

Desk Yoga

With Ikigai Yoga & Coach On Call

SEQUENCE 1



Welcome to your desk yoga practice

I'm so excited to have you on board for this amazing workshop! We've started sitting at our desks for even longer now that we work from home. We all struggle to set boundaries for our work hours and stay in one position for too long (that cup of coffee is often the only motivation to get up right?). The effects are: a bad posture, aching backs, spasms, cramps, fatigue, lowered productivity and poor concentration...and a lot more.

This workshop will help you understand the importance of moving the body regularly to create a balance in your work life - and you don't even need a mat!

In our sessions, you will learn easy, short exercises to prevent physical tension and discomfort, as well as to give the eyes and the mind regular breaks while working.

Don't worry about not being flexible, it's not about that at all! Just come with an open mind.

I'm looking forward to moving with you!

Jess

Important things to remember:

- Make sure you have a quiet space and turn your phone onto airplane mode or off
- If your body doesn't feel comfortable in a pose, don't push it
- You may have been able to do a pose yesterday and you can't do it today - that's OKAY! Nothing is constant in this world but change and our bodies are constantly in flux.
- Yoga isn't about what your neighbour can do. We all work at different paces and we're all in different spaces in our lives.
- Keep an open mind: replace judgment with curiosity

Session 1

Today we covered: what yoga is, the types of nervous systems, and the box breathing technique. Our physical sequence focuses the neck and shoulders - enjoy!

Warm-up Sequence

1. Reach up above your head and interlace your hands
Make sure that you're relaxing your shoulders away from your ears
Hold here for 5 breaths
2. Slowly start to lower your arms to your sides
Imagine you're pressing 2 walls away from each other.
Reach up again and then float the arms down. Do this 5 times.
3. Standing tall, start to slide your left hand down your left leg.
Look up past the right shoulder.
You should feel a stretch into the right side.
Stay here for 5 breaths
Repeat on the other side
4. Come to stand and start to roll the chin down to the chest
Slowly bring the head to look up, it's a gentle tilt - nothing intense!
Repeat this movement 5 times.
5. Move your head slowly to look over the left shoulder.
Bring your head back to centre and look over the right shoulder.
Repeat this movement 5 times.
6. Interlace your hands behind your back, and drop your chin to your chest.
Roll the right ear over to the right shoulder, tilt the chin up and then bring the left ear down to the left shoulder.
Rotate in one direction 5 times and then 5 times in the other direction.
7. Interlace your hands in front of you and press the palms away from your body.
Slowly round into the back, really pressing into the stretch and allow the shoulder blades to separate.
Inhale to lift the chest and arch the back.
Exhale to round through the spine.
Repeat 5 times
8. Take hold of the left elbow with the right hand and gently pull the left arm towards your body.
Hold for 5 breaths.
Repeat on the other side.

9. Hold the back of your chair if you need to support your balance.

Take hold of your left foot with your left hand and pull your foot up towards the glutes.

Make sure to keep the knees together.

Hold for 5 breaths and then repeat on the other side.

10. Bring your feet just wider than hip-width apart and fold forward with a flat back.

Take your hands either to the floor or to your shins/thighs and inhale to take the spine to a halfway lift.

Exhale to fold forward.

Repeat 5 times.

11. Bend the knees and slowly roll up to stand.

12. Bring the arms out shoulder height and bend the elbows at 90 degrees.

Lift the hands up to meet above your head and then back down to that 90 degree bend.

ROUTINE FOR NECK & SHOULDERS

This short sequence can be used to reduce tension and stress in your neck & shoulders from long hours at your desk. This is particularly good to combat a strain injury called 'Text Neck'.

1. Interlacing fingers (Hold for 10 counts as you connect with the breath)
 1. Stand behind your desk and interlace hands behind your back
 2. Roll the shoulders back and down. Hold.

2. Neck circles (5 rounds, change direction)
 1. Bring the chin to the chest
 2. Roll your head over to the right shoulder, slowly look up as you tilt the head back over to the other shoulder and down to the chest again.
 3. Go as slow/fast and as big/small as you want
 4. Switch directions.

3. Gentle shoulder stretch (5 breaths on each side)
 1. Come to sit on the chair
 2. Interlace your hands behind your back.
 3. Wrap both hands to your right hip.
 4. Turn your head to look over the right shoulder.
 5. Repeat with the hands to the left hip.

4. Shoulder rolls/rows (5 forward, 5 back)
 1. Lift the shoulders up and squeeze towards the ears
 2. Slowly, with control, roll the shoulders back and down.

5. Eagle arms (Hold 5 breaths)
 1. Hold your arms up, bending 90 degrees at the elbows
 2. Cross your right arm over the left, and twist your arms around each other until the palms meet each other.
 3. Press the elbows up and out to feel a stretch across the shoulders and back.
 4. If it's too intense, you can either just cross the arms once or place the hands to the shoulders in a bear hug

What is yoga?

- Yoga isn't about twisting yourself into a pretzel or being able to touch your toes!
- The word "YOGA" is a Sanskrit word that means "UNION"
Here, "union" refers to the ultimate connection between the body and mind, and in turn, their connection with the universe.
- Yoga is also not a religion, it is practiced by people of all faiths.
- Yoga and meditation is thousands of years old and originates in India. Just like today, people realised that they had thousands of thoughts running through their heads all day. When they sat down and started to observe these thoughts, their heads became a lot clearer.
- Science has shown that meditation has the power to fundamentally change the brain's structure through neuroplasticity and rewiring neural pathways.
- As we rewire our brain to relax, we start to have enhanced sense perception, reduced anxiety and the ability to understand that our thoughts aren't real - they aren't facts. Thoughts are an interpretation of our reality, they are not actuality!
- Yoga creates healthy minds and healthy bodies.

Effects of stress on the body & mind

We all experience stress differently but these are some common symptoms:

- Tension in the muscles, tightness in the chest, headaches, fatigue, insomnia, nausea, or dizziness.

We have 2 nervous systems:

1. Sympathetic nervous system: responsible for fight/flight/freeze/fawn

When our bodies think we are in danger, it triggers one of these responses: fight, flight, freeze, fawn. It's the body's way of staying alive!

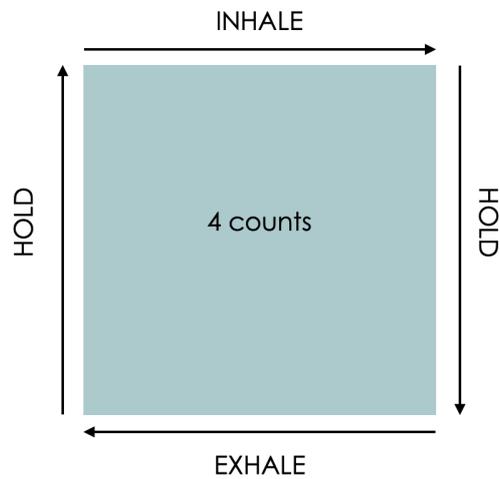
- Great for times when we had to run away from predators
- Now the constant adrenaline and stress hormones are what sit in our body constantly. That is stress.

2. Parasympathetic nervous system: responsible for rest and digest.

How do we activate this system?

- a. Meditation
- b. Breathing techniques

BREATHING TECHNIQUE 1: BOX BREATHING



1. Both inhales and exhales are done through the nose
2. This can be done with 6 counts as well. It just depends on your lung capacity and what feels good - just as long as your inhales, exhales and retentions are equal counts.

Thank you for moving with me today - I hope you feel more relaxed and ready to tackle whatever comes next in your day!

Jess