

Desk Yoga

With Ikigai Yoga & Coach On Call

SEQUENCE 4



Welcome to session 4

Today we covered: the importance of posture, relearning to sit and belly breathing. Our physical sequence focuses on correcting posture - 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 posture

Reduce back pain, improve spine health and manage a healthy posture with this sequence.

- 1.** Shoulder stretch (Hold for 5 counts on each side)
 - 1.** Place your feet hip distance apart. Hold the left wrist with the right hand and pull the left arm across your chest to the right.
 - 2.** Repeat on the other side keeping an equal weight in both feet

- 2.** Quad stretch (Hold for 5 counts on each side)
 - 1.** Place your hands on the back of the chair. Take hold of the left foot with the left hand - hold onto the inner arch.
 - 2.** Try and keep your knees together, chest facing straight forward
 - 3.** Repeat on the other side

- 3.** Seated Cat Cows (5 rounds)
 - 1.** Sit on the edge of your chair, tall spine. Place your hands on your knees.
 - 2.** Inhale to lift the tailbone, and open the chest as you arch the spine.
 - 3.** Exhale to roll back to round the spine and the shoulders, tuck the chin in to the throat.
 - 4.** Repeat.

- 4.** Gentle seated twists (5 breaths on each side)
 - 1.** Place your right hand on your lower back
 - 2.** Take your left hand to your right knee.
 - 3.** Take a deep breath in and as you exhale, gently twist towards your right - look over the right shoulder. Inhale to lift the spine out of the hips, exhale to twist.No need to force it.
 - 4.** Repeat on the other side.

- 5.** Shoulder rolls (5x in each direction)
 - 1.** Lift the shoulders up to the ears
 - 2.** Roll the shoulders back and down.
 - 3.** Repeat in the other direction

The importance of posture

Stress is natural and sometimes even necessary. But too much stress for extended periods of time has disastrous effects on the body. The more we sit the more stressed we get...WHY?

The lungs

We need AIR to give the body and the mind ENERGY.

When we slouch:

- The lungs get compressed and we don't get enough air into our bodies.
- The back muscles stretch but the chest gets tighter.
- The result: stress symptoms like fatigue, dizziness and a sore chest, feeling lethargic.
- In this slouching posture, our spines also curve unnaturally which is what gives us those sore backs, necks and shoulders (see session 2).
- Your body language communicates with your nervous system about how you should be feeling.
- Bad posture, lack of oxygen and fatigue complement each other well and can be a vicious cycle.

Relearning to sit:

1. Think of "head above the rest"
2. Then:
 - Thighs 90 to your torso
 - Calves 90 to your thighs
 - Feet 90 degrees to your calves

TIP: Raise your computer monitor/laptop - either on stacks of books/paper or buy a standing desk

BREATHING TECHNIQUE 4: BELLY BREATHING

1. Sit up straight or lie down with your knees bent.
2. Place a hand onto your belly
3. Start to breathe deeply, in through the nose (4 counts)
4. Purse your lips, breathe out through the mouth (4 counts)

** Feel the belly rising and falling as the ribs expand - try not to lift the chest and shoulders.

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