of the sensations you may be feeling in your body when reflecting on the things for which you are grateful. [pause]

Look at the thoughts that may appear and allow them to come and go as they please. Practice gentle detachment and always bring your attention back to your breath. Continue to feel the gratitude you have defined for yourself here today. [pause] When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently bring movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. When you are ready, roll to your right side and come to a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, remember your focus and your definition of gratitude. Namaste.











# 2. Releasing Negative Emotions

Length: 10 minutes

**Description:** We are so often plagued by negative thoughts and their accompanied emotions. Using our intention and the breath, this meditation focuses on naming and releasing emotions from body.

Themes: Cleansing, Awareness, Healing

**Meditation Script:** As we go into the final phase of our time together today, let's take a couple of moments to focus on deepening the breath. We begin by noticing the way we are breathing now. Gently, let's begin to deepen our breaths and rest into a profound state of relaxation. Attuning to the cycle of breath is effortless. As you inhale, allow your breath to flood your body. Exhaling during this meditation can be audible and as strong as you feel comfortable. [pause]

As we continue with these cleansing breaths, remember to maintain awareness of your breathing during this meditation. Today let's focus on releasing the negative emotions. The goal of this meditation is to cleanse ourselves of negativity and any negative emotions, which we might have been carrying with us. [pause]

First, let's find a negative emotion that we have experienced recently. Know that this experience or emotion may be different for each of us. Think about the experience that caused negativity in order to identify the emotion. Maybe this was a conflict with a peer or loved one, running late for an appointment, being stuck in traffic, some form of loss, or not engaging in self-care. Take a moment to allow a thought or image to come to your mind. [pause]

As you allow these thoughts to arise, work on identifying the emotion. Take time to remember your feelings and allow yourself, in this moment, to name it. What is its name? Anger? Sadness? Worry? Angst? Fear? Guilt? A combination of the above? Take a few moments to name this emotion. If you cannot find a perfect word for the negative emotion, then give it a simple name. Something to make this emotion tangible for your mind, rather than connected to your heart. [long pause]

After your negative emotion is named, spend time releasing it from your body. We will do this using the breath. On our inhale, think of the name, notice its presence. Do not feel threatened by this named negativity; simply notice its presence in your thoughts.

As you exhale, fully release this negative emotion from your mind and body.

You will continue this cycle for several minutes. Inhale and recognize, exhale and release negativity. [long pause]

On your inhale again, do not feel threatened by this negativity. Simply allow it to be. As your inhale, make space for it. As you exhale, release this negativity. Your exhale can be audible in this phase. Feel the peace come over you as you exhale and notice the negativity leaving your thoughts. A little bit at a time, with each exhale. [long pause]

As you feel the negativity leaving, remember that you possess the power to escort negativity out of your thoughts. If you can name the emotion, you can ask it to leave, with each exhale, with each cleansing breath.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently start bringing movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. When you are ready, roll to your right side and resume a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel the newfound positivity that fills your body and mind. Namaste.











### 3. I Am Grateful

Length: 10-12 minutes

**Description:** Feel gratitude and thankfulness for all the good in your life.

Themes: Gratitude, Peace, Simplicity

**Meditation Script:** Take in a deep breath in and let your mind relax now. Allow your body to melt into your mat. Feel your arms and your legs as they make contact with the ground and let it support you. Follow the rhythm of your chest as it moves up and down. Find appreciation in each new breath as you remember all the things you can be grateful for in your life.

The more gratitude we experience, then the more blessings come into our lives. Let your heart be grateful for the goodness in your life.

In your daily experience, there is much beauty if you only stop to admire it. Reflect upon the little things that bring joy and amazement. Hold on to that image in your mind and smile. [pause]

Allow your mind to relax even more; as you rest within; think about the people in your life who truly love you - friends or family. Hold their image in your mind and feel blessed to share your journey with them. [pause]

Now think about the recent times when someone has shown you random acts of kindness, whether it was a stranger on the street or someone you've known for ages. Let yourself feel the deep richness of gratitude for their kindness. [pause]

Let your mind relax and drift and think about your talents and abilities. Fee gratitude for the skillset you have, for your unique perspective on life, for your heatlh. [pause]

Having an attitude of gratitude helps you feel better and more cheerful every day. Recognize everything that is good in your life, no matter how small it may seem -- the love of a pet, the kindness of a stranger or a neighbor. [pause]

Feel your heart expand with appreciation over all of these simple things. Think of all the blessings in your life and feel so deeply thankful. [pause]

Feeling leads to being, so allow yourself to feel grateful. Let all negativity melt away like an ice cube in the sun. Notice that all that's left is the beauty of being. Feel safe, secure, and at peace. [pause]

Now, gently let go of anything in the past that gets in the way of you feeling and experiencing gratitude. Let go of the things that don't allow your natural flow. [pause]

Your subconscious mind knows exactly how to shift your mind, gently, so that you can easily recognize the things you have to be grateful for in your life.

This new way of being allows you to see the positive in life. Let yourself appreciate all that has unfolded in your life.

Turn your thoughts inward and allow yourself to think of all the things you have accomplished in life and feel proud, happy, and grateful. [pause]

Allow yourself to feel grateful for all the support you have received from Spirit. Embrace all the goodness of life, and all divine order has for you. Open your heart and soul to gratitude. [pause]

Acknowledge your life as a gift and give thanks for it; allow yourself to joyfully open your heart to gratitude. Allow every part of you, every inch of your mind, body, and spirit to be permeated with the energy of gratitude. [pause]

Take a breath and release any stress or tension. Release discontentment and worry. [pause]

Take a few more moments to feel the good in life and give thanks for it, allowing it to expand and create more. With a heart brimming with joy, you allow your gratitude to soar. [pause]

Begin to wiggle your fingers and toes when you are ready. Slowly bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. When you are ready, roll to your right sight and come to a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel the newfound positivity that has filled your thoughts. Namaste.











#### 4. Self-Love Meditation

Length: 20-25 minutes

**Description:** Love heals. Use the power of love to transform sadness, anxiety, and any other uncomfortable emotions and then extend that love energy to those around you.

Themes: Self-love, Healing, Cleansing

**Meditation Script:** Focus your attention on your thoughts. How spacious does your mind feel today? Inhale slowly and deeply. Hold it in for a moment and then gently exhale. Just allow any tension or anxiety to melt away as you gradually relax more and more. Take another slow deep breath in, hold it, and release. Empty your lungs completely with your out-breath. Take in one more deep breath, hold it for a moment, and then let it go. You are relaxed, comfortable, and drifting into a state of relaxation, as we begin our **Self-Love meditation** today.

Do you have a lot of thoughts moving around, maybe one or two heavy thoughts that refuse to go away? On the other hand, do you find it easy to rest in a state of deep relaxation? Whatever surfaces let it come. Express gratitude to the thought for making itself known with a gentle and calm intention; then, give it permission to move on.

Turn your mind to the emotional sensations rising from the thoughts. Are you anxious about the rest of the day? Are you worried about your to-do list? Are you calm and relaxed in this space right now? Let go of everything that is not you now.

Let go of the practice we just shared. Let go of your titles: mother, sister, friend, employee, or spouse. Right now, you are just here. There is nowhere else to be. Allow the surfacing of the thoughts and emotions to be two separate events. The emotions do not have to follow the thoughts. The thoughts do not have to respond to the emotions. Allow the thoughts to come and allow the emotions to rise. Thank them for coming to your attention, and then let them go. [pause]

Bring your attention to a time when you felt loved and cared for, safe and valued. Maybe it was with a friend or loved one. Maybe it was with a pet or on a holiday. Relive the experience as though it were happening right now. It's okay if the thoughts keep coming; let them. Then gently draw your attention back to your memory. Indulge in the emotion of that memory. Really embrace the feeling of love. Let it wash over you. [pause]

Other emotions may rise. Greet them gently and let them pass. Allow the sensation of love to be a focal point. Keep your attention on it. Let the thoughts and emotions pass around it like moths to a light. They are separate from the light no matter how closely they touch it. They come, and they go, and the light does not waiver. Recall your memory of love and safety. Relive it in vivid detail. Let every thought and emotion soak up the love. Let every thought and emotion be filled up and free to move on. [pause]

Continue to meet your thoughts with gentleness. Continue to recall your memory and live it now. Bring the sensation of love to the center of your chest. It is no longer a memory but is now available to you anytime you need it. You feel loved, you feel safe, and you feel valued. As each thought comes, share a piece of that love with them. Your chest is full of love; your mind is slow and gentle. Each thought connects your mind and heart to a deep state of love, safety, and acceptance. [pause]

Let the thoughts come slowly. Begin to indulge in the space between the thoughts. There is so much space within you. Connect to that spaciousness. Relax into it. You are well rested. You are safe. You are loved. No thought is more powerful than your ability to relax in this moment. No worry is more powerful than the love you hold inside you at this moment. It may be for thirty seconds, or it may be for one second. Take full advantage of the time of stillness, no matter how short it is. Perhaps there are no breaks between thoughts; nevertheless, continue to meet them with love. Meet yourself with acceptance; do not be harsh with yourself if you do not have the space between your thoughts yet. This is a natural process that can take some time. Just relax into this space of love, welcoming this place of stillness. You have all of the time you need. You have all the love you need. [pause]

It is common in the yoga community to think we should be happy all of the time. This is not true and is not attainable. Let that expectation go right now if you have been pressuring yourself to only feel positive emotions. [pause]

Love does not mean happiness; love does not mean always smiling. Love is total acceptance. If you are happy, then there is love. If you are sad then there is love. If there is an emotion you have been fighting or pushing away, embrace it here. [pause]

Allow it space and room to be. Allow it the right to exist with you as you indulge in the sensation of love. Whatever emotions you are feeling, allow them to have a voice; then, allow them to accept your love. Name the emotion that comes to mind. If it is love, let it be love. If it is sadness, let it be sadness. Whatever you are feeling, let it come and give it a name. Extend love to it and allow it to sit with you. [pause]

Anger, sadness, frustration, hope, joy, sorrow, worry, anxiety, anticipation, impatience, perfectionism - they are all welcomed here. This place is safe. This place is overflowing with the love coming from your availability to stay with yourself. Give yourself permission to feel whatever arises. Give yourself the privilege of meeting it with gentleness. You may remember a memory where someone was gentle to you, or one where you wished you had been shown gentleness. Give your emotions the same treatment. Give yourself this time to gently embrace everything inside of you. [pause]

Recall the sensation of love in your chest. Briefly recall your memory of love if needed. Begin to extend the love from your chest to your whole self. Meet yourself with the same gentleness you have been extending to your thoughts and emotions. Begin to use your name. You can mindfully repeat after me, adding your name instead. Your name is loved and safe. [pause]

Your name has my permission to feel everything she/he is feeling.

Your name will continue to feel loved and safe no matter with what she/he is faced. Call to mind a time when things went really well for you. Extend your love to it...

Call to mind a time when things went really poorly for you. Extend the same love to it. Give it the same love that you would extend to a great experience...

Continue to bring things to mind that have happened to you. Good things, bad things. Things that went well, things you wish had gone differently. Meet them all with the same level of love. Be engulfed in love. Let every thought and memory be filled with love. [pause]

Bring your attention back to this room as you experience this fullness. Bring your focus back to your physical body. Begin to sense for the person closest to you. Direct some of your love towards them. This may be with a kind thought, with a wish for their day to go well, or maybe just the raw emotion overflowing from your center. Your love does not run out; it will never dry up. Recall your memory, if needed, and pull the sensation of love into your chest, into the room right now. Then share it. Spread it to your neighbor, and then your other neighbor. Fill the room with your gentleness and love. [pause]

Carry this with you throughout your day. Each time you share your love, it is brought back to you doubled. Each time you share love; more love is moving through you. Think of someone in the room, or a friend or relative that needs your love and gentleness. As you extend these sensations of safety and love, feel it returning to you doubled. [pause]

In all things you do, there is love available. Keep this love close to you, and whenever it waivers, draw more from your memories of safety and light. You are always a few thoughts away from love and safety.

"You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection." – Buddha

As we draw our meditation to a close, inhale deeply two more times. Hold it and gently release. You are now ready to bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as needed. Begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right side and resume a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, you are ready to share your newfound positivity and acceptance with the world. Your heart is smiling, and you are smiling back. Namaste.











# 5. Manifesting Your Ideal Self Meditation

Length: 20 minutes

**Description**: Use this meditation to bring out the best attributes and situations you

want for yourself.

Themes: Change, Awakening, Self-love

**Meditation Script**: Relax your shoulders. Begin to breathe in slowly through your nose and out through your mouth. [pause] Ease back into your normal breathing pattern, and just allow your breathing to unfold. Let any thoughts drift in and out of your mind. Imagine each thought as a leaf flowing downstream. Notice it, observe it, and then let it go. Let the current take them away, further and further from your consciousness. Feel peace and calm wash over you with every cycle of your breath, ushering you gently into a deeper relaxation as I guide you through this **Manifesting Your Ideal Self-Meditation** today.

While your eyes are closed, and your body is heavy, feel your thoughts move through your mind. This process happens all day long, but we barely notice them. Do they move quickly? Do some of them stick? Do they linger or are they too fast to hold onto? Notice them as they move through your mind. [pause]

Now try counting your thoughts. Count them as they come. Start at one and, if you lose track, start over and begin again. [pause]

It does not matter how high or low your number is. Just observe them like writing on a chalkboard. Do not stop them or hurry them along. Let this be a passive and gentle exercise. One thought, two thoughts, three thoughts. [pause]

Begin to count them now in a pattern, like the rungs of a ladder. As you count, imagine they are leading you up towards the sky. There is no fear of heights; there is no fatigue of the body. Each thought brings you one-step higher up the ladder.

It's okay if you do not make it more than a few steps up before you are distracted. Keep returning to the first rung. One thought, two thoughts, three thoughts. Start your ascension now. [pause]

As you climb the ladder, you begin to reach the top. At the top is a platform that brings you comfort and ease. Perhaps it is your favorite vacation spot, or maybe a sunny meadow with a shady tree. Maybe it is your bed or this yoga studio. Picture the details around you and allow it to relax your mind. [pause]

There is also another version of yourself within this place. This version of you has attributes that you desire to see in yourself. Maybe this version of you is brave, kind or gentle; maybe it is full of love. Whatever you chose, this mirror image of you takes on these attributes. Maybe this version of you has that job you've been wanting. Maybe it has the family for which you have been wishing. Maybe this version is free of sickness or debt. This version of you is not limited to one choice and may be altered as new desires arise. Look at this version of yourself. What does he or she look like? [pause]

Does this new you take on these traits easily? Does this easiness make you feel jealous? Or does your heart feel joyful as you see the eagerness to take on what feels short in your life? Do you wish this was you? Or are you glad you move at a slower pace? Bring to mind one attribute you wish to have and watch the changes. [pause]

Was the change fast? Was it easy for you? Bring to mind one more trait and observe it. Try to feel what this "best version of you" is feeling. Try to imagine taking on the changes this best version of you is eagerly welcoming in. [pause]

Think of one more trait. This new you will have three of your most desired traits or changes. Keep these three things in mind for the time we have now. You may change them later, but for now, keep them close to your thoughts. [pause]

As this ideal you take on your most desired traits, you begin to approach the ladder and find it is wide enough for both of you to climb down together. You are far apart on the top rung. This best version of you is glowing with their new attributes. You are closer together on the fourth rung. Your ideal self smiles so gently at you; you can tell he or she is fulfilled and confident. You brush against each other on the third rung. Your ideal self feels warm to the touch and completely relaxed. You begin to overlap on the second rung. Your best self begins to become you, and you become them. You are completely united on the first rung. You are these new attributes. You are glowing, fulfilled, confident, warm, and completely relaxed. As you place your foot on the ground beneath you, you are the best version of yourself. You are everything you have always wanted to have. [pause]

You are brave, you are kind, you are honest; you are loved. See yourself shining with these attributes, as you have the things you wish to have. There are no desires unfulfilled. See yourself as this person. Be this person now. [pause]

Choose one of your three attributes or life changes. Picture it clearly in your mind. [pause]

Call this attribute, this gift, to the forefront of your thoughts. This is the beginning of the new you. Express gratitude to it for coming to you so plainly and simply. Express gratitude to yourself for accepting it so calmly and openly. You can express this emotion, mentally saying words thank you; or you can thank God, a higher power, divine love, or the universe. [pause]

However, you choose to express your gratitude. Do it sincerely with the belief that this attribute or life change is here right now, and that your gratitude is a response to its presence. [pause]

Choose another of your three attributes or life changes. Picture it clearly in your mind. [pause]

This attribute or change is the epicenter of the new you. On this change, others will respond. Express gratitude to it for coming to balance you, to fulfill you. Express gratitude to yourself for being confident that you can handle this attribute with grace and ease. Again, you can express this emotion, mentally saying thank you, or thanking God, a higher power, divine love, or the universe. Remain sincere, with the belief that this attribute or life change is here right now, and that your gratitude is a response to its presence. [pause]

Choose the last of the three attributes or life changes. See it clearly in your mind. [pause]

This last trait is the seal of your new changes. This trait protects others so that they cannot be taken away from you. You are in awe. You are whole and abundant. The story of you is now rewritten. Express gratitude to yourself for allowing this happiness and change to move through you. Express this sincerely, mentally saying words of thanks. Know that you have been blessed with this attribute or life change here and now. Your gratitude makes this life change last forever. [pause]

Allow the gratitude and new attributes you have taken on to fill your mind and body. You are a new person. Every obstacle that comes your way is there to strengthen your bond with these new traits. Every person you meet is reinforcing the best version of yourself. Every thought you have builds up the new you. Nothing can separate you from this blessed version of yourself. See yourself being challenged; see yourself being loved. See yourself moving throughout your day and remaining this new, shining version of yourself. [pause]

You are happy, you are loved, and you are now equipped to manifest these desires any time you need them. Express gratitude for these changes. Think about them often, contemplate them. Change is always within your power, and you now have a place to make these changes in safety and without judgment. [pause]

Take two more deep breaths in and release. As we prepare to close this session, take some time to wake up your body. When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to reconnect to your physical body. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel the newfound positivity that has filled your thoughts. Namaste.











# 6. Letting Go of Fear Meditation

Length: 15 minutes

**Description:** We can experience peace in the midst of uncertainty and chaos if we

open our hearts to love and faith instead of fear.

Themes: Cleansing, Faith, Freedom

**Meditation Script:** Let go and allow yourself to be relaxed and comfortable. Imagine your body being enveloped in a soothing blanket of peace and relaxation. Let all anxiety wash away, out of your mind...out of your spirit...out of your heart. Just relax and simply be. [pause] Now listen to the sound of my voice, as I guide you through the **Letting Go of Fear** meditation.

Have you ever been tormented by fear lately? The fear of lack, the fear of others, the fear of change, or the fear of not being good enough? I'm sure you have. However, when we believe in love and divine order, we can trust that all of our needs: mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual, are being met, and all things are working together for our highest good. When we believe in love, we can surrender and relinquish control. We can find peace in the chaos around us. Take in a deep breath and exhale. Feel the peace surrounding you now. [pause] Letting go of fear involves releasing old ideas or thoughts that promote scarcity, separation, pain, and harm. [pause]

Faith is the opposite of fear. In fact, the acronym of fear stands for false evidence appearing real. Statistics tell us that 90% of the things most people worry about never happen. There is so much wasted energy that could be put into affirming thoughts and words that build us up instead of tearing us down. Think about a time recently that you allowed fear to take over you. [pause]

Now reflect upon that fear. What did fear help you accomplish? Did fearing or worrying about a situation make it better? Did it solve the problem? Or did it just cause more pain and confusion? Inhale now and let it all go. [pause]

If our thoughts become our reality, how important is it for us to exchange negative or destructive thoughts for positive ones? One of my favorite quotes in the Bible reads, "As a man thinks in his heart so is he." It is important to recognize our fear-based thoughts, because we can attract the very things we don't want to happen. Is there anything in your life that you may have created with your negative thinking? [pause] Take a long breath in and release it now. [long pause]

Our thoughts can also heal. We can use our thoughts to bring healing to every aspect of our being. We can declare everyday: I am whole; I am healed; I am at peace. Take a few moments to breathe in each affirmative statement: Inhale: I am whole. [pause] Inhale: I am healed. [pause] Inhale: I am at peace. [pause]

We can operate in true freedom when we are able to let go of all the old patterns, mindsets, and emotions standing in the way of the good in our lives. Take a few cleansing breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth, releasing any fear-based energy that may have been stuck in your body. [pause]

Take another deep breath in and as you exhale, letting go of all heavy or burdensome cloaks that have weighed you down or that have taken you prisoner. As you breathe, feel your body becoming lighter. Experience that natural freedom that comes with conscious breathing. [pause]

No matter what may be going on in the outside world, you can feel relaxed and comfortable. By keeping your heart open to love and faith, doors of opportunity that you never thought possible can open up to you. When you wake up in the morning, cast aside any thoughts that attempt to bring you down or insert doubt into your dreams. Instead, affirm all the positive things that are going to happen to you today! Don't worry if you don't get everything you want right away. By acknowledging and being grateful for the good in your life right now, you can't help but to create more of it. Reflect upon some things you'd like in your life. Feel grateful and excited about the possibilities before you. [longer pause]

Whenever you start to think about something from your past that burdens you, automatically shift your attention away from those thoughts. Instead, bring your attention to something good and something pleasant. Or, just bring your attention to your breath and the present moment. If you feel any strong emotions associated with these thoughts, acknowledge them, and take in a few cleansing breaths. Try it now. [pause]

Right now, give your mind the OK to release old mind patterns, old thoughts, old feelings, old fears, and old hurts. Give it permission to dissolve them, to remove them from your mind gently and safely, but permanently. You might say something like, "Thoughts of \_\_\_\_\_I no longer need you. I am choosing faith and love over fear. I command you to go. Try it now. [pause]

From this moment and onward, begin to experience more joy in your life. Every day look closely to see the good and the beauty this world offers. Yes, there is a lot of chaos and bad things going on, but you can choose to focus on the good, for what you focus on grows. Let go of all the ways you are shackled to your past. In your imagination, see yourself loosening any chains around your ankles, wrists, or neck. Freedom is yours if you choose it. [short pause]

Trust your heart. Trust in the power of love. Have faith to accomplish all your goals and dreams. Think about them, talk about them, and meditate on them if you want them to manifest. Release all striving, urgency, and excessive pursuing. Your heart already knows what to do, then just be still and listen. Listen now. What do you hear? [long pause]

Take in one or two deep rounds of breath as we draw our meditation time to a close. When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel the newfound positivity that has filled your thoughts. Namaste.











# 7. Floating on a Cloud Meditation

Length: 5-10 minutes

**Description:** Take a break from life to float on a cloud and journey to your favorite places to

enjoy a little peace and relaxation.

Themes: Peace, Joy, Present Moment

**Meditation Script:** Settle comfortably on your mat. Your back is straight, your spine tall and erect. Close your eyes and inhale slowly. Allow your breath to flow freely. Now take a deep breath in through the nose and hold it (pause three counts). Release it and let it go. Inhale deeply again and hold it (pause three counts); exhale. Let every muscle in your body relax and unwind. Whatever thoughts show up, notice them with gentle detachment. Let them dissolve and fade away as I guide you through today's meditation, **Floating on a Cloud.** 

Picture a large fluffy cloud. See yourself floating through the sky on this beautiful cloud. Notice how soft that cloud feels as it rises higher and higher in the sky.

Just let yourself be carried away and enjoy the ride.

You're floating ... drifting. And it feels wonderful. [long pause]

Your body feels very comfortable as it moves through the sky. The sun is warming your body. Above, the sky is sunny and blue.

Imagine the scene beneath you. It can be anything you like. You can float to a familiar place, or you can imagine somewhere new and exotic.

All you need to do is enjoy the ride. Notice how relaxed you are. It's as if the sunshine has washed away all of the tension in your body.

Enjoy all the sights below. Is there grass and a forest, or are there tall buildings with bright lights? Notice how you feel; is there a light breeze? Do you feel the cloud moving? You let yourself be carried along, feeling so relaxed.

You keep rising higher. Other clouds are now beneath you. The sun feels even warmer and more vibrant against your skin. What a glorious feeling.

Let yourself drift wherever you desire. There are tall mountains ahead. You can float above them. Or you can drift over the ocean with its shimmering silver waves.

All you need to do is enjoy this beautiful ride as you float through the sky.

When you are ready, the soft white cloud will take you home. It knows where to go as it drifts lower to the ground. Watch the cloud disappear as you return safely to where you need to be.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breathing as we prepare to draw our meditation time to a close. Allow yourself to awaken. Open your eyes and notice where you are. Notice how refreshed and relaxed you feel.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes, bringing movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel the newfound positivity that has filled your thoughts. Namaste.











## 8. Be Happy Meditation

Length: 8-10 minutes

**Description**: Infuse your heart, body and mind with happiness. Smiling from your

heart invites blessings into your life.

Themes: Joy, Peace, Contentment

**Meditation Script**: Close your eyes. Inhale deeply and then let it out. Notice any tension behind your eyes, your jaw or your forehead. Relax those muscles. Relax your cheeks and your mouth. Relax your upper body and arms. Now relax your lower body, including your legs and feet. Feel any weights, tension, or stress pull downward, leaving your body and sinking into the earth beneath you. Take a few more moments to rest in the silence and stillness. [pause] Listen to my voice as I guide you through this **Be Happy Meditation**.

Notice how good you are feeling.

Allow your mind to hold a pleasant thought. Think about someone you love or focus on a happy occasion. [pause]

Let your mouth create a smile. [pause]

If there is any tension in your body, let your smile melt it away. Just smile into any tight muscles. A smile is stronger than any tension.

Let the smile move through each part of your body until you are totally relaxed.

- 1. Focus on your liver and dissolve resentment and anger. [pause]
- 2. Shift your smile to your kidneys and feel any fear melt away. [pause]
- 3. As you smile at your lungs, let go of feelings of sadness. [pause]
- Focus on your stomach and let anxiety dissolve. Unclench any tight stomach muscles.
   [pause]

Notice how good relaxation feels. [pause]

Now, continue smiling and become aware of your heart. Feel the energy coming from your heart. [pause]

While enjoying this relaxed state, repeat to yourself: [pause after each one]

- 1. I am happy, no matter what happens.
- 2. It is easy to smile and be happy.
- 3. I create my happiness every day.

- 4. I can be happy whenever I choose to be happy.
- 5. My world is better when I smile.

Return your awareness to your face. Are you happier than you were earlier? [pause]

Take in one or two deep rounds of breathing as we draw our meditation time to a close. [pause]

Open your eyes and enjoy how you are feeling.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently bring movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel joyful and relaxed. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer. One long deep breath in and exhale. Namaste.











## 9. Abundance Fills My Life Meditation

Length: 5-8 minutes

**Description**: Affirm abundance in all areas of your life.

Themes: Abundance, Health, Gratitude

**Meditation Script**: Close your eyes and inhale a deep breath. Hold your breath for a few seconds and exhale. [pause]

Inhale again. As you breathe in, become aware of how healthy and alive you are. Exhale.

Breathe in and tighten your face muscles. Squeeze your eyes and mouth. Tighten all the muscles in your face. Hold your breath for a moment, and then breathe out as you let your face muscles relax. [pause]

Breathe in. Tighten the fingers in both hands and squeeze them into a tight fist. Wait a moment, and then exhale. Relax your hands. [pause]

Breathe in. Tighten your stomach, buttocks, and the muscles in your hips. Hold it for a moment, and then exhale. [pause]

Breathe in. Tighten your leg muscles. Hold it for a moment, and then exhale. Notice how relaxed your body is. [pause]

Repeat the following: [pausing after each one]

Everything in my life is as it should be.

I am one with the divine spirit.

I draw energy from the divine, so I can create the perfect life.

My relationships are strong.

My health is glowing. I accept my body.

I support my body by eating well and exercising.

My body is a wonderful gift.

I attract everything I need. The universe keeps giving back to me, as I trust in its love and goodness.

While I enjoy divine abundance, I let go of thoughts that don't benefit me or that are holding me back. I release sadness, grief, and judgment. I am free to move forward.

Creativity flows through me. My creative spirit allows me to be successful in whatever I do.

I feel grateful for the abundance in the universe. I have friends, shelter, and food that benefit me.

My heart is open to love. Divine Order provides me with an abundance of love, which I return to others. I feel connected to the universe every day. There is no place in the universe for loneliness.

Being connected to Spirit brings me an abundance of inner peace. Love allows me to move forward, and there is no resentment to hold me back. I trust that Divine Order to know what is best. I easily forgive those who have tried to harm me. I accept myself and keep moving on.

The abundance in my life is a blessing, and I am grateful each day. I have compassion for myself and for others. Joy fills my heart and is a natural part of my life.

The universe has provided everything I need, and I celebrate each day.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breaths, as we draw our meditation time to a close. [pause]

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes, and gently bring movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel joyful and relaxed. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer and smile. One long deep breath in and exhale. Namaste.











## 10. My Secret Place Meditation

Length: 5-8 minutes

**Description**: Take a trip to your secret place and meditate on the best of who you already are.

Themes: Peace, Self-love, Spirit

**Meditation Script:** Inhale deeply. As you exhale, let all the tension leave your body. Breathe in calming, clean air as you inhale.

Focus on any stubborn tension remaining in your body. As you inhale, breathe healing air into those areas. [pause]

Now, imagine a place where you feel safe, calm, and happy. It is a beautiful place. It can be somewhere you know or an imaginary place.

Really visualize your place. All the colors and sounds. How does it make you feel?

Enjoy how wonderful you feel in this secret place. You are safe and at peace.

You become aware that you can feel this good any time you chose. Repeat to yourself: [pause after each one]

- 1. I feel totally at peace.
- 2. I am perfect just the way I am.
- 3. I love myself.
- 4. I deserve to feel good about myself.
- 5. I embrace who I am.
- 6. My life has boundless possibilities.
- 7. I control my future.
- 8. I love myself.
- 9. I am not my mistakes. I learn from them and move on.
- 10. I am a good person, even if I make a mistake. Everyone makes mistakes.
- 11. I accept my flaws.
- 12. I enjoy my strengths.
- 13. I handle problems to the best of my ability
- 14. I love who I am.
- 15. I feel no need to compare myself to anyone else.
- 16. I love myself.

Take a look around your wonderful, secret place. Know that you can come here anytime you want to feel calm and safe. Take these feelings with you as you carry on with your day. This is the way you deserve to feel.

You are now ready to leave your place.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breaths as we draw our meditation time to a close.

Open your eyes and love who you are.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently, bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. Feel joyful and relaxed as you leave this meditation today. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer. One long deep breath in; exhale. Namaste.











# 11. Changing Seasons in Life Meditation

Length: 15-20 minutes

**Description:** Change and moving through the different seasons of life can be a bit scary, but it doesn't have to be. This meditation illustrates how the change and new seasons can bring new blessings and opportunities.

Themes: Change, Trust

**Meditation Script:** Just let your body rest – becoming completely at ease. Drift in a perfect place of mental relaxation – and physical relaxation.

Notice the natural rhythm of your breath. Surrender to a profound state of relaxation. Let it take over and go with it. Focus within and welcome this sense of peace.

You are free to do as you please. You can drift in your own space and strengthen your focus on your breath. Or you can follow my voice and allow it to guide you even deeper.

You are aligned with the Earth, and its rhythm. The rhythms of the Earth – like the rhythm of your breath, your heartbeat, or the rhythm of day and night, can teach you valuable lessons about the fluctuating nature of things. The sun rising and setting; the rhythm of the moon that waxes and wanes; the changing rhythm of the seasons – wintery coldness, warming to spring, summer heat cooling again in autumn. Contemplate on these changes and know that you are part of them.

Your rhythms, just like the Earth's rhythms, release one thing and open to another. Think about the moon releasing her light to take on shadow – and the dark of the moon, that turns toward growing light again.

And that sweet sense of melancholy in the autumn, when the leaves turn brown, and fall – gently to the ground. That sense of loss and ending and knowing autumn will change, too. The sense of loss will give way to the stillness of winter – and then, the return of light and life in the spring – one change making the next change possible.

As you breathe, can you feel your own rhythm? And on your next breath – can you open to change, in your own life? Your in-breath brings in oxygen, and what is new – your out-breath lets go what you no longer need. Change with every breath.

Change in your own life, so that you can move as gracefully as the seasons. On your next breath – feel the breath and know that you are wise. From all the experiences of your life, you have learned from your mistakes. And you are at a place in your life when you know what you want, and how to care for yourself. The wisdom you've earned in your life guides you through change.

And on your next breath, if you will – feel the breath fill you. Know that you are strong in your body. Strong in your understanding of who you are. Your strength guides you through the changes in your life.

Your strength and wisdom support you as you go from one season to the next.

On your next breath – can you connect to your sense of trust? Trust that the universe is sending you just what you need – in each and every moment – to grow and be fulfilled.

Even if you cannot see the reason for change – even when you cannot fully welcome it – you hold a sense of trust. You trust the change will bring good things, even if you can't see them yet.

Maybe you remember a time in your life when something changed – when something you wanted something that didn't happen for you. Or, a relationship you valued ended. At that time, you were filled with regret and sorrow. And then – in a year's time, or two – you looked back and realized that the change was a good thing in your life, even though you hadn't been able to recognize it then.

Can you remember such a time in your life when something you didn't want to change, but it did change? Were you glad at that time? [long pause] Like the leaves that fall in autumn – leaving the trees bare – and making space for the new leaves that come in the spring.

Time spent with your relaxed breathing, and your body, is calming and peaceful. On your next breath, if you will —return to the sense of calm and peace that you feel right now. It feels as though change moves you off balance.

Move through the changes in your life as gracefully as you move through the seasons.

Honor yourself for taking this time with your body and your breath. Take this time to strengthen yourself. Feel your connection to your body – and to the Earth – and to peace.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breath as we draw our meditation time to a close.

Open your eyes and love who you are.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes; bring movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel joyful and relaxed. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer and be grateful for the changes in your life. One long deep breath in; and exhale. Namaste.











# 12. Forgiving Your Past Meditation

Length: 15-20 minutes

**Description**: Holding onto the past can cast a heavy burden on your heart. Define those things

standing in the way of your peace of mind and release them today.

Themes: Letting Go, Love, Peace

**Meditation Script:** Get settled and comfortable in your easy-seated position. Your back should be straight while your shoulders are relaxed. The mind is calm. Rest now in this place of absolute ease and peace, noticing how much stillness there is in your body. How does it feel to be at harmony...?

Your breath is holding you. The mat and the floor – supporting you. Each breath is taking place in a setting of peace. Tranquility.

It may be that this peace is so wonderful for you. You set as your intent that nothing will get in the way of it. Letting nothing get in the way of your peace of mind. And if you wanted, you could even take that as your mantra, for this meditation: "Nothing is worth the price of my peace of mind. Peace is mine."

Drifting on that wave of peace, and ease. Drifting on your breath. And knowing that – if you choose – you can listen to my voice and the suggestions that are right for you. And if you want, you can listen – without any emotional attachment at all. Emotions are a rich source of information. They connect us to our world and to others. Sometimes it's so good to just float or drift, free of emotion.

If you want – you can imagine you are somewhere that the wind is blowing – a brisk wind. You are holding on to a ribbon that represents your emotions. You can lift your hand and let the wind just pull the ribbon away from you, out and up. The ribbon turns in the wind as it spins away from you – growing smaller, and just disappearing.

Can you open your heart to forgiving yourself from this place of peace while knowing that nothing can disturb it? Just open your heart to forgiveness. You don't even need to know what you are forgiving. In this peaceful place, you may find that it is easy to forgive yourself. For the things you did in the past. (pause) Regrets you've had. (pause) For things you didn't do. (pause)

Forgiveness only makes sense, doesn't it? Because those regrets are all in the past. Nothing changes the past. Staying with those regrets. Rather, it just keeps you away from those perfect present moments - like this one.

You came here to give yourself the gift of this time, and to give your body the gift of movement. To dwell in the present moment – as you practiced. And breathed.

Now can you give yourself one more gift? That is to forgive yourself for anything and everything in the past. You can decide, right now, to have no emotional attachment to the past. That's right. No emotional attachment to the past at all.

Instead, just honor the sacredness of being human. Know that to be human means to learn from your mistakes. And you have brought out so much wisdom from every experience in your past. You learned who you are – what you want – how to care for yourself and honor yourself. Every experience in your past has added to your wisdom. Your way of dealing with your life and with the world.

In addition, if you find you have to do something before you can forgive yourself – make amends with someone. Alternatively, pay back something that's owed – whatever it is. You can just tell yourself right now that you'll do what you need to in order to forgive yourself. It's OK. It's just part of that sacred process of being human. And really – your peace of mind is too important. It's too precious to do without. Your peace of mind is worth whatever small thing you may feel you need to do to open back up to the sense of peace.

Nothing is worth the price of your peace of mind.

So right now, you can take what you learned from your past experiences and just let the rest go. Details, memories, emotions and regrets - just let them all go. They aren't important. What's important is how much you've learned. How very far you've come. I'm important to be fully present in this moment.

On your next in-breath, tell yourself: "Nothing is worth the price of my peace of mind. And I forgive myself. Wholly and completely." (pause) And on the next outbreath, let go of anything of which you need to let go. (pause)

Just letting go of anything and everything is deeply healing. Allow your past to remain in the past; you are free to experience the wonderful things that happen right now. Float in this space of peace and forgiveness. This present moment – knowing that in the days to come – you'll continue to find it easier to let go of the past. Practice self-forgiveness, and to be in every shining ... present ... moment.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breath as we draw our meditation time to a close. Begin to wiggle your fingers and toes when you are ready. Slowly bring movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel joyful and relaxed. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer. One long deep breath in and exhale. Namaste.











## 13. Spiral of Love Meditation

Length: 8-10 minutes

**Description:** Words have immeasurable power. Choose a word that resonates with your

heart and allow that word to penetrate your being and imbibe its vibration.

Themes: Peace, Joy, Love

**Meditation Script:** Take a deep breath through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Repeat this breathing cycle a few more times on your own. Return to your normal and natural breath now, gently observing the ebb, flowing your breath like the waves in the sea. Relax your shoulders and feel the crown of your head rising with each inhale. [pause] Follow my voice now, as I lead you in a guided meditation, Spiral of Love.

As we begin this meditation, choose one simple word that brings you calmness and steadiness. It should help you relax. You can select something like peace, joy, contentment, balance, love, or happiness. [pause]

I'm going to use the word peace, but you choose any word that resonates with you at this moment.

Continue to breathe in and out, focusing on that one word. Breathe in, breathe out peace; inhale, exhale joy. [pause]

Inhale your word, letting it spiral around you and every inch of your body, starting at the ground until it reaches the top of your head. [long pause]

See your word circling around you and engulfing you in its essence. Feel the word pour deep inside of you. Allow yourself to become that word. Feel its divine nature vibrating or pulsating within you. [pause]

Let the word fully become you, not just something that you do or inspire to be, but what you are now. You are peace, you are love, you are joy, or whatever word you chose.

Breathe in and out softly. Make sure your spine is straight, the crown of your head lifted, and your hips seated firmly into the ground. [pause]

Your shoulders are relaxed; your belly is soft.

Breathe steadily and smoothly; connect fully with this present moment.

Breathe in love, joy, and peace, and then exhale, sending them out into the world. [pause]

Let go of all worry and stress. Allow your word to penetrate your heart. Notice your heart as it responds to the word. See the word imprinted upon your heart. [pause]

Spend a few moments in silence now, allowing your mind to focus on the word. It becomes its expression and feels its heavenly vibrations. (long pause)

Take a deep inhale through the nose and exhale out through the mouth. Rub your palms together and place them over your eyes and then over your heart. [pause]

May we always see clearly through the eyes of love and may divine and geniune love fill our hearts.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes - bringing movement back to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. When you are ready, roll to your right sight and finally come to a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, remember your focus and your definition of gratitude. Namaste.











#### 14. Three Part Breath Meditation

Length: 5-7 minutes

**Description**: The three-part breath is great for releasing toxins and clearing our impurities both

emotionally and physically.

Themes: Mindfulness, Cleansing, Balance

**Meditation Script**: As we settle deeper into shivasana, feel the rise and fall of your breath. Inhale and exhale deeply. [pause] While bringing attention to the breath, make sure you are breathing from your abdomen.

As you continue to breathe consciously, notice how the cool air travels down through your nostrils into your belly. Nostril breathing allows us to cleanse the body and to dissolve impurities. Filling the belly allows us to feel the full energy of our breathing. As you exhale, draw your navel to your spine, feeling a full release of breath, and allowing for the inhale to naturally return. (pause)

Continue your breathing, exhaling fully and pulling your navel to your spine. When we exhale fully, we are properly releasing toxins from the bottom of our lungs. Full exhales allow us to release the toxins as opposed to recycling them through our lungs. (pause)

Let's move to a three-part breath now that we have deepened our breathing. This will allow us to continue to deepen the breath and release the toxins from the body. Continue to fill your belly first. As you continue the cycle of inhalation, feel your breath move from your belly, up to your ribs, and finally arriving to your chest. Retain this inhale briefly, and then exhale.

Release first the breath from your chest. Then, deflate the ribs region and empty the belly. Again, fill the belly, then the ribs and lastly the chest. Retain and release the breath from the chest, then ribs, followed by the belly.

Suspend the exhale, feeling your navel move towards the spine as you fully release. Allow for the inhale to come naturally.

Continue with three-part breaths. (long pause)

As we come to a close, return your natural breathing. Allow your breath to return to a natural rise and fall. Begin to return energy to your body. Slowly wiggle your fingers and toes, while feeling free to move your neck, ankles, and wrists. (pause)

When you feel ready, roll to your right side and come to a seated position. Bring your hands to the heart. Thank yourself for coming to class today and for allowing yourself this healing through relaxation and cleansing. Your cleanse will continue throughout the day and night. Namaste.











# 15. Peaceful Memory Meditation

Length: 5-7 minutes

**Description:** Find a memory that brings you peace. Use this memory to bring comfort and joy and release any tension or negative energy.

Themes: Peace, Joy, Letting Go

**Meditation Script:** Allow your attention to come to your breath as we settle into our relaxation pose. As thoughts come in and out of your mind, allow them to do so. Redirect your attention to your breath if you begin to feel consumed by these thoughts.

Allow for your mind to find one memory, feeling, person, or thing that brings you joy. This thought should be a soft joyful feeling - one that comes naturally. Connect this positive feeling with a sensation of warmth. As you continue to inhale and exhale, inhale deeper into the feeling of warmth and exhale any unwelcomed thoughts away. (pause)

Deepen the feeling of warmth by adding a color to this energy. This color should be soft and further perpetuate the feeling of warmth, joy, and peace. Feel this energy fill your body upon your inhale, suspending through your exhale and deepening with each continued inhale. (pause)

As you continue to breathe and focus on the peaceful energy within, allow this focus to also remove any negative energy or tension from your day; what you need to let go, let go. Allow the negative emotions to be effortlessly replaced by the feeling of peace. Know that you deserve this peace, as it is your natural state. (pause)

Let your breath find its rhythm as we come to a close. Allow your breathing to return to a natural rise and fall. Slowly wiggle your fingers and toes. Feel free to move your neck, ankles and wrists. (pause)

When you feel ready, roll to your right side and come to a seated position. Bring your hands to your heart center. Thank yourself for coming to class today. Remember this peace after leaving class. Hold on to this peace for the remaining part of today and tonight. Namaste.











### 16. Meditation to Open the Heart

Length: 7-10 minutes

**Description:** Like a flower emanating its fragrance and beauty, open your heart to

receiving the love and the light around you.

Themes: Heart, Letting Go, Forgiveness

Meditation Script: Find a comfortable position and close your eyes.

Breathe in and breathe out naturally. Feel how your stomach rises and falls. Keep breathing naturally. All you need to be aware of is your breathing. If random thoughts arise, just blow them away.

You can feel yourself relaxing.

Be grateful that you are here in this moment. Inhale deeply and feel the gratitude flowing throughout your body. You love yourself unconditionally and you love others unconditionally. As you continue to breathe deeply, enjoy how good it feels to love and be loved.

Your whole body is relaxing.

See yourself sitting beneath a large, powerful oak tree. It is a beautiful autumn day and the leaves are getting ready to change their vibrant color. The oak tree is strong and majestic. There is a slight breeze moving through the air and the world around you is peaceful and serene. Notice the lovely flowers growing in the grass around you.

Inhale deeply and become aware of your heart. In your mind, you see your heart as a beautiful flower; its pedals are slowly opening. Exhale. [pause] Notice the light shining inside of you as your heart opens up to the possibilities of love. This love starts with you as you forgive yourself. Your heart radiates forgiveness. As you breathe out, feel yourself releasing the fears that have kept your heart closed. Inhale. [pause] Your heart is growing bigger and brighter. See the love in your heart expanding to those around you. Feel yourself opening up your heart to them. Allow the love others have to flourish inside yourself. Feel it grow, like the flower.

Exhale. [pause] See your heart letting go of old anger patterns that no longer serve you. Feel the light growing stronger inside of you. As you exhale, breathe out old fears and feel your heart becoming lighter and more radiant.

Now, lean back and feel the strength of the oak tree against your back. Its power flows through your body and you become a part of the tree – safe ... strong ... secure...[pause] [pause after each one]

Silently say to yourself, "I am letting go of my past."

Now, think of someone you know. Let them into your awareness and into your heart. Open your heart to that person. [pause]

Silently, say to yourself, "You are surrounded by love." [pause after each one]

Inhale and feel the power of love filling your heart. Allow the sense of warmth and well-being to flow through your entire body. You know that the love that radiates from your heart returns to you and makes you even stronger.

When you are ready, open your eyes, and enjoy the feeling of lightness and peace as you continue with your day.

<sup>&</sup>quot;My heart is releasing any past hurts because I no longer need them."

<sup>&</sup>quot;I accept that I am a strong, lovable person."

<sup>&</sup>quot;My heart and my spirit radiate love."

<sup>&</sup>quot;I am ready to welcome the present and let love into my heart."

<sup>&</sup>quot;I can feel love healing my spirit."

<sup>&</sup>quot;I am grateful for all the love that radiates out to the world."

<sup>&</sup>quot;I am at peace with the world and those around me."

<sup>&</sup>quot;I care for myself, and I care for others."

<sup>&</sup>quot;You deserve to be loved."

<sup>&</sup>quot;You feel at peace with yourself."

<sup>&</sup>quot;You deserve to be happy."











# 17. Meditation to Reduce Anxiety

Length: 5-7 minutes

**Description:** Release anxiety and tension in your body as you unwind your muscles, releasing anxious thoughts and relaxing your body.

Themes: Peace, Balance, Healing

Meditation Script: Get comfortable and close your eyes.

Keep breathing in and out. There is nothing else for you to think about right now; just be present with your breathing.

Let the air into your body. Then breathe out fully with every breath.

Each time you breathe, you feel yourself becoming more relaxed. Your breathing is becoming slower and slower.

This time is for you. There is nothing else you need to think about and nothing else for you to do; simply enjoy feeling more and more relaxed.

Notice how your body feels at this moment. Just be aware and don't try to change anything. If any thoughts enter your mind, notice them, and let them float away.

Become aware of your body as you continue to breathe. Just observe how your head feels, your eyes, your chin, your neck. Move your attention downward to your shoulders, your back and your arms. Observe how your stomach feels. Notice how each area of your body feels. Are there parts that feel tense?

Pay attention to your hips... if there is any tension, just notice it. Nothing else.

Move your attention down to your legs ... your knees ... to your feet.

Keep breathing and pay attention to your whole body. Is there an area considerably tensed?

Focus on the tension. Imagine those muscles are like a rubber band ... loose ... relaxed. See those muscles softening ... relaxing. How does it feel when your muscles relax?

Let the relaxation spread throughout your body. Your muscles become limp as the relaxation grows.

If there are any anxious thoughts, just notice and let them move on. There is nothing you need to think about at the moment.

Now, imagine your body is a lovely candle. It is solid, but it can melt.

Continue to breathe and imagine your body becoming warmer with each breath. The warmth is starting to melt the candle. Your hands and your feet are becoming softer ... almost liquid. Enjoy the pleasant feeling.

The warm feeling is spreading throughout your body; feel the warmth in your stomach melt away any tension and anxiety. This feels so nice.

Notice any thoughts you may be having. You can melt away any anxiety by focusing on one, single word. When you inhale, say the word "relax" in your mind. Say the word "relax" again as you exhale.

Inhale ... relax.

Exhale ... relax.

Continue to breathe. Notice how calm you are feeling. Enjoy the sensation of complete calm and serenity.

Breathe like this any time you feel tense or anxious. Each time you breathe, you become stronger, more to able deal with the stress that happens in your life.

Now, wiggle your fingers and toes and bring back movement to your body. Open your eyes and stretch your body. Notice how wonderful you feel.











### 18. There is Nothing Wrong with You

Length: 10-15 minutes

Description: This is a beautiful meditation that promotes self-love, healing, and

wholeness.

Themes: Self Love, Gratitude, Acceptance

Meditation Script: Maintain a soft and steady breath. Feel the ease of your breath flowing in and out like a gentle wave. Allow your breath to soothe away all your cares and concerns so you can focus only on this present moment. Rest in the silence now. Listen to the quiet peace that comes from cultivating a still mind and a pure heart. Rest with me as I guide you through today's healing meditation. Imagine yourself standing in front of a mirror. There is a faint light shining so you can see everything clearly. Come close enough to see your entire body. Starting at the crown of your head, scan down your entire body slowly. Take a moment to pause on something you appreciate. Start at the tip of your head and work your way slowly down your neck. (pause)

Maybe you like your eyes, your nose, and your lips. Don't give attention to negative thoughts. Let them go and embrace the things you like. Now move from your neck to your belly button. Find something to appreciate. Your shoulders that help you carry the weight of your responsibilities; your stretch marks that grew with you through the good times and bad. Find as many things as you can to appreciate. Now move down your arms, your hands. Thank them for being strong. For working hard to provide you with strength. For being patient as you use your fingers to navigate through your daily tasks.

Now look to your legs. Thank your thighs for supporting your weight; your feet for taking you where you need to go. Send gratitude from your hips to your toes.

Now the mirror changes. Instead of the outside, you can see the inside. Begin the process of self-reflection again. Start from your mind. If all of your thoughts and memories are being reflected in front of you, what do you see?

Do you see happy things? Troublesome things? Do you see memories you wish you could let go of or good times ahead? Welcome whatever you see. Take a deep breath for each image that comes up in your mirror. There are no good or bad reflections; they are just reflections. Breathe.

Now let your gaze go lower and look at your heart. What does it look like? Is it opened and at ease? Is it guarded and dark? Somewhere in between? Really, observe its metaphorical appearance. Greet its appearance without judgment. There is no good or bad way for your heart to appear. Take a serious inquiry into the way it exists in this moment right now.

Recall that there are no good or bad images here. This is a safe place for the images to make

themselves known and be greeted with compassion. Welcome them.

We are going to look at one more thing in the mirror. The hips. It has been said that we store a large amount of our emotions in the hips. What do your hips look like? Are they tight and closed, sore, or open? Greet the image, embracing it without judgment.

Each moment you have with your body, your thoughts, your mind, is a chance to understand yourself deeper. It is a chance to greet yourself with more kindness, with more enthusiasm for what the next moment will bring. This allows the healing and the light to enter. Look back in the mirror. Imagine an ideal you. Start with your head. What do your thoughts look like? What does your mind look like?

Now move to your heart. What does it look like? What does it feel like? Let your ideal self-fill your chest.

Lastly your hips. Do you want your emotions stored there? Are you happy to let them be? Do you want this region to be open and free? There is no wrong answer.

Try to see all three ideals in your mirror. Try to see yourself glowing with your ideal self. Now embrace the idea that this is you. You are already what you want to be. You are already completely healed from past hurts. You are no longer your baggage or your shame. You are perfect. This moment and every moment, you are perfect just as you are.

You are enough, for yourself and anyone else. You are whole, and you are healed. The only thing stopping us from embracing the fullness of our being is perspective. Try to embrace that now. Recognize that you are whole, healed, and enough.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breath as we draw our meditation time to a close.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes, and slowly bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. Feel joyful and relaxed as you leave this meditation today. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer. One long deep breath in and exhale. Namaste.











# 19. Sweeping Your Heart Clean Meditation

Length: 10-15 minutes

**Description:** Using animals as an analogy, this meditation focuses on healing those fearful and wounded parts of your being and sweeping your inner space clean.

Themes: Heart, Detox, Letting Go

**Meditation Script:** Let your mind relax. Let the events that happened in your day fall off and into the distance. You can pick them back up after class if you want, but for now let them go.

Imagine your mind opening like a tent. It is wide and empty, swaying gently as a breeze brushes against it. Imagine sunlight streaming in through the seams. What color is your tent? Does it have windows? Is it large or small? Does it sit in a forest or in an open field? Imagine your mind as an ideal campground.

Now imagine your memories as an animal. Think of one memory that brings sadness with it. Maybe visualize it as an injured bird, or perhaps a small winged insect that can't get warm enough to fly. It can be whatever you need it to be. Imagine it in your tent.

Next, think of a memory that brings anger. Imagine another animal, like a wild hog. Maybe this animal tries to attack your first one. Maybe it tries to tear holes in your tent. Imagine it in your tent with your first animal.

Now think of a memory that brings fear. Maybe this one is a turtle that won't come out of its shell. Your group of animals is growing quite large now. Does it take up much space? Is your tent almost full? Imagine your new animal and take in the scene of your tent now.

You can continue to use the suggested emotions or begin to think of your own. For the next animal, you may use lethargy or a substitute. Perhaps this one is a squirrel ready to hibernate for the winter, wishing to be undisturbed. Add this animal to your group.

Now imagine how many of each animal you need. If you're feeling a lot of sadness, there will be a lot of your first animal. Anger - your second animal, fear - your third animal; lethargy - your fourth. Maybe you don't need an animal present for the fourth sensation. Maybe you aren't experiencing these emotions. And that's okay. Imagine whichever animals match your feelings all together in your tent. Play with your animals and with your vision.

Do the animals interact? Do they keep to themselves? Do they want to leave the tent? Imagine them now

Now visualize yourself walking up to the tent and unzipping the door so it opens. It opens widely so all the animals may leave freely. All injured animals are healed as they pass through. All fearful animals

are brave at the sight of the open door. All sleeping animals awake refreshed. Back up and give them space. Do not try to make them leave in any order. Do not try to make any of them stay. Stand back and allow them to return where they belong. Let them out; let them be free.

After all of your animals have left, imagine sweeping out your tent. Make sure it is free of all dirt. Sweep from one side of the tent to the other. Sweep up the dirt, dust, and fur. Reclaim your space. It is yours to live in. No animal may enter anymore without your permission. It is clean, and it is yours.

Now zip the door closed and sit in your tent. Feel the sunlight shining in through the seams. Hear the breeze moving against the sides of the fabric. Breathe in the peace of your cleansed, open space. You are free of all disturbances. You are free to relax.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breath as we draw our meditation time to a close.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel joyful and relaxed. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer. Take one long deep breath in and exhale. Namaste.











### 20. Observing the Breath

Length: 7-10 minutes

**Description:** Observe your breath and keep your focus in the present moment.

Themes: Mindfulness, Relaxation, Cleansing, Balance

**Meditation Script:** Let your mind relax as you inhale deeply through your nose. Let your body relax as you exhale gently through your mouth.

Allow yourself to relax completely with each inhalation and exhalation.

Now is the time to let go, relax, and just be in the moment. You are free from worry and free from any thoughts.

Take a breath in through your nose and feel your scalp and forehead relax.

Exhale and feel your facial muscles relax and soften. Your tongue relaxes; the tension in your jaw is released.

Let your thoughts fade away. The images in your mind fade away as you relax in the stillness of the present.

Take another soft, steady breath and let yourself feel so light and free.

Inhale and feel your shoulders go limp as they relax. Feel the tension drain from your back as all your muscles relax.

Exhale and feel your chest and solar plexus relax.

Feel your arms and hands relax.

Inhale and feel your stomach relax.

Your buttocks and thigh muscles unwind so that there is no tension in your lower body.

Exhale and feel all the muscles in your entire body relax, go loose, and limp. All remaining tension melts from your body. You feel good, safe, and relaxed.

With each breath, your mind gently returns to center and anchors you in the present moment even more.

Relax and continue to breathe deeply, but comfortably in through the nose and out through the mouth.

Observe your breath as you inhale and exhale. Notice how your thoughts become neutral and fall away as you inhale and exhale.

As you consciously breathe your mind automatically and gently shifts away from distracting thoughts, images, dreams, and plans. It lets them go as it returns to center.

Your concentration deepens with each breath. Negativity, discontent, and worry are released with each breath.

Maintain a steady focused breath as your mind floats, detached from everything.

Each breath has a calming, clearing effect on your mind and body.

Notice how your chest rises and falls.

Notice how calm you feel.

Notice how your mind remains neutral and empty of thoughts.

Take another profound breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. Relax and allow yourself to be in the stillness.

Exhale all stress and worry, letting your mind float, as you feel peaceful.

With each breath, you feel lighter, so relaxed and calm.

Your mind gently and easily returns to center with each breath. Your mind stays gently focused in the present moment.

With each breath, your mind becomes calmer and more relaxed. With each breath, your mind lets go of all unnecessary thoughts, all attachments, and judgments.

Take another gentle breath and return to your center as we draw our meditation time to a close.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Gently, bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel joyful and relaxed. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer. Take one long deep breath in and exhale. Namaste.











# 21. Overcoming Depression

Length: 15-20 minutes

Description: Find relief from depressed feelings with gentle detachment from negative thoughts, forgiveness, and positive affirmations.

Themes: Healing, Letting Go, Peace

**Meditation Script:** Settle into a comfortable position. Feel gratitude for completing your practice today and give yourself a smile. Let your muscles relax and ground yourself into the earth below you. Allow any strain or tension to quickly melt away. It's okay if you notice your mind wandering off. Simply return your attention to your breath and this present moment. As you continue to sink into a deeper state of relaxation, follow my voice as I guide us through a meditation **on overcoming depression**. [pause]

Millions of people battle with feelings of depression. Maybe you are depressed or have been in the past. You may even know someone who carries this heavy burden.

It's difficult to find joy in the world when we are depressed. Everything is filtered through the dark cloud of despair. Most often, depression stems from a dis-ease about our life that we have carried around for some time. This disease or toxic energy is strapped in our body, blocking the flow of love and light.

We also close our hearts to love when we're depressed. We lose trust in life and feel all hope is gone. We can feel powerless and all alone, losing sight of divine love and provision.

There may not be an easy cure for depression, but we can, with intention, release these feelings by acknowledging them, feeling them, and then letting them go.

Gently let your mind acknowledge anything that might be causing you to feel depressed. [pause] Once you have something in your mind, notice it with gentle detachment. See if you can rise above it, maybe watching it as you are sitting perched up on a cloud.

Notice how you are feeling in your body. See if you can give this feeling a name. Even when we are feeling depressed, there are often some underlining feelings that are involved. Is it regret, shame, disappointment, sadness?

Once you have named it, notice where you feel it most in your body. Your head, your chest, your neck, or maybe all over. What does it feel like? Heaviness, anxiety, tightness?

Take a few moments to breath into the area or areas you feel these emotions most. With each exhalation, silently repeat to yourself: I release this pain. I release this pain. Continue on your own using your breath to target and release all that is ailing you. I release this pain. [long pause] Is there anyone that you need to forgive? Holding onto grudges can also block the flow of good and positive energy in our life and cause depressed feelings. Maybe you need to forgive yourself. Whether it's you or another person, don't let another day go by without forgiveness. Think of the person you need to forgive. Say their name silently in your mind. This could be you. With each exhalation, silently repeat the name and I forgive you; I forgive you; I forgive you. Use your breath to release any strong emotions that show up in your body. [long pause]

Are you feeling a little lighter now? As we release these weights, the energy starts to flow again, and we feel better, freer.

For the remainder of this meditation, I will guide you through some positive thoughts and affirmations to help you to affirm the good in your life, letting go of those toxic emotions that steal your joy and peace of mind. You can just listen or repeat them silently after me.

All worry is released. All unconscious guilt and shame is released. Your mind dissolves all unwanted negative feelings and the burdens of the soul.

Every day you feel lighter and lighter; freer and freer; happier and happier.

Each day you find your mind is filled with more positive feelings. Your days are brighter. Your hope is being restored.

Each day you are shedding the pains and regrets of your past and the expectations of the future. You are finding gratitude in the present moment, in the here and the now.

Your mind is renewing and transforming itself. Feelings of depression are lifted, and lightness fills your spirit.

Every day your mind becomes more aware of the good in life. More aware of the beautiful things and it dwells on the things you love, the people, places, and activities that bring you joy.

Filled with thoughts of love and joy, each day you feel better and better.

Stress and tension lift away and feelings of ease and relaxation replace them.

Filling your mind with thoughts of wonderful happy things brings peace and serenity so your mind automatically seeks out more of those thoughts.

You are finding it easier and easier to overcome feelings of depression, anxiety, and sadness by becoming aware of your negative thoughts and then reframing them into something more positive.

When reading or listening to the news your mind automatically listens for what's good and positive, filtering out that which is negative.

Your concentration is now on those things that are wonderful and positive.

Each day you effortlessly become fuller of positive thoughts and intentions. Vibrant energy pours through you. Daily chores, tasks, and errands become more enjoyable. They are now something to which you can look forward to doing.

Your thoughts are more controlled and able to stay in the present moment.

Feelings of lightness, brightness, and happiness become your new state of being and each day you find that you feel good, truly good.

Life becomes more pleasurable with this new change in thought and attitude. Your mind gives more attention to the beauty of life and in nature.

Focus on the things you do have and the good already present in your life increases. Light-heartedness and gratitude become your new way of being.

Your life responds beautifully to your new frame of mind because your new frame of mind sets new vibrations for your life, which attract beauty and harmony.

Take in one or two deep rounds of breath as we draw our meditation time to a close.

When you are ready, begin to wiggle your fingers and toes. Slowly, bring back movement to your body. Take as much time as you need to wake up your muscles. If you are lying down, roll to your right and then push yourself up into a seated position. As you leave this meditation today, feel joyful and relaxed. Bring your hands to your heart in prayer. Take one long deep breath in and exhale. Namaste.









### 22. Mindfulness Meditation

Length: 6 minutes

**Description:** The simplest of things bring a long-awaited healing. This meditation teaches us how to observe what happens within.

Themes: Mindfulness, Present Moment, Peace

**Meditation script:** Find yourself in a comfortable seated position on your yoga mat - Sukhasana or whatever makes you feel comfortable. It should make you feel at ease and completely pain-free. Close your eyes and put your hands on your legs, as long as it is comfortable for you. Keep your shoulders relaxed. Sit up nice and tall and breathe.

Take a moment to appreciate what your body just did during your yoga practice. Take a moment to rebalance your body. Help it nourish the prana you created and get ready to leave the mat with a mindful positive approach.

Take a deep breath in through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Take a moment to hear the sound of your breath; take a time to focus on the sensations that arise.

Whatever happened before or whatever is going to happen, try to let it all go. Focus on this present moment and reinforce your intention to find your inner peace.

If any thoughts cross your mind, then don't force yourself to reject them. Instead, become a spectator and observe them without judgment. Just notice them with the yogic detachment and awareness of the present moment.

Take another deep breath in through the nose and exhale through the mouth; let all things go. Start to listen to the sound of your breath and relax your body even more, in a deeper more intimate way.

Continue to notice the sound of your breath and focus on your inner sensations, noticing how you really feel.

Honor and recognize your body and soul, using a breath you can hear (ujjayi breath if it suits you). Listen to the sound of your breath and again, whatever comes up keep noticing it, and just let it go. Bring your focus to the sound of your breath, soothing and calming down like the sound of the ocean. Use the imaginary waves of this ocean to wash away all your worries, your thoughts.

Take your time to find the natural rhythm of your breathing. Breathe at your own pace. Whatever makes you feel comfortable.

Open up your heart and your mind, welcoming calmness and mindfulness. Stay here, in the present moment, for at least three minutes.

When your mind starts to wander, use your breath and let it go.

On your next inhale, bring your hands together in prayer in front of your heart and keep your eyes closed.

Acknowledge this moment and acknowledge how you feel. Acknowledge your emotions before and after this meditation practice and how this changed you.

Try to bring this sensation with you off the mat, throughout the day, and when you feel overwhelmed. Use your ocean breathing to come back to a space of deep restfulness.

Take a deep breath and acknowledge your health, your body, and soul. Feel gratitude for your commitment to meditation. Take your time and when you feel ready, bow forward and seal your practice with Namaste.











# 23. Cultivating Trust

Length: 7-10 minutes

**Description:** When we cultivate trust, we align ourselves with Love and the universe to manifest our

highest good.

Themes: Trust, Self-Love, Clarity

**Meditation Script:** Come into an easy and comfortable seated position on your yoga mat. If you need even more support, then sit on a yoga block or a blanket. Sit up nice and tall, putting your hands on your legs. Keep your shoulders relaxed, while closing your eyes. Use your breath to help you relax even more. Begin by taking some deep inhales and exhales through the nose. Come into a state of ease and serenity.

Continue to focus on your soft breath as I guide you through a meditation on trust. Your breath is a sign of your profound trust.

Whatever shows up to your mind, whatever is there to worry and scare you - let it all go.

If you have some doubts or some uncertainty in your life, use this moment to let go.

Taking a deep breath in through the nose, acknowledge your mistrust. Exhale through your mouth, pushing this feeling away. Again.

Take a deep breath in through the nose. Notice the doubts showing up to your mind. Focus on them, exhale through your mouth with a sound.

One more time.

Take a deep breath in through the nose, feel your emotions and your uncertainty. Exhale through your mouth with a sound.

Now take a moment and bring your hands to your heart. Anjali mudra - Prayer position.

Listen to the sound of your natural breath coming back to normal.

Sit a little bit taller, feeling a connection from the basis of your spine to the crown of you head. Feel the connection to your divine self.

Let's reconnect.

Whatever made you lose your trust – the trust in yourself, in others, or even in life itself, try to forget about it. Reset what you think you know and start again from the very beginning.

Feel free from the world; enjoy this moment as a complete moment of freedom and openness. Your mind is lighter. It is freed from all the negative thoughts and ready to be nourished with some positive thinking. You are experiencing a new dose of real, profound, and grounded trust. Now we change things a little bit.

We get up and stand with the feet hip-width apart. The toes are pointing forward. We are spreading awareness to our feet. This is Tadasana -Mountain pose. Now we open our palms.

Move back and forth a little bit and imagine that this is your trust.

Trust is changeable, and it is something you can keep or lose -like your balance.

Try to feel the change in your body and mind every time you come back to stillness.

Focus on that feeling; connect to your center and to your intuition.

Trust your ability to find your center and reconnect every time you choose to do so.

You can do it.

Take a deep breath in through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Repeat out loud: I trust. Bring your trust to every part of your life, starting with yourself.

Trusting your intuition is the main key to trusting the universe. Put your trust in the bigger plan awaiting you.

Take another deep breath in through the nose and smile. Exhale through the mouth.

Feel your power to trust. Feel your instinct, your brand-new ability to refocus and move from fear to faith, trusting in love every step of the way. You are living a meaningful life. You are respecting yourself and the universe. You effortlessly tune in with your intuition and your higher self.

Bring your hands to your forehead and bow. Namaste











### 24. Mantra Meditation

Length: 10 minutes

Description: Allow the vibration of OM, the first sounds of the universe to enrich your

soul and cleanse your mind, body, and heart.

Themes: Mindfulness, Present Moment, Cleansing

**Meditation Script:** Find yourself in a comfortable seated position on your yoga mat. You can use Sukhasana or whatever makes you feel comfortable, whatever makes you feel at ease and is completely pain-free. If you need even more support, then sit on a block or a blanket. Sit up nice and tall, putting your hands on your legs. Keep your shoulders relaxed, close your eyes and breathe.

Take a moment to appreciate what your body just did during your yoga practice and to explore your emotions, your feelings, and your inner voice.

Today we are going to use mantras. It is the perfect tool to heal our soul.

A mantra allows us to see below the surface, into our subconscious, helping to shift our negative habits and patterns into positive ones.

We are starting with the sacred word and mantra: OM

It is said that Om represents everything, the seed and sound of all of creation.

Leave what happened before this moment behind you; don't think about what is going to happen. Focus on yourself; focus on this one present moment.

Take a deep and long breathe in through the nose and exhale through the mouth, extending your outbreath until your belly is empty of air. [pause] Repeat it again. [pause]

Now breathe in through your nose and as you exhale. We will say our mantra: OM. Inhale. Exhale. OOOOOOMMMMMMMMMM.

Take your time to get used to it and repeat this mantra again synchronizing it to your breath. Inhale. Exhale. OOOOOOMMMMMMMMM.

Now get into it again. This time focus even more on the sound of the breath. Inhale, Exhale, OOOOOOMMMMMMMMMM.

Listen to the sound of the universe. It is the first, original vibration, representing all of creation: It represents the heaven, the sea, and the earth.

Feel the harmony with love and the universe. Feel more grounded; fully connect to yourself. Again. Inhale and on the exhale. OOOOOOMMMMMMMMMM.

Feel the energy and the fluctuations of your mind.

Deep breath in...Deep breath out... OOOOOOOOMMMM.

Clear your mind and rewrite its patterns.

Notice how you feel; notice how your body is nourished from this sacred sound. You feel like your soul is being massaged. You feel prana taking over you and guiding you in a complete state of oneness.

Now we are going to add some mudra to our OM to deepen our connection to the universe to feel our roots again.

Create the sacred OM mudra with calm and intention; connect the index finger with the thumb on the same hand. Create the mudra with both hands.

Feel the energy and connection in your fingers spreading all over your body. Feel the thumb - the gateway to Divine Will and feel the index finger - your ego. Feel these two elements become one.

Repeat the sacred sound again now with the mudra. Inhale. OOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMMMMM.

Feel your prana. Again.
Inhale. OOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMM.

Take your soul to a higher state of calmness and awareness.

Breathe in and say to yourself, "I am one with Love and the Universe." As you breathe out say, "Love (universe) and I are one."

Stay in your mudra for at least three minutes, listening to the sound of your breath.

Feel the vibration of the sound Om and notice if it has changed you during this practice. [pause]

Feel the calmness in your body and mind. [pause]

Take a deep breath and acknowledge your health, your body and soul, and feel gratitude for your commitment to meditation, to Love, to the universe, and to your higher self.

Take your time and when you feel ready, bow forward and seal your practice with Namaste.











# 25. Body Sensation to Alleviate & Manage Pain

Length: 10-15 minutes

Description: After a thorough body scan, use your breath with laser focus to alleviate

any tension or pain in your body.

Themes: Healing, Self-Love

**Meditation Script:** Come into a seated position on your yoga mat, with your back straight. Take a deep breath in through the nose and exhale fully with a sigh.

Let your hands rest in your lap or on your thighs and as you begin to breathe in and through your nose. Feel your stomach expand on the inhale and contract on the exhale.

As you breathe, let your thoughts fizzle away and bring your awareness to the space between your eyebrows; relax that space.

Bring your attention to your jaws, so that the mouth is closed but the teeth are apart. Relax your jaws. Now we begin the body scan from the top of the head to the toes. We observe how we really feel. We effortlessly notice the sensations in the body, and with the power of our breath, we release pain and tension.

So, let's begin.

Visualize it and relax as I say each part of the body. [pause] If you feel any tension there, see if you can penetrate that area with your breath like a laser. Use your breath to release any tension, pain, or stress you are holding in that specific area of your body. [pause]

Bring your attention to the top of your head -the forehead, the cheeks, the mouth, and the back of the head. Continue with the top of the shoulders, the front of the chest, the upper back, the middle back, the lower back, the stomach, and the ribs. [pause]

Bring your awareness to your shoulders, the biceps, the triceps, and the forearms and to your hands. [pause]

Bring your attention to your hips; feel yourself firmly rooted into the mat. Bring your attention to your thighs. First the right thigh and then the left thigh. The right knee, the left knee. The right shin, the right calf muscle. The left shin, the left calf muscle. The right ankle, the left ankle. The right foot, the bottom of the foot, the top of the foot, the right toes, the left foot, the bottom of the left foot, the top of the foot, the left toes. [pause]

Now, scan your body from your head to your toes, as a total body overview. Take your time to notice how you really feel. [pause] If you feel any tension or any pain, bring your awareness to that area of your body. Use your breath to breathe to bring positivity and energy to it. [pause] Exhale out the discomfort and the pain you feel... feeling yourself in total relaxation. [pause]

Don't force your body to change how it feels but instead try to accept its signals; this is the way your body and mind speak to you. Instead of shutting it all down, respect it. Listen to it, cherish every single signal and learn something more about your body and how it reacts to things, emotions, or illness. [pause]

Respect your body and try to nourish it and take care of it with the power of your breath, with your prana, with this higher form of love for yourself.

Take a few moments. [pause]

Bring your hands in prayer and take a moment to acknowledge the sense of calmness that you feel and notice that it has the power to carry you throughout your day. [pause] When you are ready, seal your practice with Namaste.











#### 26. Divine Guidance and Direction

Length: 7-10 minutes.

Description: Divine guidance comes naturally when we remove all the thoughts,

worries, and conditions from the surface of our heart.

Themes: Wisdom, Guidance, Direction

**Meditation Script:** Find yourself a comfortable seated position on your yoga mat. Use Sukhasana or a relaxing position that makes you feel more comfortable. Make sure you feel at ease and completely pain-free. If you need to add some more support, you could sit on a yoga block or on a blanket.

Take your time to find your space. [pause]

Sit up nice and tall, keep your shoulders relaxed, close your eyes and breathe. Feel free to lie your arms down softly on your thighs. [pause]

Once you find your moment, take some deep breaths in through your nose and exhale through your mouth. [pause]

Take a moment to appreciate and acknowledge all the good things that yoga has brought to your life and to your body. [pause]

Now it's time to focus a little bit more on your soul.

Try to focus on the rhythm of your breath, to the sound of the vital energy inside you and open up to the divine guidance. [pause]

Keep in mind that divine guidance is not something for which you have to look, but rather it is something that comes from within. Hidden behind the surface of made-up worries, schedules, and social masks, you just have to release it and give it the chance to shine and to lead your way. [pause]

What you are looking for is the perfect union of your body and soul - a balanced and serene mood and attitude. It prepares a fertile soil to grow amazing beautiful flowers, as divine insights from your higher self, come forth.

This is the day and the time to let your walls down and feel free to show up with no defenses, vulnerable, completely and widely open.

Take a long deep breath in and a long deep breath out. Listen to the sound of your breath becoming heavier and heavier. Use this moment to focus on your emotions and on how you really feel. [pause]

Focus on your breath, creating a soothing and intimate environment to cultivate a new improved mindful and open mindset. [pause]

The sound of your breath with its vibrational frequencies will show up. It will spread all over your body nourishing at a different stage, at a deeper level. [pause]

Release your sense of discomfort, of loneliness, of insecurity. Experience the present moment. [pause] Take a deep breath in and visualize a door. Exhale and try to open the door with all your energy. You see the light waiting for you on the other side. [pause]

Connect to that light and enjoy every single ray you see. Feel it all over your face, your heart, and your spirit. [pause]

Give your inner self the chance to discover and explore all its abilities, all its powers and energy. Take another deep breath in and a long breath out, but with a sigh. Rub your hands together and generate a little heat between your palms. Put them on your eyes once they are warm. [pause]

Take these last precious moments to acknowledge your commitment to this practice, to bringing that light to your life on and off the mat. When you are ready, put your hands down and gently open your eyes. And together we bow. Namaste.











# 27. Living Without Regret

Length: 15-20 Minutes

**Description:** Bring to mind any past or recent regrets and make peace with them

through forgiveness and faith.

**Themes:** Cleansing, Letting Go, Forgiveness

**Meditation Script:** Come into a comfortable, seated position on your yoga mat. You can use Sukhasana (Easy Seated) or whatever makes you feel comfortable. Sit up nice and tall, putting your hands on your legs. Keep your shoulders relaxed, close your eyes and breathe. Begin to slow down your breathing and observe your natural rhythm as your belly rises and falls. [pause] On each inhale, hold your breath for a few seconds. Then, release it, completely emptying your lungs of air. Repeat a few more times. [pause] Embrace the stillness. Surrender to the silence. Be present with me now, as I guide you through a meditation on living without regret. Should your mind begin to wander, bring your attention back to your breath, my voice, and this present moment.

So many of us live with regret. In fact, next to love, regret is the second most felt emotion. Whether you regret missed opportunities or conscious or willful mistakes of the past, you can move past regret and be free. Take a moment to reflect upon a regret in your past that you are still struggling with today - something that, if you had the chance to do it over, you'd do it differently. Maybe it the loss of love relationship, a financial decision missed or gone bad, a bad or missed career choice, or a family situation. [pause]

Think about how long you have allowed this regret to linger in your heart. Has it been months or even years that you have suffered with the pain of regret? Are you now ready to be free? To let it go and move forward? To forgive yourself? [pause]

What has this regret taught you? What lessons have you learned? Anything that we go through provides us with wonderful lessons, even if it's not to do that thing again. Acknowledging and confessing our regrets helps to clear our heart and soul of them. It helps them to lose their power over us.

In the Bible, there is a story about a king named David who suffered from much pain and regret. David said that when he did not acknowledge his regrets, it felt like his bones were wasting away and all day long his heart groaned. He felt heaviness in his heart and had no strength in his body. Then, instantly he felt relief when he acknowledged and released his pain to his Creator and was open and honest

about his feelings.

If you have never acknowledged or released specific regrets, why not do it now? [pause] The spirit of Love is close to the brokenhearted. If you desire, take a moment to silently acknowledge your regrets and gently let them go. [pause]

Allow your breath to move any regret from your body. Taking deep breaths in and out of the nose. Inhale peace. Exhale regret. Breathe in joy. Breathe out sorrow.

Living with regret narrows our focus in life. Regret tells us that there are only specific ways in which we can do specific things, at specific times, with specific people. We lose sight that there are as many possibilities as there are stars in the sky. In your mind, see the millions of stars in the sky in various shapes and sizes. These stars represent the many ways that you can receive the good that you desire, even now.

If you've been holding onto limited ways to achieve your dreams, can you release those now? Can you open your heart to new paths, new endeavors, and new opportunities that might want to present themselves in ways completely unexpected? If so, surrender your limitations for the bountifulness and abundance in the universe.

The great author, Henry David Thoreau once said, "Be confident in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined."

Have your regrets stopped you from living the life of your dreams? Are you so focused on the past and what you don't have that you can't embrace your future or fathom what it may hold? The problem with living in the past or too far towards the future, is that we forfeit the joy we could be experiencing right now. The past is gone; the future is not promised. Can you reflect on those things right now - activities and people that bring you joy today? Allow the positive emotions these thoughts bring to wash over you and soothe your heart.

Do you recognize that even without the lost relationship, finances, career, or whatever is causing you regret, you still have so much for which you can be thankful? Take a few moments to feel grateful for what you do have. Don't let society dictate to you what you should have or should be doing. The only path to take is the one that is led by your heart, and sometimes it just doesn't work out the way you hoped, but at least you tried. Maybe you gave up too soon. Maybe you should have tried harder, or maybe you should have left sooner. These are all games of the mind. It's okay. You did the best you could with who you were in that moment. Forgive yourself and move on. [pause]

There are still more chapters to be written, even if you believe you failed in some areas in your life. There are more blessings to come if you will keep your heart open to receive the gifts of life.

Be grateful that you can recognize your regrets, so you never have to repeat them again. Be thankful for the regrets that will help you to make different choices the next time around. Instead of giving up and giving in, gird your heart, and let go of these memories. Acknowledge them one last time and then give them a proper and loving burial. Grieve the loss one last time or how many times you need. [pause]

Allow your breath to move any remaining regret from your body. Taking deep breaths in and out of the nose. Inhale peace. Exhale regret. Breathe in joy. Breathe out sorrow.

Never look back from this day forward. We only keep our past alive by reflecting on it today. There is so much more for you than what lies behind. Open your heart to love and trust. [pause]

Stay focused on the present moment while taking small steps towards your dreams. Take one-step at a time. Don't try to force it or rush it. Take one-step, then another, finding pleasure and joy in each part of your journey. [pause]

Let the peace and Love that passes all understanding rule your heart and mind. As much as we'd like to think we are in control, there is a higher force in the universe keeping it all going. And you are an important part of this plan, so always feel loved and supported.

Conclude by imagining a shower of bright white light that purifies your body, taking away tensions, blocks, and any remaining regret away. Take a few more breaths by calmly coming back into reality and opening your eyes.

Bring your hands into prayer. Notice how you feel, how your body, and soul and mind are now back on track. Ready to fulfill your life in a happier and more productive way.

Continue to rest in your state of relaxation. Take another deep breath in and feel the energy flowing again throughout the body. Now breathe in and release.

Seal your practice with a grateful bow. Namaste.











#### 28. Visualization Meditation for Peace

Length: 10 minutes

**Description:** Let the ebb and flow of the waves help you to release any worries or

burdens and find peace in the tranquil surroundings of nature.

Themes: Peace, Mindfulness, Present Moment

**Meditation Script:** Take your time to get comfortable. Sit up nice and tall. Keep your shoulders relaxed, close your eyes, and breathe. Feel free to lay your arms down softly on your thighs. [pause]

Once you feel settled in your comfortable position, take some deep breaths in through your nose and exhale through your mouth. [pause]

Take a moment to appreciate and acknowledge your commitment to this moment. [pause]

This is your time to find your peace of mind, to find your inner balance and see everything in perspective.

Take a long deep breath in through your nose and exhale through your mouth with a sigh.

Try to feel even more grounded in your seated position and feel the earth underneath supporting you.

Take at least three breaths at your own pace; nothing complicated - just breathe into your thoughts. Whatever shows up - observe it, accept it, and let it all go. [pause]

Now we're going to take a little trip in our imagination. Take a few moments to imagine yourself seated on a sandy beach. No one's around you. You feel the sun on your skin, while the warm sand is on your feet. [pause]

Make your breaths a little bit deeper and heavier. Listen to this sound and listen to your prana. [pause] Now take long deep breaths in through your nose and exhale through your mouth. [pause]

Focus now on the relaxing, calming sound of the waves of the ocean in front of you. [pause]

See the crystal-clear waters rippling and reflecting the ray of lights. [pause]

If your mind starts wandering and some negativity or worry shows, then just breathe into it.

Deep breath in - into the waves; deep breath out. Feel the sound of your worry and negativity flushing away, dissolving. [pause]

And again. [pause]

Deep breath in - into the waves; deep breath out - feel the sound of your worry and negativity flushing away; let it all go. [pause]

One last time, make the most of it. [pause]

Deep breath in - into the waves. Let them recollect all your thoughts. Feel your negativity and worries disappearing; long deep breathe out. [pause]

Now take in all the positive vibes of this scenario - the light, the calming waters, and the warm and reassuring sand. The rhythm of the waves cradling you and leading you to your higher version of yourself - with a new and improved positive attitude to live the rest of your day with intention, positivity, and peace.

Bring your hands into prayer and notice how you feel, how your mind and spirit are now back on track. Remember you can get back to this scenario every time you need too; you can elope and feel connected again. You can come here to nourish your soul even more.

Sit quietly in this calming, relaxing moment...take a long breath in...feel the peace flowing again...all though your body...and exhale and release...

Let's seal our practice with a grateful bow...Namaste.











### 29. I AM Mantra Meditation

Length: 10 minutes

**Description:** A mantra is a powerful way to anchor and soothe the mind. Using the

mantra "I AM" to affirm whatever you need to be in this moment.

Themes: Mindfulness, Peace, Present Moment

**Meditation Script:** Come into a comfortable seated position on your yoga mat. Find a position that makes you feel comfortable and at ease, and that it is completely pain-free. If you need even more support, then sit on a block or a blanket. Sit up nice and tall, put your hands on your legs, keep your shoulders relaxed, close your eyes and breathe.

Take a moment to appreciate what your body just did during your yoga practice. Explore your emotions, your feelings, and your inner voice.

Take a deep breath in through your nose and exhale out of your mouth.

Try to explore your higher self. Open your heart and focus on how you really feel. Take another long deep breath in and long breath out.

Today we will focus on several mantras or affirmative phrases that will focus and ground us. Let's begin with something easy to say, something useful to really connect to this moment and to the practice.

Take a deep breath in through your nose, exhale out of the mouth and say out loud, I AM PRESENT. Don't be shy, listen to the sound of your voice, and to your commitment coming to life.

Again, take a deep breath in through your nose, exhale out of the mouth, and say out loud, I AM PRESENT.

Feel the power of your words, the vibrations in your chest, and the clarity taking over all through your body.

One more time.

Take a deep breath in through your nose, exhale through the mouth and say aloud: I AM PRESENT. Try to spend at least 10 breaths in your meditation posture to focus on how you really feel. [pause] Use your breath to inhale peace and positivity. Exhale out negativity and whatever makes you feel uncomfortable. [pause]

Whatever shows up, every thought, every emotion, just be an observer - breathe into it. [pause]

Now we are going to take things to another level. Using our voice to soothe our present emotional and mental condition.

How do you feel?

Anxious? ......Sad?.....Stressed?

Whatever is going on right now, you have the power to let it all go.

You have the power to be the best higher supporter of yourself. (pause)

Now, create your own mantra. Create a motivating positive short phrase or sentence that can help you to get through this moment and what is coming next.

Say aloud: "I AM......"+ whatever can help you facing a hard time. "I AM CALM", ..."I AM OKAY"...."I AM STRONG". And so on...[pause]

Use it as the perfect chance to customize this meditation to feel supported and more into yourself. Get to know yourself a little bit better and learn how to really sooth your soul. [pause]

Keep going with your own mantra.

Take a deep breath in through your nose and exhale through the mouth and say out loud your own mantra or affirmative phrase.

Repeat this at least five times or until you are satisfied.

Bring this mantra with you on and off the mat to use it to soothe your soul and spirit whenever you need it.

Take your time, and when you feel ready, bow forward and seal your practice with Namaste.











### 30. Setting an Intention for Your Day Meditation

Length: 10 minutes

Description: Starting your day with intention will help you to be more mindful and

productive. It will support your happiness and well-being.

Themes: Purpose, Clarity, Direction

**Meditation Script:** Take in some deep cleansing breaths. Begin with a few times in through your nose and out of your mouth. Now continue on your own. Settle into your body and allow all tension to be released. Let your shoulders relax. Soften all the muscles in your head, around your eyes, and along your jaws. Sink into a deeper level of relaxation, comfort, and ease with every exhale. Bring your breath back to its natural rhythm as we move into our **Setting an Intention for our Day meditation**. [pause]

Feel yourself grounded deep into the earth. Feel present. Feel supported.

Take a few breaths to empty your mind and to let go of your to-do list for today. Surrendering all to this present moment. [long pause]

As the day begins to unravel, think about what kind of day you would like to have today. So often we start our day without taking any time to check-in with ourselves, to reset our mind, or emotions. We carry with us the mental and emotional baggage from the past that can weigh us down and interfere with our well-being as well as our productivity. Continue to breathe in deep cleansing breaths so you can start this new day refreshed and renewed. [long pause]

Now think about your body. Think of one or two words that describe how you want your body to feel today. Some words that come to mind might be healthy, whole, or strong. Choose a word that describes how you want your body to feel today. [pause]

Begin to breathe in your word and then exhale your word. Feel your word penetrating every cell of your body and absorb the essence of your word, becoming strengthened by it. [pause]

Now think about your emotions. Think of one or two words that describe how you want to feel today. Some words that come to mind might be joyful, peaceful, or secure. Choose a word that describes how you want to feel emotionally today. [pause]

Begin to breathe in your word and then exhale it. Feel your word penetrating your emotions. Imbibe the essence of it and become strengthened by it. Allow it to push out any emotions that are not serving your highest wellbeing. [long pause]

Now bring your attention to your spirit. Think of one or two words that describe the essence of your spirit today. Some words that come to mind might be divine, pure, or grounded. Choose a word that best describes how you want to feel in your spirit today. [pause]

Begin to breathe in your word and then exhale your word. Feel your word entering your spirit. Embrace the essence of your word and become strengthened in your spirit by it. [long pause]

Now, take all three of your words and begin to repeat them silently in your mind. [pause]

See if you can visualize your words circulating around you. [short pause]

Now imagine your words entering into your heart and permeating through every member of your body from the top of your head, down to your fingertips and toes. Allow the words to become a part of you, a part of your being, a part of your character, or a part of your soul. [pause]

Allow these words to reset your day. Bathe your body, emotions, and spirit with intention that will support all of your endeavors today. [short pause]

Now begin to bring your attention back to your breath and your body. Wiggle your fingers and your toes. Bring your palms together in front of your heart. Remember today to let your intentions guide the way you want to present yourself to the world. Repeat them often and silently in your mind to keep them before you. Let's all bow together. Namaste.











# 31. Evening Meditation: Letting Go of The Day

Length: 10-15 minutes

**Description:** Reflect on your day noticing what brought you joy and what made you feel discomfort. Find gratitude or re-play the scene again in your mind with a different outcome. Poleose it all so you can retire with pages of mind.

outcome. Release it all so you can retire with peace of mind.

Themes: Releasing, Relaxation, Letting Go

**Meditation Script:** Breathe in deeply now. Notice your abdomen rising as you fill your lungs with air. With each exhale, release all muscle tension and mental stress. Allow your body to go limp with each cycle of your breath, as you ease into a deeper state, calm, and relaxation. Visualize and feel all the weights and worries of the world flowing from your body, down to your mat, and then into the earth. [pause] Enjoy the peace and the stillness as we move into our **Letting Go of the Day Meditation**.

Think back on your day, pondering some of the events that happened. See if you can observe them with gentle detachment. Imagine you are perched on a cloud watching your own movie screen in the sky. This magical screen plays back to you your day, so you can reflect on specific areas of your life, helping you to find gratitude as well as personal growth. [pause]

Out of the events or situations that come to mind, focus on any that brought you joy, peace, or contentment. Allow those specific moments to show up on your movie screen in the sky. As you replay these events, feel whatever emotions show up, deeply in your heart. Whether it is love, joy, peace, or something else, let the feelings begin at your heart and then let them spread throughout your body. Recognize and take a few more moments to appreciate and be grateful for these moments today. [pause]

Now bring your attention to any circumstances today that caused you hurt, fear, or pain. Reflect on what happened and bring any peak emotions you felt to the surface of your consciousness. What we feel we can heal. Feel the pain. Notice and acknowledge your discomfort. Let it burn itself right out of you with only peace and comfort remaining. Take a few deep breaths in and out through the nose to complete the cleansing cycle. [pause]

Lastly, reflect upon an action or behavior today that you regret or that didn't go so well. If you could, think about what you would do differently. See the scene replay on your private movie screen in the sky. Maybe you wasted a lot of time today on unimportant matters. Perhaps you broke your eating plan, failed to be true to yourself, or to your goals. Contemplate on it now. [pause]

Try to replay this scene with a different scenario and outcome. See yourself being successful, saying no, being a peacemaker, or whatever fits your story. [pause]

Now it is time to forgive yourself, wash the slate clean, and let it go. Every day is a new opportunity to start afresh and anew.

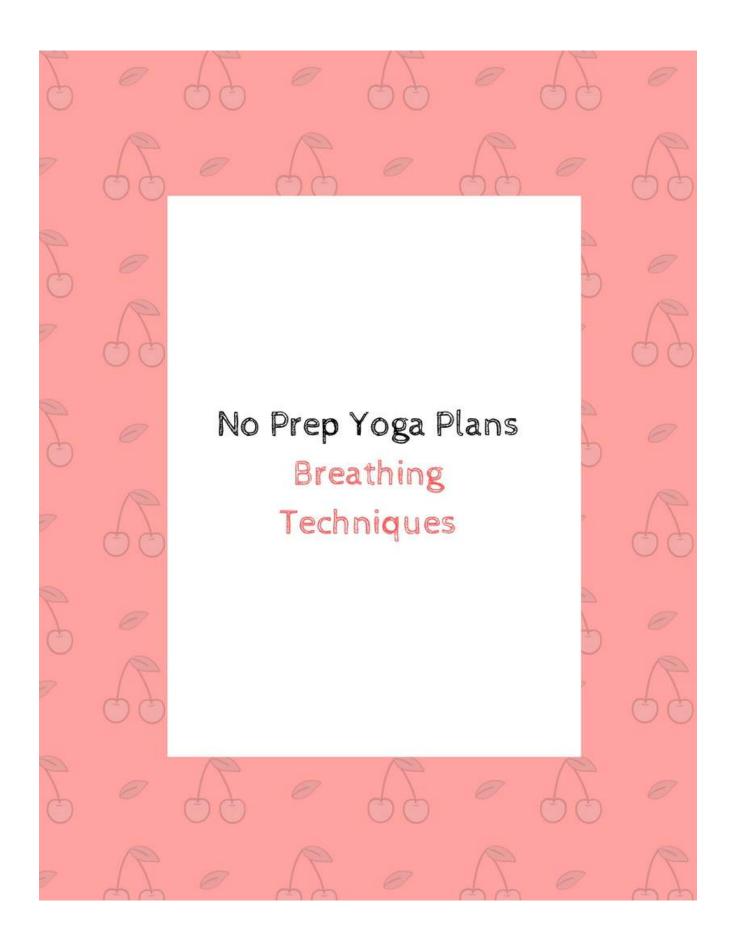
Repeat silently and fill in the blank after me: "I deeply and completely love and accept myself, even though I (whatever you did with which you weren't happy). Let's do it again: I deeply and completely love and accept myself, even though I .

As we come to the conclusion of our reflective evening meditation practice, let's embrace and be grateful for all the good we experienced today and the opportunity to release and let go of the burdens that don't lift us up or empower us.

In whatever way that seems right to you, let go of all weights and heaviness. See them as balloons being released into the air, drifting further and further away, never to be seen again.

Let serenity fill your heart and calmness soothe your mind. Take these with you as you leave today. Sleep with tranquil peace tonight.

Now bring your hands together into prayer and pull them close to your heart. Let's close our meditation with one deep inhale and OM. Inhale OM, Exhale. Namaste.





# Yoga Breathing Techniques Numerous Benefits of Deep Breathing

Deep breathing has numerous health benefits. Try deep breathing when you feel stressed, angry, or anxious. Many people rarely deep breathe during their normal days, even when not stressed. Some people believe deep breathing is yoga people, which is not the case. If you have never considered deep breathing, you are missing out numerous benefits that can improve your general health.

Deep breathing is essential if you want to live healthy for a long time and to have good moods. Breathing properly is associated with noticeable health benefits such as treating sleep problems, body pains, and aches, among other benefits. Below are 18 benefits of deep breathing. In addition, why you need to incorporate it into your day-to-day routine.

- **1. Deep breathing helps to detoxify the body** Our bodies are capable of getting rid of more than 70 percent of toxins just through proper breathing alone. Therefore, you are not releasing those toxins if you are not breathing properly. Failure to breath correctly leads to overworking the other body systems. For example, when you exhale, you release carbon dioxide, which is a natural waste of your body.
- **2. Deep breathing helps to release tension** Your body compresses when you are angry, stressed, or scared. Most of the body muscles get tight making the breathing difficult and shallow. When you cannot breathe properly, your body is not getting sufficient oxygen needed.

- **3.** Deep breathing brings clarity by relaxing your mind and body- Good flow of oxygen into the brain helps to reduce anxiety levels. When you breathe deeply, slowly and pay attention to the rhythm, your mind and body relax. As the body relaxes, you are able to concentrate well.
- **4.** To relieve emotional issues, consider deep breathing- To get rid of emotional problems, pay attention to your breathing. Deep breathing clears uncomfortable feelings out of the body.
- **5. Deep breathing helps to relieve body pain-** The connection between the body, the mind, and the feeling is beyond many people. For instance, when you feel pain in any part of the body, you normally hold your breath. However, according to numerous studies, deep breathing helps to relieve body pain.
- **6. Proper breathing massages the body organs** -Deep breathing is an exercise of the diaphragm. The movements created by the diaphragm muscles massage the liver, small intestines, pancreas, and the stomach. The diaphragm descends and the abdomen expands as you inhale. Through these movements, vital organs in the body function properly, and you improve the blood circulation. Deep breathing also strengthens abdominal muscles.
- **7. Breathing increases the body muscles** -Deep breathing is a process that improves oxygenation in all body cells. With enough oxygen in the body, especially to vital organs such as the brain, body muscles increase.
- **8.** The immune system improves through deep breathing- Another health benefit of deep breathing is strengthening the immune system. When you breathe in, oxygen moves from the lungs to the bloodstream. It then attaches itself to the hemoglobin and then is transported to all body parts. By breathing properly, you improve the immune system.
- **9. Deep breathing improves body posture** Deep breathing techniques over a period of time improves body posture. Poor posture can lead to improper breathing among other health issues. So, you can begin to improve your body posture by learning deep breathing techniques as early as possible.
- **10.** You improve the quality of your blood through deep breathing -Through deep breathing techniques, you can be able to exhale all carbon dioxide in the body and increase the amount of oxygen you breathe in. This helps to increase the quality of the blood.
- **11. Deep breathing helps to develop digestion** Our digestive organs, such as the stomach and the intestines, need a lot of oxygen to function properly. Through deep breathing, you can improve the digestion.
- **12. You improve the nervous system through deep breathing** The entire nervous system needs an efficient flow of oxygen to function properly. The spinal cord, the brain, and the nerves function well when you breathe properly. Your entire body functions well too since the nerves system communicates to the entire body when it functions properly.
- **13. Proper breathing makes the lungs stronger** When you deep breathe, your lungs become stronger and very powerful. You also eliminate major respiratory problems through deep breathing.

- **14. Deep breathing makes the heart healthy** Proper breathing techniques make the work of the heart simple. More oxygen is inhaled since deep breathing makes the lungs stronger. This means more blood is sent to the lungs, and the heart does not need to overwork itself to deliver oxygen to other body organs. Also, proper breathing brings a significant gap in the lungs, making the heart rest a bit.
- **15. Deep breathing helps in weight control** If you want to lose some pounds, consider deep breathing. The extra oxygen helps to burn the excess fat in the body. Also, if you would like to add some kilos, the extra oxygen helps to feed hungry glands and body tissues.
- 16. You can improve energy levels and stamina through deep breathing.
- 17. Deep breathing helps in cellular rejuvenation.
- **18. Proper breathing boosts your mood** More oxygen in the brain and vital organs in the body helps to elevate the moods and reduce physical pain.

## **How to Deep Breathe Properly**

For you to enjoy the above health benefits, you need to learn how to deep breathe properly. You should not only involve the chest, but your abdomen as well. Even in ancient times, the Romans and the Greeks recommended deep breathing as the best exercise for cleansing the body system and providing inner strength.

Deep breathing is a very significant exercise for everyone. However, the exercise should be slow, rhythmic, deep, and through the nose not the mouth. The recommended strategy is three or four seconds in, hold, and then three or four seconds out. Below are important steps on how to perform deep breathing.

- **Step 1:** Inhale through your nose, expand the belly, and then fill the chest. Count up to five seconds.
- **Step 2:** Hold for three or four seconds. Feel the cells filled with healing, golden, and balancing energy.
- **Step 3:** Start exhaling from the parted mouth. You should feel your body cells releasing waste and draining the old energy. Count up to five seconds.

#### Bhastrika or Bellows Breath



If you teach an early morning class or lunchtime yoga class, Bellow's Breath will help to wake students up or help them get over the mid-day slump. Bhastrika pranayama or Bellows Breath is an energy-boosting breathing exercise that helps to rejuvenate the body, purify the mind, and better your breathing. It can also reduce anxiety, headaches, and increase alertness. It may be best to avoid doing it late evenings since Bhastrika makes your mind active.

#### Benefits of Bhastrika

- Good for clearing your mind.
- Releasing negative energy.
- Invigorates your body.
- Relaxes your muscles and mind.
- Powers you out of that sluggish motion.
- Makes your voice better by improving your talking and singing.
- Purifies your blood and removes foreign objects from your body.
- Improves your breathing and revitalizes all organs in your body.
- Good for fatigue and takes care of that mid-day slump.
- Improves the health of the brain and heart by supplying enough oxygen.
- Calms you down and reduces anxiety.
- Warms up your body therefore it is a good exercise for the cold weather.
- Improves your blood circulation.
- Helps in treatment of allergies, throat infections, tonsils, asthma, and thyroid.
- Boosts your immune system and is good for your appetite.
- Strengthens your lungs and makes your breathing deeper.

#### How to Do Bhastrika - Bellows Breath Technique

- 1. Sit up in any steady and comfortable position. Relax your shoulders and close your eyes.
- 2. Have your legs crossed.
- 3. Have both your hands rest on the knees.
- 4. Keep your body tall and close your mouth.
- 5. Start with exhaling forcefully in rapid succession. First, take a deep breath in for about one

second, filling both your lungs with air.

- 6. Delicately breathe out, for about one to two and a half seconds, producing a hissing sound.
- 7. Make sure the breath comes from your diaphragm and your chest fills up with air whenever inhaling.
- 8. Take the deep breaths, and exhale gently for about five to 10 inhalations and exhalations per cycle. You can do three to five rounds.
- 9. Rest between the rounds, allowing for your breathing to come back to normal.
- 10. Complete your final inhalation and exhalation exercise.

#### **Additional Tips**

- You can do Bellow's Breath by lifting the arms (cactus style) on the inhale and lowering on the exhale.
- Keep your chest, shoulders, neck, and head relaxed when inhaling and exhaling.
- Pace yourself with your inhaling and exhaling, depending on your health.
- Monitor your posture and breathing by sitting in front of a mirror.
- Best done in the morning or mid-day, as to not interfere with your sleep.
- A great 'pick me up' and is good for getting you out of a fog or that mid-day slump.
- Can pick up speed to two breathes (inhale/exhale) per second.

#### Who Should Not Do Bellows Breath?

- If you are pregnant.
- If you have high blood pressure.
- If you have heart disease.
- If you are suffering from acute asthma or fever.
- If you have a severe nose blockage.
- If you recently underwent surgery, you should also consult your doctor first, before doing this energizing breathing exercise.

## Hummingbee Breath



The Hummingbee Breath, also known as Bhramari pranayama, is an effective yoga breathing technique that helps in calming down and relaxing the mind instantly. This breathing technique is named after a black Indian bee named Bhramari. The technique is commonly referred to as the hummingbee technique because the exhalation in the technique resembles a bee's humming sound. Yoga instructors cite the technique as being one of the most efficient breathing exercises to use for relaxing the mind from frustration, anxiety, or agitation.

#### Benefits of Hummingbee Breath Technique

There are a couple of benefits attributed to the Bhramari pranayama technique. These benefits include:

- Inducing an instant mental calming effect
- Reducing hypertension
- Relieving mental stress
- Relieving fatigue
- Improving breathing
- Helps in mitigating migraines
- Builds confidence

#### **How to do Hummingbee Breath:**

Ideally, this technique works on a concept of calming and soothing nerves on the forehead and around the brain. The vibrations produced by the humming sound naturally calm these nerves and consequently relieve the mind of any stress. Here is how to do the technique:

- 1. Find a well-ventilated corner and sit upright with the eyes closed and with a gentle smile on the face.
- 2. Keep the eyes closed for a considerable amount of time. Feel the quietness and sensations within the body.
- 3. Place the index fingers gently on the cartilage between the ears and cheeks.

- 4. While in this position (fingers on the cartilage), take deep breaths in and out and at the same time pressing the cartilage gently. There are two ways of pressing the cartilage: You can press the cartilage continually or press it in & out, while making loud humming sounds like a bee.
- 5. For better and efficient results, make a high-pitched humming sound as opposed to low-pitched sounds.
- 6. Breathe in again while repeating the pattern for three to four times.

#### Additional tips to follow when doing the Bhramari pranayama

- Do not put the index fingers inside the ears. The fingers should be placed gently on the cartilage.
- Keep the mouth closed when making a humming sound.
- Avoid hard pressing the cartilage but instead press gently with the index fingers.

The most fascinating thing about the hummingbee breath technique in yoga is that it is a technique for all. From the children to the elderly, the technique is 100% safe and has exceedingly great benefits on all people regardless of their ages. You can also perform the technique while lying on your back on a mat in a well-ventilated room. When in this position, you need not press the cartilage using your index fingers, but can simply make the humming while breathing in and out.

## Ujjayi Breath Yoga Technique



**Ujjayi** pranayama technique, also known as the 'victorious' technique is an energizing and relaxing breathing technique. This technique needs to be long (dirge) and smooth (suksma) to produce a relaxing feeling to the doer. The ujjayi sound in the technique is produced by constricting the throat's opening gently thereby creating a smooth resistance to air passage. Gently pulling the air on inhalation and exhalation against the resistance created by constriction on the throat's opening produces a soothing sound.

#### <u>Ujjayi Breath Benefits</u>

There are several exceedingly great benefits of Ujjayi breath yoga technique including but not limited too:

- Enhances mental awareness
- Improves spiritual wellbeing
- Regulates body heating
- Relieves tension in the mind
- Strengthens the nervous system
- Relieves sinus pressure
- How to do the **Ujjayi** breath technique

#### **How to Do Ujjayi Breath:**

The throat should not be tightened when practicing this pranayama (breathing) technique. For people with respiratory conditions like emphysema and asthma, the technique should only be done with the guidance and monitoring of a qualified yoga instructor. If you feel dizzy or become faint, you should stop performing the technique immediately. Here is how to do the **ujjayi breath technique**:

- 1. Relax the body and close the eyes gently while in a comfortable sitting position. Drop the mouth slightly open to relax the tongue and jaw.
- 2. Perform deep inhalation and exhalation through the mouth and feel the air passing through the windpipe.
- 3. When exhaling, contract the throat slightly like you do when whispering and produce a soft whispering sound "aahh." Imagine the sound forming a breath fog on a window.

- 4. Constrict the throat during inhalations after you are comfortable with the exhalations. This constriction when inhaling and exhaling makes an "ocean" sound that moves in and out softly.
- 5. When you can control inhalations and exhalations comfortably, close the mouth gently and breathe through the nose only. You will notice the "ocean" sounds still present. Direct your breath to the vocal cords while ensuring that the mouth is closed but the lips are soft.
- 6. Allow the "ocean" sounds produced during inhalation and exhalations soothe the mind.
- 7. Practice the ujjayi technique for five minutes but increase to 15 minutes while seated for deeper meditation.

#### Additional tips during Ujjayi pranayama

- Your breath needs to be steady, smooth and full for the "ocean" sound to soothe the mind.
- Maintain breath steadiness and smoothness throughout the technique.
- Do not push yourself beyond the limits as this may cause injury to your breathing tract and will definitely not produce a soothing effect on the mind.

When practicing the ujjayi breath technique, take it slow and develop your breathing control by relaxing and breathing consciously and effortlessly. This will free the mind of any stress or tension.

## Three Part Yoga Breath



The Three-Part Yoga Breath, also known as Dirga pranayama is one of the eight classical limbs practiced in yoga. Pranayama assists in expanding one's attentiveness and enables them to see their own soul through themselves. Practicing three-part yoga breath teaches you how to breathe fully and completely.

#### **Benefits of Three-Part Yoga Breath**

- Deep three-part yoga breathing increases the supply of oxygen to the body.
- Increased oxygen supply indicates that more blood with oxygen circulates to all body cells.
- With the air exchange at the cells, more carbon dioxide gas is eliminated from the body.
- Deep breathing provides more life force, vitality, and energy to the body.
- The three-part yoga breathing also helps in calming down body nerves and minimizes stress.
- It helps in preparing for deep meditation.

#### **How to do Three Part Yoga Breath:**

- 1. With your eyes closed, lie down on your back and relax your face and body. You can either keep your legs stretched out or bend your knees. Bring your feet soles to your mat if that makes you more comfortable.
- 2. Start by watching the natural way of inhaling and exhaling without altering anything. If anything from the back of your mind distracts you, try to disengage yourself from the thoughts. Let them go as soon as you notice them so that you can go back to your inhales and exhales.
- **3.** Now start to inhale through the nose deeply.
- **4.** Fill up your stomach with your breath each time you inhale. Expand the stomach with air.
- **5.** Expel the air from your stomach each time you exhale. Draw your navel back towards your spine to ensure that the stomach is empty of air.
- **6.** Repeat the deep stomach breathing five times. This is the first part.
- 7. On the next breath in, fill up the stomach as explained above. When the stomach is full, draw in more breath and allow the air to expand to the rib cage. This will make the ribs widen apart.
- **8.** On the next breath out, allow the air to go first from the rib cage, allowing the ribs to slide back closer to each other. Let the air out of the stomach, pulling the navel back towards the spine.
- 9. Do the deep breathing into the stomach and rib cage five times. This is the second part.
- **10.** During the next inhale, fill up both the stomach and rib cage with air as explained above. Then, breathe in a little more air and allow it to fill the upper chest and to the collarbone, causing the heart center to expand and rise.

- **11.** During the next exhale, let the breath go out first from the upper chest, from the rib cage and then from the stomach.
- **12.** Continue at your own speed, gradually letting the three parts of breath go smoothly without pausing.
- **13.** Continue for 10 breaths.

#### Who shouldn't do the Three-Part Yoga breath?

No one, as long as one can breathe, they can practice the three-part yoga breath and enjoy all the benefits that come with it.

## Alternate Nostril Breathing



#### Nadi Shodhana is often referred to as Alternate Nostril Breathing.

- Nadi means subtle energy channel.
- Shodhan means cleaning, purification.
- Pranayama means breathing technique.

The Nadi Shodhan pranayama is a breathing technique that helps clear blocked energy channels, which are caused by stress, physical toxicity, trauma, and an unhealthy lifestyle. Blocked energy channels (nadi) can lead to illness, depression, low energy, sluggish digestion, itching, irritability, dry throat, excessive eating, and sexual problems.

#### **Benefits of Alternate Nostril Breathing**

- Helps to calm and clear the mind.
- Helps to bring the mind back to the present moment.
- Improves circulatory and respiratory issues.
- Helps to reduce stress in the mind and body.
- Brings balance into the right and left hemispheres of the brain.
- Helps to clear, purify, and balance the energy centers in the body.
- Can help to keep body temperature in balance.

#### How to Do Nadi Shodhan pranayama? - Alternate Nostril Breathing Technique

- 1. Sit comfortably with your spine erect and shoulders relaxed.
- 2. Rest your left hand on the left knee.
- 3. Very gently and without pressure, place the tops of your right index finger and middle finger between the eyebrows. Place your little finger and ring finger on the left nostril, and the thumb on the right nostril. These will be used open or close your left and right nostril.
- 4. Press your thumb down on the right nostril and breathe out gently through the left nostril. Do not force the breathing and keep the flow gentle and natural. Do not breathe from the mouth or make any sound while breathing.
- 5. Breathe in from the right nostril and exhale from the left. You have now completed one round. Continue inhaling and exhaling from alternate nostrils.

6. Continue alternating sides. After every exhalation, remember to breathe in from the same nostril from which you exhaled. Keep your eyes closed throughout and continue taking long, deep, smooth breaths without any force or effort.

#### **Additional Tips:**

- ❖ Do not use the Ujjayi breath.
- ❖ Your exhalation should be longer than inhalation.
- ❖ After every exhalation, remember to breathe in from the same nostril from which you exhaled.
- Keep your eyes closed throughout and continue taking long, deep, smooth breaths without any force or effort.
- Should be safe for all to do.

## Skull Shining Yoga Breath



Skull-shining yoga breath technique is a famous technique known for internal cleansing. It is mainly used as a simple warm-up for other yoga techniques. Skull-shining breathing is also known as the Kapalabhati-pranayama technique. It is an advanced exercise that requires an experienced teacher for you to be perfect. However, by regular practice, you can be able to master the technique well. The skull-shining breathing means the shining forehead. It is precisely what happens when you practice the move regularly.

#### Benefits of Skull-Shining breathing yoga technique

There are numerous benefits associated with Kapalabhati-pranayama technique. Some of the main benefits include:

- \* Improving the metabolic rate, thus it is good for weight loss.
- \* Help to clear the energy channels.
- \* A good exercise for people with diabetes because it stimulates abdominal organs.
- \* Help to improve the blood circulation.
- \* Develops the digestive tract.
- \* Helps to trim down the belly.
- \* Rejuvenates the brain and energizes the nerves.
- \* Uplifts and calms the mind.

#### How to perform skull-shining breathing technique

The Skull-shining breathing technique is a yoga move that helps to release toxins. It is one of the most-popular exercises for internal purification. It is also an excellent warm-up practice.

Here is how to do Kapalabhati-pranayama technique:

- **Step 1**: Relax as you sit with your spine elected. Then place the hands on your knees, and palms wide open to the sky.
- Step 2: Take a full breath. Try to pull in your stomach as you exhale. Then, pull the navel back

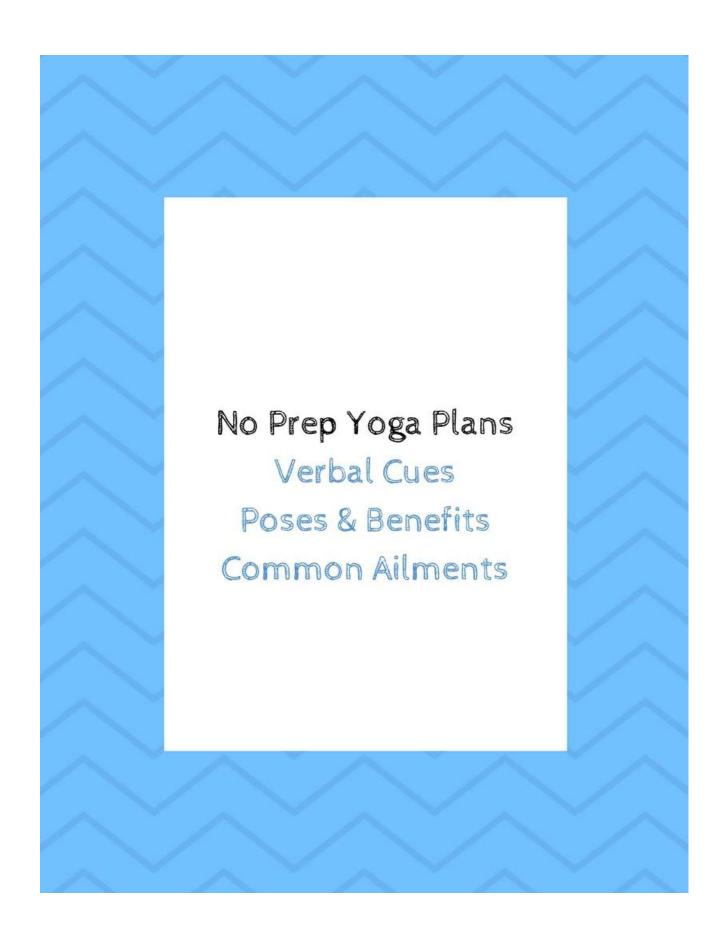
towards your spine. Try to do as much as you can do, but make sure you are comfortable. You can place your hand on the stomach to try to feel your abdominal muscles as they contract. Now pull the navel inward.

- **Step 3:** Relax your navel and the abdomen and let the breath flow into the lungs as usual.
- **Step 4:** Try to take twenty such breaths. After twenty breaths, you will have completed round one of Skull shining breathing technique.
- **Step 5:** After finishing round one, close the eyes and relax. You will feel the sensations of the body.
- **Step 6:** Do two or more rounds of Kapalabhati pranayama technique.

#### Who should avoid doing Kapalabhati-pranayama technique (Skull-shining yoga breath)?

This technique is safe and has numerous benefits for everyone regardless of gender or age. However, if you have artificial pacemakers, backache, or recently undergone surgery, avoid the technique at the moment. In addition, pregnant women or women that have given birth recently should not practice this exercise. Individuals with heart problems or with hypertension should try the technique under a yoga teacher.





## **Verbal Cueing Tips**

This section of No Prep Yoga Plans includes 24 verbal cues for the most popular poses as well as their benefits. Before moving forward, below you will find some cueing tips that are used by master yoga teachers. I found these tips so useful that I wanted to share them with you. According to Carla Bradley of Verge Body Mind and 20-year veteran yoga teacher, the most common verbal cueing mistakes include:

- 1. **Talking way too much** Many times new yoga teachers use too many words when giving verbal cues. Instead, verbal cues should be purposeful, direct, and succinct.
- 2. **Making instructions too complicated** This can go hand in hand with talking too much. The lengthier the yoga instructions, the more room for confusion.
- 3. **Passive cueing-** Using passive verbs takes away from strong and direct instruction. Instead of saying, "Now we're going to raise our hands overhead," say, "Raise your hands overhead."
- 4. **Not creating another space for silence or pausing** Students come to yoga primarily to release and relax, and they need some silence and space integrated within the practice to help them do so. Too much talking can interfere with their peace of mind.

Now that you know what not to do, I'll share some of the **most effective verbal cueing strategies** according to Bradley. These include:

- 1. **Announcing the Pose** Verbally stating the yoga pose before giving cueing instructions helps students know the direction you are going. Students can spend more time mindfully moving into the pose than waiting to hear your directions or what comes next.
- 2. **Using active words** Start your cueing with active verbs and avoid wordiness like "now we're going to" or "now gently begin to..." Instead, use verbal cues like, "raise your arms," "plant your right foot," or "press hands into the floor."
- 3. **Speaking directly to body parts** Similar to the above cueing examples, after saying the verb, add the affected body part.
- 4. **Leading with the breath** Incorporating and integrating the breath throughout the practice helps students to calm their minds and relax. Exclaiming, "Inhale or exhale," occasionally before, during, or transitioning between poses helps students stay mindful of focusing on this important physical and emotional process.
- 5. **W.A.I.T (Why am I talking?)-** Bradley explains a cycle for each pose that includes what she calls support cues. **Support cues** come in five varieties and help students embrace the poses more fully. These support cues include: 1) silence, 2) mental support, 3) breathing, 4) physical support, and 5) personal experiences/inspiration.

Incorporate support cues while students sit, stand, or lie in stationary positions. I will break these down a little further below and how you can use NPYP for some of these:

**Silence**- Always incorporate some silence within each pose. Once students are set up in the pose, this might look like two or more full breathes of silence. Silence also gives students a little time to settle in or deepen into the pose before exiting or transitioning into a new pose.

**Mental Support**- As yoga teachers we want our students to become more mindful of their sensations, thoughts, feelings, and insights that might be showing up. Use the **NPYP Creating Mindful Awareness Section** for mindful prompts you can share with students as they hold poses or rest.

**Breathing**- Use inhale and exhale prompts to ensure students incorporate the breath throughout the practice. Other prompts include: Breath in, breathe out; full breath in, full breath out.

**Physical Support**- Physical support can be in the form of assisting with alignment; rubbing backs and necks, or even sharing the benefits of the current pose with students. Use the **NPYP Verbal Cueing Guide** with benefits to remind you of pose benefits that you can share with your students.

**Personal Experience/ Inspiration**- Interject NPYP inspirational affirmations, scriptures, prayers, or briefly share personal anecdotes around your yoga theme.

Lastly, each yoga pose should progress through four stages, states Bradley in her *Rock Your Yoga Class Video Series*, these include: Super cues, Exit cues, Transitional cues, and Support cues. To learn more details about these, check out Bradley video.

#### **Some Common Yoga Active Cue Verbs:**

Bend	Anchor	Engage	Raise	Roll
Cup	Open	Activate	Bind	Twist
Kick	Drop	Extend	Wrap	Gaze
Plant	Hold	Lunge	Relax	Airplane
Push	Focus	Contract	Surrender	Lower
Press	Hover	Lift	Draw	Roll



## 24 Top Yoga Verbal Cues

Visit Yoga International to listen to pronouncations:

 $\underline{https://yogainternational.com/brochure/sanskrit-pronunciation-guide}$ 

Boat Navasana	Benefits (nah-VAHS-uh-nuh)
Keep spine straight and legs straight (or bent). Balance on tailbone. Engage your core to find balance. Arms should be out in front of you parallel to the ground. Gaze at your toes.	Strengthens the thighs, hips, abdominal muscles, and the back. Targets the core muscles Massages internal organs Builds balance and concentration
Bound Angle / Butterfly Baddha Konasana	Benefits (BAH-duh cone-AHS-uh-nuh)
Bend your knees. Pull your heels toward your pelvis. Press the soles of your feet together. Lengthen torso. Bring feet to toward your legs.	Promotes healthy urinary and reproductive organs Increases general circulation by stretching major arteries and lymph glands in groin, legs, and thighs Stretches adductor muscles of the thighs Can help alleviate pain from sciatica Relieves discomfort from pregnancy and menstruation
Bow Dhanurasana	Benefits (DAHN-yoor-AHS-uh-nuh)
Lie on belly. Chin to mat. Arms by sides. Bend at knees bringing heels towards buttocks. Squeeze shoulder blades. Take hold of feet and draw knees towards each other. Spread toes and press feet into hands, Inhale and lift. Breathe into back.	Stretches the entire front of body. Strengthens the spine. Opens shoulders, chest, and throat. Stimulates circulation in pelvic area. Strengthens lungs.

Bridge	Benefits
Setu Bandha Sarvangasana	(SAY-too BAHN-duh shar-vahn-GAHS-uh-nuh)
Lie on your back.	Open and expand chest.
Bring feet close to your tailbone.	Strengthens mid and upper spine.
Stack knees directly on top of ankles.	Reduces depressed feelings
Feet are parallel & hip distance apart.	Stretches torso.
Lift your hips.	Increases circulation to thyroid gland.
Walk your shoulders together creating a shelf.	Energizes the legs.
Spin inner thighs towards the floor.	Relieves low back tightness
Create space between chin & chest.	Alleviates menstrual and menopause symptoms.

Camel	Benefits
Ustrasana	(OOH-tra-AA-SUN-aa)
Kneel on floor, knees hip with apart. Firm buttocks. Rest hands on back of pelvis. One hand at a time, cup hands on heels. Press hips forward. Lift heart. Head drops back.	Opens up the hips, stretching deep hip flexors. Stretches and strengthens the shoulders and back. Expands the abdominal region, improving digestion and elimination. Improves posture. Opens the chest, improving respiration. Relieves lower back pain.

Chair	Benefits
Utkatasana	(Oot-kah-TAHS-anah)
Stand erect with your feet and legs slightly apart or wedged together. Stretch your hands to the front with palms facing downwards. Keep elbows straight. Bend the knees. Push your pelvis down, as if you are sitting in an imaginary chair. Weight is in ball of foot and heels.	Tones the leg muscles Strengthens hip flexors, ankles, calves, and back. Stretches and tones chest and shoulders. Strengthens balance. Stimulates the heart, diaphragm, and abdominal organs.

Crescent Lunge	Benefits
Anjaneya	(AHN-jah-nay-AHS-uh-nuh)
Inhale your right leg high; exhale low lunge. Stack front knee over ankle. Back leg is straight and you're on the ball of your back foot. Raise your hands overhead. Palms face each other. Draw lower abs in. Lift through the chest.	Opens your groins and hips Stretches and tones thighs and legs Strengthens your knees, ankles, and waist Stimulates abdominals organs Increases stamina and lung capacity Lengthens the spine and stretches the chest Relieves indigestion, constipation, and sciatica

Relax your shoulders.

Downward Dog	Benefits
Adho Mukha Svanasana	(AH-doh MOO-kah shvah-NAHS-anna)
Plant hands shoulder distance apart.	Strengthens hands, wrists, low-back, hamstrings,
Feet hip distance apart.	calves, and Achilles tendons
Press through arms.	Relieves back pain by strengthening the entire back
Spread fingers wide.	and shoulder girdle
Feel pelvis lifting away from ribs.	Lengthens shoulders and shoulder blades
Draw shoulder blades toward pelvis.	Reduces tension and headaches by elongating the
Pull chest towards thighs.	cervical spine and neck and relaxing the head
Reach out through heels.	Deepens breathing and respiration
Pull the navel towards the spine.	Decreases anxiety and stress
·	Increases full-body circulation

Extended Side Angle Utthita Parsvakonasana	Benefits (oo-TEE-tah PARZH-vuh-ko-NAHS-uh-nuh)
From Warrior 1. Exhale. Forearm to thigh. Extend top arm up & forward. Gaze toward ceiling. Press knife-edge of the back foot into the mat. Roll top shoulder down back; open thru chest. Continually draw back hip up & roll it open.	Stretches side of the body. Reduces sciatica pain. Relieves hip, thigh, and low back pain due to arthritis. Opens groin area and tones belly. Helps to stabilize knees, hip joints, chest, and shoulders. Increases circulation around heart and lungs.

# Half Lords of the Fish Ardha Matsyendrasana Benefits (ARD-uh MAHT-see-ehn-DRAHS-uh-nuh)

From staff or seated pose.

Pull one knee into chest and place foot over

thigh. Press buttock into mat.

Twist torso towards bent knee.

Hug leg or place opposite arm outside bent leg. Place other arm behind back as you look over

shoulder.

Inhale lift spine, exhale deepen twist.

Stretches shoulders, hips, neck, and spine Relieves fatigue, backache, and sciatica Stimulates digestion and metabolism Stimulates kidneys and liver Relieves menstrual discomfort

Locust	Benefits
Salabhasana	(shah-lah-BAHS-uh-nuh)

Lie on belly.

Arms by sides, palms facing up.

Firm buttocks.

Inhale and lift head, shoulders, legs, and arms

away from floor.

Squeeze shoulder blades.

Arms and legs are parallel to floor.

Slide shoulders down your back.

Stretch through fingertips.

Gaze forward keeping neck long and base of skull lifted.

Strengthens the muscles of the spine, buttocks, and backs of the arms and legs.
Stretches the shoulders, chest, belly, and thighs.

Improves posture.
Stimulates abdominal organs.

Helps relieve stress.

Mountain Pose	Benefits
Tadasana	(tah-DAHS-uh-nuh)
Ground through your feet. Engage your quads. Pull belly to spine.	Improves posture Promotes stability and confidence. Strengthens thighs, knees, and ankles

Reach your hands to the sky.

Spread your fingers wide.

Palms facing each other, pinkies in.

Improves blood circulation

Encourages healthy digestion

**Encourages healthy digestion and elimination** 

Increases strength, power, and mobility in the feet,

Harmonizes the body and mind

Increases awareness, energy, and enthusiasm

Pigeon Kapotasana	Benefits (Cop-oh-TAH-sah-nah)
From lunge or downward facing dog, walk or glide one foot towards the opposite hand. Knee opens to opposite side of mat resting leg towards a 90-degree angle. Lengthen and extend back leg. Top of foot presses into the mat. Rest head, hands and arms onto the front mat. Use block if needed.	Helps with urinary disorder Stimulates the internal organs Increases hip flexibility Improves posture, alignment, and overall suppleness Lessens or alleviates sciatic pain Diminishes lower back pain and stiffness.
Plank Kumbhakasana	Benefits (koom-bahk-AHS-uh-nuh)
From table top step or jump feet back to high push up. Fingers are spread and hands directly under shoulders. Tighten core. Tailbone tucks. Pull belly button towards spine.	Tones core muscles, abdomen, chest, and lower back. Strengthens the arms, wrist, and shoulders. Strengthens and lengthens spine muscles. Improves posture.
Pyramid Pose Parsvottanasana	Benefits (PARZH-voh-tahn-AHS-uh-nuh)
Hips are squared, torso, and hips facing the same direction. Step back on one leg 1 ½ to two feet apart. Forward bend, hinging at the hips. Elongate spine and keep back flat. Hands either behind the back or on the ground. Gaze toward your back toe.	Calms the brain. Stretches the spine, the shoulders, the hips and the hamstrings. Strengthens the legs. Stimulates the abdominal organs. Improves posture and sense of balance. Improves digestion.
Rag Doll Baddha Hasta Uttanasana	Benefits
Exhale Rag Doll. Bring Feet Hip Width Apart.	Lengthens lower back. Stretches the calves and hamstrings.

Seated Forward Bend Paschimottana	Benefits (POSH-ee-moh-tan-AHS-anna)
Sit up straight with legs extended. Shoulder back and heart lifted. Flex thigh muscles while anchoring thighs to floor. Lift hands over and hinge at hips leading with chest then drawing heart towards thighs. Lengthen through top of crown.	Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression. Stretches the spine, shoulders, and hamstrings. Stimulates the liver, kidneys, ovaries, and uterus. Improves digestion. Helps relieve the symptoms of menopause and menstrual discomfort. Soothes headache, anxiety, and reduces fatigue.

Side Plank	Benefits
Vasisthasana	(VAH-shees-THAH-suh-nuh)
Start in plank position. Feet together, press your weight down through your right hand and forearm. Roll your body to the right, balancing on the outer edge of your right foot. Stack your left foot on top of your right foot and keep your legs straight. Modification: Bring left knee down to mat.	Strengthens wrists, forearms, shoulders, and spine. Increases flexibility in the wrists. Opens the hips and hamstrings. Tones the abdominal muscles. Improves balance, concentration, and focus.

Spinal Balance	Benefits
Dandayamana Bharmanasana	
Begin in tabletop, hands under shoulders and	Strengthens the core muscles.
knees under your hips.	Lengthens the spine.
Toes flat and pressing into mat.	Improves balance, coordination, and focus.
Draw your belly button toward your spine.	Builds core body strength and lengthens the spine.
Extend and lift your right leg behind you, pressing	
through heel. Keep parallel to floor.	
Extend left arm and fingertips in front.	

Squat	Benefits
Utkata Konasana	(oot-KAH-tuh cone-AHS-uh-nuh)
From forward bend. Walk feet toward opposite side of mat.	Strengthens legs, feet, calves, and ankles. Relief of lower back pain.

Feet facing forward or at angle. Exhale and slowly lower buttocks down toward

Knees roll towards each other. Bring hands to prayer position.

Soften abdomen, relax shoulders, and breathe into back.

Tight calves: Student can roll up back of mat to place heels.

Opens hips, ankles, groin, and Achilles heels. Stimulates abdominal internal organs. Stabilizes the spine. Purifies sex glands and spleen.

Standing Forward Bend Uttanasana	Benefits (OOT-tan-AHS-ahna)

Stretches the hips, hamstrings, and calves. Strengthens the thighs and knees. Hinge at the hips. Grow long through the spine. Keeps spine strong and flexible. Keep waist and torso straight. Reduces stress, anxiety, depression, and fatigue. Flat back. Calms the mind and soothes the nerves. Relax the neck. Relieves tension in the spine, neck, and back. Hands hugging each elbow, or on the ground. Stimulates the abdominal muscles.

Bend knees as needed.

Vrksasana	(VIIK-SHAH-SUN-NUN)
Tree Pose	Benefits (vrik-SHAH-suh-nuh)

Gaze forward. Strengthens the ligaments and tendons of the feet. Shoulder blades together and back. Strengthens and tones legs and buttocks. Heart open. Activate core. Place foot on the thigh or calf, not on the knee. Press evenly onto all four corners of the standing

Hands at prayer, overhead, or on the hips.

Triangle Utthita Trikonasana	Benefits (oo-TEE-tah tree-koh-NAH-suh-nuh)
Front foot faces the short side of the mat.  Back foot turned out toward the long side of the	Stretches and strengthens the thighs, knees, and ankles.
mat. Distribute weight evenly between both legs.  Open chest towards the sky.	Stretches the hips, groins, hamstrings, calves, shoulders, chest, and spine.
Heels in a straight line.	Stimulates the abdominal organs and improves
Keep legs straight.	digestion.
Top hand reaches towards sky; bottom hand	Helps relieve stress
reaches toward the mat.	Reduces symptoms of menopause
Gaze towards palm of hand.	Relieves back pain.

Upward Facing Dog Urdhva Mukha Svanasana	Benefits (OORD-vah MOO-kah shvon-AHS-anna)
Slide Forward.	Strengthens the arms and shoulders.
Straighten arms.	Tones the core and waist.
Open your chest.	Lengthens the hamstrings and calves.
Roll on to the tops of your feet.	Improves circulation to brain.
Lift your thighs off the mat.	Stretches the spine and strengthens the back.
Pull belly to spine.	
Pull shoulder blades together & down your back.	

Warrior 1 Virabhadrasana I	Benefits (VAH-shees-THAH-suh-nuh)
Set back foot to a 45-degree angle.	Stretches the chest and lungs, shoulders and neck,
Front knee should be bended at 90 degrees,	belly, and groin.
stacked over ankle.	Strengthens the shoulders, arms, and back
Square hips. Front heel & back leg should	muscles.
connect in a straight line.	Strengthens and stretches the thighs, calves, and
Arms extended overhead.	ankles.
Gaze toward hands.	

Warrior 2 Virabhadrasana II	Benefits (VAH-shees-THAH-suh-nuh)
Press through the outer edge of back foot. Stretch the mat apart with your feet. Stack the front knee over the ankle. (Knee points towards pinky toe). Spin your inner thighs out and away from each other. Lift your belly, spine, and chest. Stack shoulders over your hips. Reach through both arms and fingertips.	Stretches your hips, groin, and shoulders. Opens your chest and lungs. Builds stamina and concentration. Energizes and strengthens arms. Stimulates your abdominal organs. Relieves back pain. Develops balance and stability. Improves circulation and respiration.

Wide-Legged Straddle Prasarita Padottanasana	Benefits (prah-suh-REE-tuh pah-doh-tahn-AHS-uh-nuh)
Stand with legs wide apart and feet parallel.	Calms the mind.
Flex legs.	Relieves stress, anxiety, and mild depression.
Draw kneecaps up.	Reduces back pain.
Hands to hips and hinge forward.	Opens hips
Lead with heart, head towards floor.	Alleviates neck and shoulder tension
Hands touch floor or hold onto ankles or big toe.	Tones abdominal organs and improves digestion.

## **Yoga Relief for Common Ailments**

## **Yoga Relief for Common Ailments**

In this section, we will highlight a few ailments that are greatly helped by yoga or that you should use some caution with. Use these to create specialty classes around a certain ailment or theme.



- Hypertension
- Headaches
- Depression

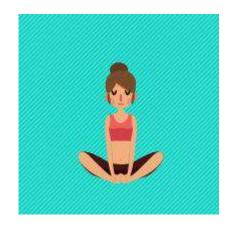
- Back pain
- Digestion
- Pregnancy

#### Yoga for Hypertension

Many people manage hypertension or high blood pressure with prescription drugs. Hypertension can increase chances of a stroke and heart failure. Stress is a major factor.

Yoga helps reduce symptoms of hypertension induced by soothing the sympathetic

nervous system, slows down the heart, and allows the mind and the muscles to relax.



#### **Best Yoga Poses for Relief**

See some yoga poses below that can be beneficial in reducing hypertension and high blood pressure. The best poses for this condition is to keep the spine horizontal, thereby allowing the heart to slow down.

- 1) **Pranayama (Conscious breathing)** Calms the sympathetic nervous system and enhances the flow of blood to the tissues and specifically to the heart, due to the up and down movement of the diaphragm.
- 2) Bridge Pose- Energizes the kidneys and soothes the nervous system; reduces blood pressure.
- 3) **Easy Pose** Calms the mind and the body. It regulates the nervous system, working directly or indirectly to bring about reduction in blood pressure.
- 4) Hero Pose Opens the chest and improves blood flow. It helps normalize blood pressure.
- 5) **Bound Angle Pose** Relieves stress and improves blood circulation, helping to detoxify the entire system. The heart working gets regulated and the blood flow is kept in check, thereby regulating blood pressure.
- 6) **Reclined Hand to Big Toe Pose** -Releases stress from limbs. Improves the flow of the blood and the oxygen; relaxes the back.

#### **Poses Contraindicated for Hypertension**

- 1) Those with untreated hypertension must avoid inversions that are unsupported, such as **Headstand Pose** or **Handstand Pose**. Also, avoid any other poses where the pressure is felt in the temples or in the throat, which cause difficulties in respiration.
- 2) Forearm Stand, Handstand Pose, and Shoulder Stand should also be avoided.
- 3) When doing lunges, planks, eagle, tree, or side triangle poses, they must be practiced up the wall, as it offers a safer inversion pose for the legs.
- 4) Avoid any forward bends or any other inverted asanas without a support for the head.

## Yoga for Depression or Anxiety

Anxiety and depression usually go together, with most anxiety problems like social anxiety, panic attacks, OCD, traumatic stress, and other phobias usually being followed by depression. By practicing certain yoga asanas, you can counteract depression caused by anxiety, as it helps reduce the stress causing hormones and results in relaxation. The calming asanas or poses like restorative poses or forward bends are great for agitation, anxiousness, or fearfulness.



#### **Beneficial Poses**

- 1) **Down Dog Pose** -Helps elongation of the spine and release of the head, thereby combating anxiety and energizing the body. Recommended to try the variations of this pose.
- 2) **Sitting Forward Bend to the Plow Pose** -Offers relief from anxiety and energizes the entire body, making you feel more active.
- 3) Wide Legs Standing Forward Bending Pose Advanced students can also practice the Supported Headstand instead of this one. It energizes the body and balances your emotions along with rejuvenating the brain.
- 4) **Inverted Staff Pose** -Breathe for one minute in this pose, which helps open up the chest and lifts up your spirits, invigorating the entire body.
- 5) **Upward Direction Bow** -Improves blood circulation and provides stimulus to the nerves, creating a general sense of well-being. Hold the pose for ten seconds or else do it three times for shorter time periods. Lower the body carefully on the floor while coming out of the pose.
- 6) **Child Pose** -Helps release the spine muscles and calms down the nerves.
- 7) **Shoulder Stand** -Reduces irritability, controls your emotions, and nourishes the nervous system in the process. It helps balance the body's endocrine system.
- 8) **Plow-** A soothing pose that calms the nervous system and brings relief from irritability.

After doing the above sequence of poses, you can rest in the Savasana or **Corpse** for about ten minutes. If you are still feeling anxious or depressed, you can opt for restorative poses, such as **Legs Up the Wall** and other more energetic poses.

#### **Exceptions for Poses**

- 1) Those having neck or heart problems, high blood pressure, pregnant and menstruating women, or those suffering from diarrhea and nausea must avoid **Sitting Forward Bend to Plow Pose**.
- 2) Those having a neck problem can use a bolster for placing the head while performing the Inverted Staff Pose.
- 3) People having shoulder issues, menstruation problems, or high blood pressure must avoid the **Shoulder Stand Pose.**

## Yoga and Pregnancy

#### **Managing Pregnancy Complications with Yoga**

There's a link between yoga and pregnancy, and when practiced with caution, yoga can help pregnant women breathe and relax. In turn, this allows them to prepare and adjust to the physical demands of pregnancy, labor, birth, and eventually, motherhood. Yoga calms both the mind and body, enabling expectant women to relieve physical and emotional stress throughout the duration of the pregnancy.



#### **Recommended Guidelines for Prenatal Yoga Class**

- · Asana poses can put undue pressure on the back particularly during the first trimester they minimize blood flow to the uterus.
- · Poses that stretch abdominal muscles to a large extent should be avoided, as they may raise the risk of strains, pulls, and other injuries. Relaxin (a pregnancy hormone) softens connective tissues, allowing the uterus to expand. (Cobra, Locust, Bow, etc.)

#### Adjustments Should be Made to Mitigate Risk

- From the second trimester onwards, when the center of gravity begins to shift, any standing poses should be done with the heel to the wall or with a chair for support. This helps prevent loss of balance and risk of injury.
- For breathing exercises, bend forward, hinging from the hips. Start with the breastbone and stretch the spine from the top of the head to the tailbone. This exercise allows the ribs more space to move, which makes breathing a lot easier.
- The pelvis should be kept in a neutral position during all poses by working the abdominals and tucking the tailbone down and in. This exercise relaxes the hip flexors and the muscles in the buttocks, reducing sciatic pain along the back of the leg, a common side effect of pregnancy.
- Twisting exercises should engage the shoulders and back primarily, as opposed to the waist, to prevent adding pressure on the abdomen.

#### **Instructors Should Discontinue Stringent Exercises**

- Hot yoga should be avoided entirely as it can endanger the health of the growing baby, according to scientific research.
- Exercises should be stopped in case of discomfort or pain. Common poses should be modified as the body changes, and as the instructor, you should customize the sessions to suit the different stages of pregnancy.

#### More Poses to Avoid:

- Full Inversions (once baby in position) -Headstands, Handstands, and some arm balances.
- Tummy Poses (after first trimester)- Cobra, Locust, Bow

# Best Poses for Pregnancy: (Use bolsters and props for extra support)

Warm-up	Seated	Knealing	Standing	Lying
Easy Seated Child's Pose (WL) Seated Side Bend Cat and Cow	Ankle to Knee Head to Knee FB Bound Angle WL Seated Forward Bend	Garland/Squat Dolphin Kneeling Toes Pigeon Low lunge Downward Dog Lizard	Standing Forward Bend Warrior 1 and 2 Extended Triangle Goddess Extended Side Angle Triangle Pose Tree Pose Chair Pose High Lunge	Legs up the Wall Reclining Bound Angle Supported Fish Bridge Corpse
WL= Wide Legged				

FB= Forward Bend

### Yoga and Digestion

#### Yoga and Digestion: Simple Poses for Healthy Digestion

Yoga poses work on the soft tissues, gently squeezing them like a sponge. When students use these poses to compress the digestive organs, waste-bearing fluids are freed up, making it easier to clear them out of the tissues.

When these areas are stretched out or opened during a yoga pose, new life-giving nutrients are encouraged to circulate into the cells to

continue a systematic process of massaging essential organs and facilitating the wave-like movements in the body that are known as Peristalsis.



#### **Simple Yoga Poses for Improved Digestion**

These poses should help get students into a more fluid state, with the digestive organs operating without any blockages.

- **Bridge pose:** This is meant to open up the front of the body and stimulating the abdominal organs for improved circulation. Although effects may be modest, when coupled with other techniques it can significantly improve the process of digestion and help to minimize the feeling of constipation.
- Cat/cow position: From all fours, students can work the shoulders, neck, back, and abdominal muscles, while maintaining a comfortable position. This can be used to apply continued pressure on these muscles by repeating the process with every breath and with minimal effort.
- **Seated twist:** This position puts pressure on the internal organs by gently twisting the body both left and right. It essentially wrings out harmful toxins to bring in fresh nutrients and much-needed oxygen. It is a simple, yet effective way, to strengthen abdominal muscles for improved digestion, and to alleviate constipation.
- Legs to the wall: When the body's natural position is reversed for a few minutes; e.g. by hanging upside down on an inversion table or by placing legs up against the wall, it solves a number of health issues. This can have a profound impact on back plain and circulation; and it can improve digestion when it is held for a minute or two.
- **Head to knee pose:** This pose is effective at stretching the shoulders, hips, waist, back, and thighs. It brings fresh air into the lungs, effectively filling these regions with oxygen. It can be used to improve the general condition when a person is feeling unusually stuffed or rounded.

**Caution:** These procedures don't present any distinct danger; however, for health reasons certain conditions shouldn't be ignored.

- i. Pregnant women should not pose on their back after the first trimester, as this can reduce blood flow to the uterus.
- ii. **Bahya and Kapalbhati** (Skull Shining Breath) breaths should be avoided during menstruation; however, yogic breathing (pranayama) can be practiced gently.

## Yoga for Headaches

#### Yoga poses that can help in relieving headaches

There are numerous triggers for headaches including sleep deprivation, stress, allergies, eyestrain, or sinus problems. For people who are prone to headaches, other underlying factors should be considered. For instance, posture and oxygen insufficiency in the brain can also cause headaches. This is because



poor standing or sitting postures affect blood circulation in the brain and affect the respiratory system, which leads to muscle tension eventually resulting in headaches.

Yoga poses that help relieve or even prevent headaches focus on relaxing muscles in the head, neck, back, and improving body posture. Below are several yoga postures that are good for headaches:

- 1. **Mountain Pose** Improves posture; relieves pressure and tensions in the head muscles and improves flow of blood and air in the brain. Alleviates fatigue in neck and head muscles.
- 2. **Elevated Legs Up the Wall** Relaxes and stretches muscles in the upper back and the neck; lowers blood pressure.
- 3. **Savasana** Relaxation to the head and neck muscles; helps in releasing the tension and strain caused by a headache. Practicing for 15-20 minutes routinely can greatly alleviate or prevent headaches from recurring.
- 4. **Shoulder Stand** -Eases stress and irritability that are triggers for headaches. This allows the mind to relax and prevents muscle straining.
- 5. Head-Knee Pose Stretches and relaxes the muscles in the neck and head. Relaxes the eyes and jaw.
- 6. **Child's Pose** Stretches muscles in the shoulders and the back of the neck. Prevents muscle strain in the neck especially for people who spend much of their time sitting or standing.

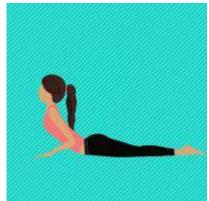
#### **Exceptions for poses**

- 1. Those suffering from hypertension, neck and heart conditions, as well as menstruating women and pregnant women should avoid the **Legs Up the Wall Pose**.
- 2. **Inverted poses** should be avoided by people with hypertension or those menstruating.

# Yoga for Reducing Back Problems

Back pain is often caused by poor posture, slouching, injury, misalignment of back and spine, sciatica, overuse of muscles, and spinal disc dislocation.

How yoga helps? Yoga helps to alleviate back pain by reducing stress and relieving tension in the muscles. Yoga also promotes lengthening of the spine, as it indirectly reduces tension on the strap muscles of the back. Gentle stretching and lengthening poses allow the vertebral bones to loosen up, reducing back pain and aligning the posture.



#### Benefits of Lengthen and Stretching Poses for Back Pain

- Helps improve the body posture.
- Strengthens the back and abdominal muscles.
- Completely relaxes the tired back.
- Good way to warm up the body before practicing other yoga postures.
- Helps open up the lungs so that they can be used to their full capacity.

#### Yoga Poses that May Reduce Back Pain

- **Tadasana** This is technically the correct way to stand upright shoulders squared and tummy in.
  - Cobra Pose

     Opens up the chest area and shoulders; also strengthens the back.
  - **Cat Stretch**–Helps make the back more flexible.
  - Child's Pose Relaxes entire back and shoulders.
  - Warrior Pose Soothes the shoulder plates and massages the lower back and knees.
  - Chair Pose Relaxes and warms up the knees and hipbones.

<u>Poses to Avoid</u>: Camel Asana, Lunge Twist, Full Wheel Pose, Boat Pose, and Seat Forward Fold. These mentioned asanas require complete stretching of the back, putting unnecessary strain on your back and possibly worsening symptoms.

# Yoga Poses Listed by Benefits At a Glance Most Common Yoga Poses & Benefits

Abs (Stimulates)	Back/Gluts	Brain/Memory	Calms Mind
Boat Bridge Butterfly Cat / Cow Camel Cobra Crow Downward Facing Dog Fish Frog Half Moon Headstand Incline Plank Locust Low Push Up Pigeon Plough Plank Seated Forward Bend Staff Sphinx Tabletop Triangle Warrior 1 Warrior 2 Warrior 3 Wide Leg Forward Bend Wild Thing	Bow Bridge Camel Cat / Cow Child's Pose (Lower/Upper) Cobra Crow Dolphin Downward Facing Dog Eagle Fish Locust Lunge Mountain Plough (upper back) Reclining Big Toe Shoulder Stand Sphinx Standing Forward Bend Staff Tabletop Tree (lower) Triangle Warrior 1, 2, and 3 Wide Legged Forward Bend Wild Thing	Alternate Nostril Breath Big Toe FB Bridge Child's Pose Cobra (Low) Diamond (Yoga Scissors) Downward Facing Dog Half Spinal Twist Headstand Humming Bee Breath Inversions Lotus Mountain Peacock Plow Pyramid Seated FB Shoulder Stand Tree Upward Plank Wide Legged FB	Bridge Butterfly Childs Corpse Cow Face Dancer Dolphin Downward Dog Eagle Easy Seated Eye of the Needle Head to Knee High Lunge Forward Bend Legs up the Wall Lizard Low Lunge Marchi Pigeon Plow Rabbit Reclining Bound Angle Shoulder Stand Sphinx Seated Forward Bend Standing FB Warrior 3 Wide-Legged Forward

Supine Hand to Feet Floating Triangle

Warrior 3 Wheel

**Bellows Breath** 





**Upward Facing Dog** 

Tree

Wheel



Cobra Bow Bridge Butterfly Childs Crescent Lunge Downward Dog King Dancer **Pyramid Reclining Spinal Twist** Seated FB **Spinal Twist** Standing FB Warrior 1 Wide Legged FB **Upward Facing Dog** 

Cat Cow



Crane Crow Dolphin Eagle Extended Side Angle Half Moon Locust Mountain Plank Prayer Seated FB Staff **Reclining Hero** Tree Triangle Warrior 1 Warrior 2 Wide-Legged FB

Camel



Bird of Paradise

**Bound Angle** Downward Dog Extended Side Angle Gate Firefly Half Moon Heron **Pyramid** Reclining Big Toe Revolved Triangle Seated Forward Bend Seated Head to Knee Seated Wide Leg FB Side Lunge Side Plank Standing Big Toe Standing FB Standing Split Standing Wide Leg FB Triangle



Bridge Chair Chaturanga Childs Cobra Cow Face Crane Crow Dolphin Downward Facing Dog

Eagle Arms Extended Hand to Toe Firefly

Forearm Plank Headstand Locust Low Push Up Peacock

Plank to Dolphin Seated Forward Bend Side Plank

**Sphinx** Staff

**Plank** 

**Upward Facing Dog** Warrior 1

Wheel Wild Thing Yogi Push Ups



Airplane Kicks Boat **Bound Ankle** Bow Bridge Camel **Chair Twist** Child's Pose

Cobra Cow Face Pose Crescent Lunge **Crescent Twist** 

Extended Hand to Big

Toe

Dancer

Fire Hydrant Lifts Extended Side Angle Fish

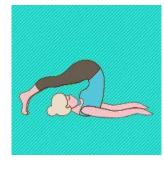
High Lunge Incline Plank

Locust **Pyramid** Staff

Thread the Needle Triangle

Warrior 1, 2, and 3 Wide Leg Forward

Bend Wheel



**Boat** Bow Bridge Butterfly Camel Cat Cow

**Downward Facing God** Garland

Gate Half Frog

Half Lord of the Fishes Seated Head to Knee

FΒ

Marchi Pose **Pyramid** 

Seated Forward Bend

Sphinx

Standing Big Toe FB Standing Forward Bend **Standing Split** 

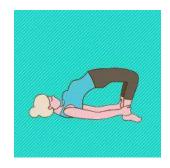
Standing Side Stretch Standing Wide Legged

FΒ

Support Head or **Shoulder Stand** 

Wheel

**Upward Facing Dog** 



**Bound Angle** Bridge Childs Easy Pose Extended Side Angle

**Extended Triangle** 

Garland

Crescent Lunge Mountain

Standing Big Toe FB

Standing FB **Supported Chair** Supported Half Moon Supported Bridge Triangle

Warrior 2

Wide Angle Seated FB

Tips: \*Avoid

hyperextending the knee

\*Supported: Use wall

or blocks

Tips:

Wrist- Avoid weight bearing

# Legs /Feet / Calves

# **Neck Pain**





Bridge Bow
Camel Camel
Chair Cat Cow
Child's Pose Child
Downward Facing Dog Corpse
Extended Side Angle Dolphin

Half Moon Dolphin Plank
Headstand Extended Puppy
Locust Extended Triangle

Mountain Fish

Pigeon Half Lord of the Fishes

Pyramid High Lunge Seated Forward Bend Legs up the Wall

Sphinx Locust
Standing Forward Bend Low Lunge
Staff Neck Rolls
Tree Pigeon

Triangle Shoulder Rolls

Warrior 1 and 2 Sphinx Wide Legged Forward Staff

Bend Standing FB
Wheel Upward Plank
Warrior I

(Add your own)

(Add your own)

**BONUS SECTION!** 

# No Prep Life-Changing Meditation Plans

# FOR INSPIRING YOGA & MEDITATION TEACHERS



Creating an inspirational meditation class has never been easier!

BY RHONDA JONES www.NoPrepYogaPlans.com

# How to Create Awesome, Life Changing Weekly Meditation Classes!

The incredibly fulfilling and powerful aspects of meditation have been well known and appreciated for centuries. They have a place throughout the history of almost every faith around the world. In recent times, there has been a renewed interest in the practice of meditation as both a faith-based discipline (which focuses on spiritual growth and has an emphasis on spiritual enlightenment from a tradition that is rooted in mysticism). It is also used as an inspirational tool (that is more of a secular approach and emphasizes the benefits of meditation to improve physical and mental health. It focuses on the ways in which meditation can be used to heal the body, increasing mental performance, and enhancing the other powers of the mind). Many meditation practices will include aspects of both, as there is a considerable overlap in the teachings of both styles.

#### The Benefits of Meditation

If you are planning to incorporate a meditation segment into your yoga class or if you wish to host a separate class that teaches the practice of meditation, then you are likely to find that your students will welcome the idea with interest and enthusiasm. Since the practices of yoga and meditation are so closely related, leading your students to the meditative path will actually compliment their yoga practice and in itself. In addition, it will provide enormous value to the development of mindfulness and enhanced mental and physical well-being.

The benefits that you can offer your students through meditation are many. Here are just a few:

- Increased self-awareness
- Reduction of stress
- Improved mental outlook
- Promotes a healthy lifestyle
- Improved concentration
- Reduces anxiety and nervousness
- Increased energy
- Enhances mood
- Relieves pain
- Heightened sense of mindfulness

- Improved functioning of the cardiovascular and immune systems
- Greater control of the mind
- Enhanced memory and attentiveness
- Slows down aging
- Reduces blood pressure level
- Boosts immunity
- Enhanced creativity
- Increased resilience
- Development of positive social connections

It's no surprise that the practice of meditation has been around for hundreds of years and as science and technology improve our knowledge of the mind, the benefits of meditation seem to become more and more significant. Offering a meditation class can introduce your students to a potentially life changing practice and can give them the means to realize so many incredible benefits!

#### **Preparing for Your Meditation Class**

Once you have decided to host a mediation class, it is important to first decide whether you will approach the practice from an inspiration-based or faith-based perspective. This will guide you as you plan for the class, giving you a foundation from which to approach your instruction.

Now you can begin to choose the elements, which you feel, may be conducive to providing an enhanced meditative experience. You will then need to structure a basic framework for what will take place in your class, with particular attention to both the class opening and the closing of the class. You may find it helpful to practice your class meditation plan with a friend or group of friends so that you can be comfortable with your role as a guide, familiarize yourself with the flow of the plan, and make any changes if needed.

#### The Outline for a Meditation Class

To give you some help with planning for your classes, let's talk a little about the basic components and elements with which you should incorporate into each meditation class.

#### **Before the Class**

Your meditation class is a place where you and your students will gather to embark on a shared journey to a place of inspiring stillness and deeply peaceful contemplation. As such, the setting of your class should accommodate this journey as much as possible and you should prepare your classroom or studio for the meditation before your students enter the door.

#### **Indoor Class Setting**

If you will conduct your classes in your classroom or studio, then you should keep the space open and free from distractions. You may want to lower the lights and perhaps bring in some candles to create an atmosphere that is relaxing and soothing. Lightly scented candles, sage, aromatherapy oils, or incense may be a nice touch to make the room inviting and calming. In addition, decide how you want students to enter the class. I see meditation as a sacred experience so I ask students to remove their shoes and enter the space in silence and contemplation. This helps to prepare everyone's minds and bodies for the practice. It's not really a time for socializing and it will be more difficult to settle down the mental chatter or monkey mind when there has been a lot of noise and activity in the room.

#### **Natural Class Setting**

You may want to consider conducting your meditation class outside if, you have access to a tranquil and peaceful location where you and your students can gather uninterrupted. Of course, this is best only if the weather permits. Outdoor meditation sessions can prove to be very grounding and can awaken the sense of a closer relationship between the self and the universe. In addition, an outdoors setting requires no setup and can take place at any time of the day.

#### Seating and Temperature

Comfort is extremely important in meditation, so you should plan to have large, comfortable floor pillows or cushions for your students to sit on and make sure that the temperature of the room is set to a normal setting. It is also okay for students to sit in chairs. Many people have this mental picture that in order to meditate you must sit in a lotus position. More importantly, your students should be comfortable. For some, this will be the first time they have meditated and you want to convey that meditation is for "every" body. Before my meditation classes begin, I will set up a row of chairs as well as rows of blankets and pillows for those who prefer to sit on the floor.

#### Music or Not

You can have some instrumental ambient style music or some recordings of peaceful sounds of nature on hand, if you feel it will be helpful to set the mood for your class. I tend to play soft music during the entire class, but it is low enough as to not be a distraction. I would recommend alternating between meditating with and without music. This will help to dissolve any notions or ideas that you need music to meditate successfully. The mind is always looking for something to attach itself to and if students become accustomed to only meditating with music, in circumstances when music is not available, they may forfeit their practice for that day or time period.

#### The Beginning of Your Class

When it is time for your class to begin, be ready at least 10-15 minutes before the scheduled time. It is a good idea to come up with a particular theme on which to base your class. Every session should have a different theme and ideally will build on techniques or material from previous classes. Here are some theme suggestions you might consider:

- Finding the Stillness Within
- Visualization and Meditation
- Basic Pranayama (Breathing) Techniques
- Mindfulness at the Workplace
- Meditation to Enhance Mood

#### **Meditation Course Outline**

A well-prepared yoga/ meditation instructor will have a good sense of what specific topic she will be covering, will have a class format to follow, and also will be able to anticipate possible questions her students may have. It is helpful to draw up a weekly outline and include the basic components of each class. Remember that your class material should take up the entire class time. You can establish a working plan with a basic outline in effort to conduct the class. Here is an example of a possible class outline you can use with different options. I have also incorporated some ways you can use No Prep Yoga Plans in your meditation group (NPYP). See below:

#### I. Class Introduction - (10 min)

- Discuss the topic or theme of the class for that day in a general way.
- Propose ideas or come up with questions to get students thinking about the topic.
- Use an appropriate opener such as a story, biblical passage (for faith-based groups), or quotation that relate to the topic at hand.
- NPYP: Decide on a theme and select one of the NPYP devotionals or inspirational openers. Read
  this to your class and share any connections or stories that you have with the message.
- Open with a time of silence to allow everyone to transition from the outside world to meditation class.

#### II. Class Discussion of Theme - (15 min)

- Engage your students in a more detailed and open discussion of the class topic.
- **NPYP:** Open the themed-topic up for discussion with some more personal and open-ended questions. Give everyone in the group an opportunity to share.
- Invite students to ask questions.

- o Give specific examples of how the theme can be applied to everyday life.
- o Demonstrate any new techniques that you may wish to teach.
- o Listen to a talk or video about meditation or an experience of someone who meditating.
- Create your meditation group around a favorite book. My all-time favorite book for meditation class is "Seeing Through the Eyes of Love." Each week I will create a topic around each chapter and discuss any highlights or nuggets in the book (around that topic) with my students. I try to encourage them all to purchase the book as well and read it at home to support their personal yoga practice. I have created a blog post at NoPrepYogaPlans.com that lists 13 inspirational and faith-based books that every yogi should have in their personal library.

#### III. Meditation - (25 min)

- Ask students to seat themselves comfortably to begin the meditation session.
- Begin the guided meditation in a voice and tone, which is in a smooth and controlled pace as much as possible.
- If you are doing a more silent meditation like mindfulness, centering prayer, or mantra meditation, get the meditation started by guiding students with a few deep breaths, even a brief progressive relaxation. Then after a period of silence, use your voice to bring students back into the room (take a few deep breaths, wiggle fingers and toes.)
- NPYP: Use a script that is relevant for the topic or theme you have chosen for that particular class.
- Speak clearly but maintain a steady and moderate volume and remember to pause at appropriate intervals.
- Use your voice and the content of the script as a means to gently guide the students to a relaxed and peaceful state.
- Continue to lead the meditation until completion.
- As you close the meditation, give the students a minute or so to return fully to a state of physical and mental alertness.

#### IV. Class Conclusion - (10 min)

- Use the last few minutes of the class to open up a group discussion where students can comment or share thoughts about their experience.
- o Encourage students to practice a similar meditation during the week on their own.
- Give students an assignment, maybe a list of questions that pertain to the topic or the type of meditation they will be practicing, and encourage them to bring it the following week.
- o Thank your students for their time and invite them back for the following class session.

This is a basic guide for how to create an amazing meditation class that your students can actively participate in and which you can feel comfortable leading. Naturally, you can follow any other format you have in mind and make any alterations or changes you like, but the basic components in the outline should serve as a good place to start.

#### **Incorporating No Prep Yoga Plan Guides**

No Prep Yoga Plan Guides provide another alternative to conduct an entire month of meditation classes. They require almost no prior planning and will provide you with all of the basic essentials to teach an excellent and comprehensive class. The guides contain not only a fully executable plan for yoga instruction, but also an entire range of classroom tools to teach a meditation class as well. Depending on whether you will teach your meditation class from either an inspirational or faith-based approach, the guides come in two versions: Inspirational and Christian. Each set of plans come with a set of 30 yoga class openers along with 30 guided meditation scripts you can narrate to promote inner peace and mental and physical well-being.

Meditation is a practice that you will find to be restorative and will aid you and your students in their yoga practice as well. It is a practice which one can perform anywhere and with regular practice, its amazing healing and profoundly empowering results will slowly transform your life, your outlook, and your overall physical and spiritual health.



No Prep Yoga Plans Sample Beginning Class

Class # 1- Your Very First Meditation Class!

Class Duration: One hour

#### **Before Class:**

- Outline your class schedule
- Set up the room
- Create sign-in sheets or system for payment

#### **During Class:**

**5 Minutes**- [Silence Space] Use this as a time to transition into class time; you can play some soft music. This also gives a little extra time for those running a few minutes late to get there.

**10 Minutes**- [**About You**] Introduce yourself and share some history about yourself: your background, training, interests, and your own meditation practice. Tell them why you love meditation and what it has done for you.

**10 Minutes-** [Your Students] Allow students to introduce themselves. Ask them to share their name, how they heard about the class, what are their expectations, what type of meditation practice they have now and for how long.

**10 Minutes- [Class Overview & Norms]** Give an overview of the class, procedures, the format, any book you'll be using (share some excerpts from it), and what they will learn in the class. If you have a class outline for them or a sheet with class norms, pass that out and go over it. A few examples of class norms you might find in a meditation class include: 1) All information shared is private, 2) During discussions, please listen without offering advice.

**15-20 Minutes-** [Meditation] For my very first class I like to start with a guided meditation. You have MANY to choose from in the NPYP guide. That being said, I do believe that as a meditation teacher, I should prepare students to meditate at home, so during my classes I tend to teach more silent forms of meditation and use guided meditations every now and then, but that's just my classes, not yours. Guided meditations are wonderful anchors, especially for beginners. However, in all classes I will ease students into the meditation practice sometimes using one of the shorter relaxation scripts in NPYPs.

**5 Minutes** [Closing] Allow students a few minutes to share their experience during the meditation as well as answer any questions. If you can, copy off a breathing meditation technique outline and ask students to practice it at home starting at 5 minutes a day for newbies and longer for more seasoned meditators. If they already have a technique they love, that's even better.

#### **After Class:**

- Add email addresses to your mailing list.
- Continue to promote your class.
- Prepare for class # 2.

\*This is a sample bonus version of my next guide <u>No Prep Meditation Plans</u>, so be on the lookout for it, where I will provide you with much more advice and additional class samples.

# About the Author of No Prep Yoga Plans



Online business owner and author, Rhonda Jones, maintains a career as meditation facilitator, a faith-based yoga instructor, and an overall wellness coach. Jones has collectively created over 100s Christ-centered guided meditation and affirmation audios. In addition, she is the author of *The Christian Meditation Journal* and the creator of the 12-week program, "Detox Your Life & Awaken Your Inner Spirit." Rhonda is also a certified hypnotherapist that focuses on emotional healing & a public school intervention teacher.

In addition to these, Rhonda hosts local as well as destination healing retreats where participants can unplug from the demands of life, draw closer to God, find inner healing, deepen their meditation practice, and reset their lives. She believes that spiritual growth and personal transformation begins when we learn to "be still," while meditating on scriptures and connecting with God in spirit and truth. She completed several yoga teacher trainings at both Niroga Institute in Berkley, California and Yahweh Yoga in Arizona (highly recommend).

Jones is a mom and grandmother. Her hobbies include gardening, cooking, and exploring anything health and wellness related.

#### **Contact info:**

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# Additional Websites:

The Christian Meditator. Com God Getaways. Com

#### **Social Media:**

Facebook: No Prep Yoga Plans & Christians Who Meditate Group

Twitter: Christmeditator

**Pinterest:** The Christian Meditator **Youtube:** The Christian Meditator **Instagram:** No Prep Yoga Plans

# **TAB LABELS**

# DUPLICATE TO LABEL PAPER, CUT, AND ADD TO TAB DIVIDERS TO SEPARATE SECTIONS IN YOUR BINDER

Getting Started
Relaxation
Openers
Sequences
Meditations
Breathing
Techniques

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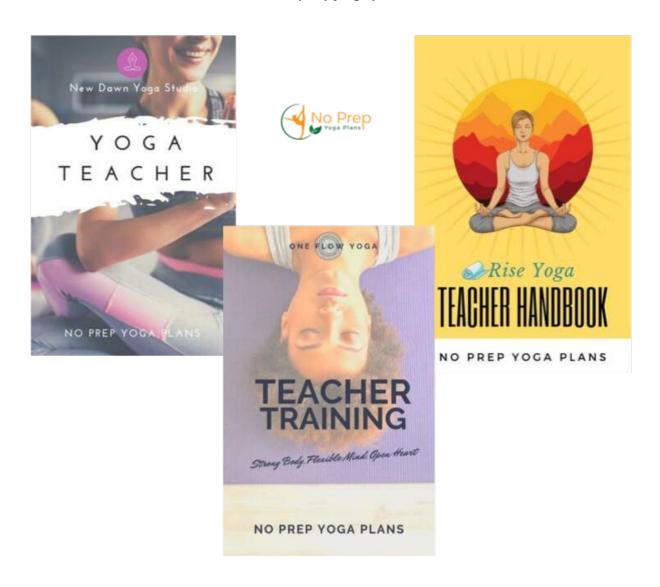
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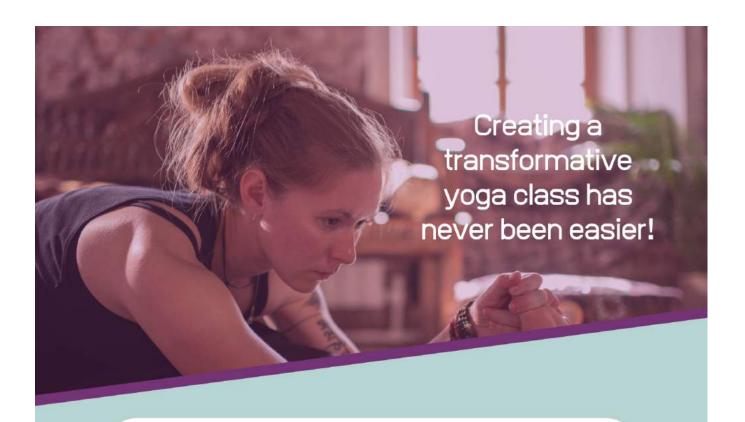
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# "I LOVE No Prep Yoga Plans!" "These No Prep Yoga Plans are Amazing!"

Whether you are a new or seasoned yoga teacher, **No Prep Yoga Plans** can help you teach a transformative yoga class in minutes! As a yoga teacher myself, I couldn't find anything like NPYP on the market, so I created my own yoga manual. Now it's available to yoga teachers everywhere. There are many yoga books on the market that teach different aspects of yoga, but none so comprehensive and user-friendly. It includes everything I wanted at my fingertips to create a transformative yoga class.

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