

Desk Yoga

With Ikigai Yoga & Coach On Call

SEQUENCE 3



Welcome to session 3

Today we covered: how and when to take breaks, , the 4-7-8 breathing technique. Our physical sequence focuses the wrists - 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.

Sequence for wrists

If you spend a lot of time writing, typing or drawing, this routine will give you gentle stretches to increase blood flow to your forearms, wrists & fingers.

→ Do each exercise for 5 breaths on each side or in each direction.

1. Wrist rotations:
Make a fist around your thumbs. Rotate your wrists both ways, going as fast or slow as feels good for you.
2. Face your palm forward in a "stop" gesture.
Pull your fingers back - gently and slowly, trying not to tense the muscles in the wrists as you do so, but rather feel a light stretch into the underside of the wrists.
Repeat on the other hand.
3. Face your palm towards the body, fingers pointing down. Hold fingers with the other hand and pull downward, gently.
You should feel a light stretch in your forearms and top of your wrists.
Repeat on the other hand.
4. Palm facing forward in a "stop" gesture
Pull each finger towards you, one by one. Relax the wrist and arm.
Repeat on the other side.
5. Shake your hands, and flick your fingers out.

How and when to take breaks

- Pre-meeting pause
- Take 1-5 minutes to just breathe and refocus.
- Gaze away
- Reduce the strain on the eyes and look into the distance when you finish a task or section of a task - especially if you're at a computer.
- Take 5 breaths, be aware of the sensations in the body. Do you need to take a break?
- Set a timer on your phone for 30 minutes
Every 30 minutes, get up and walk around for a couple of minutes to allow the spine to decompress. Make yourself some tea/coffee or stretch.
- Practise desk yoga sequences (or even just one or 2 exercises from a sequence) every 2 hours. In your traditional 9am-5pm workday, that's only 3 times - 15 minutes of bliss!
- If you need a mental break you can also do a short meditation.
Either on your own or on an app:
Headspace, Calm or Insight Timer are all fantastic meditation apps.

** REMINDER

Breaks aren't really breaks if you're checking your phone.

- Taking a break means exactly that: you are *breaking* between your actions.
- Create time and space!

BREATHING TECHNIQUE 3: 6-7-8

1. Allow your lips to gently part.
2. Exhale completely through the mouth, making a whoosh sound as you do.
3. Press your lips together as you silently inhale through the nose for a count of 6
4. Hold your breath for a count of 7.
5. Exhale again out the mouth for a full 8 seconds, making a whooshing sound throughout.

Repeat 4 times when you first start. Eventually work up to 8 repetitions.

→ If holding and exhaling for 7 and 8 seconds respectively is too much, start with a 3-4-5 pattern and work your way up slowly.

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

Jess