

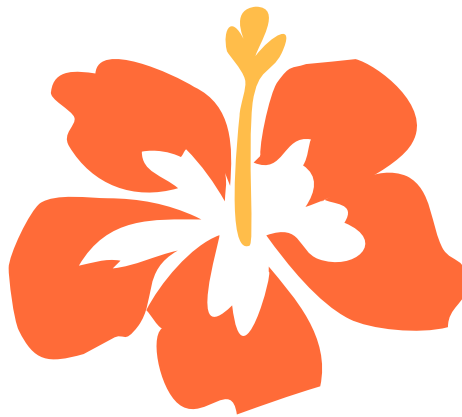
10 EXERCISES OF MIND, BODY BALANCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH. PART 1



Shape Your Body, Shape Your Mind

Anyday, Anytime, Anywhere.....

Close Your Eyes, Breathe Deeply, Look
Within & Choose what you need for
you RIGHT NOW



Please Note: These exercises are not in any particular order and all will aid in helping the creative instinct to be realised and released with breath awareness, visualisation and movement.



Exercise 1:



Exercise 1:

Relaxation: Mind/Body Balance & Peace Within.

Close your eyes and breathe deeply.
Inhale through the nose and exhale
through the nose.

Count the length of your inhale and the length of your exhale. If one is longer than the other, make both the same length as the longer breath. Then add another count to both breaths and continue for 5 inhales and exhales.



You can use your thumb beginning at your index finger to touch each finger on one hand to count to 5, finishing back with thumb and index finger. (Mudras)

This can be done anywhere when you are feeling stressed. You will feel an instant calm wash over you.

Visualise how you want to be and how you want to feel and let it wash over you. See it coming to fruition on your long inhales and exhales.



Exercise 2:

Spine Twist



Aim: To Rotate and Lengthen Spine.

Rotates Spine (Any spine twist is wonderful for detoxification due to the gentle massage affect to the internal organs). Inhaling helps lengthen the spine and exhaling helps with the rotation. You are massaging your liver on one side & spleen on the other. Health and wellbeing is enhanced by keeping those internal organs healthy.

Breathing

- Inhale from an upstretched position. Open your arms to shoulder level while turning your upper body to the right.



Looking back at your right arm on the exhale.

- Lift back up onto your toes for balance. Then lower your feet and lower your arms to look back to the left arm with spine twist (repeat 2 more each side) while inhaling and exhaling.

Watch Points: Keeping knees, ankles and feet in parallel alignment, (do not twist lower limbs).

Contraindications: Spinal issues such as herniated disc, pinched nerves, rib injuries, shoulder injuries.



Exercise 3:

Pilates Roll Down & Balance



Aim: The Standing Roll Down strengthens the abdominal muscles and helps improve blood circulation throughout the body. It also stretches and increases mobility in the back, spine, neck, and hamstrings.

In addition to releasing tension and stress, it also creates space between the vertebrae and improves posture. Bringing the blood to the brain will help balance the mind.

Breathing: Moving into Pilates Breathing, in through the nose and out through the mouth as this stimulates the adrenals and focuses on core muscles.



- From parallel stance of Mountain Pose inhale through the nose and on the exhale through the mouth. Tighten an imaginary belt or band to 50-70% around your waist and drop chin to chest. Let your shoulders drop forward and with soft knees begin a slow roll down towards the mat feeling each vertebra until you reach as far as possible without stress.

Let your arms dangle and give your head and shoulders a slight shake and then inhale again keeping your abs scooped in and rise slowly, vertebra by vertebra to standing and then rise to your toes to balance with arms extended towards the ceiling.



Watch Points: Soft knees, picture each vertebra slowly moving and be careful if you have a lower back issue. Core muscles must be engaged.

Contraindications: Spinal injuries, osteoporosis, balance issues, dizziness, ankle, shoulder issues, detached retina.



Exercise 4:

Down Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana) or Pilates Inverted V



Aim: To move to the mat as this is the gateway that leads into the fusion of both Yoga and Pilates.

It is a Yoga Inversion and Pilates pose and particularly this YogaPilates Fusion pose is the beginning of our strength section in both Yoga and Pilates.

It is the most wonderfully strengthening yet meditative pose and can be used to relax between other strength work or just hold on its own for a wonderful stretch.

It elongates and releases tension from the spine, stretches and strengthens arms, shoulders and back.



It stretches hamstrings, calves, arches and hands and lengthens the spine. It improves mobility of the digestive system, relieves back pain, headaches, insomnia and fatigue. It is also recognised as a pose to help symptoms of Depression, PMS and Menopause due to the calming benefits.

It can be done against a wall if there are wrist issues or carpal tunnel syndrome, eye or ear infections. Also to be avoided during late pregnancy.

As you are deep into this position (without discomfort) breath and open the mind, heart and spirit to how you want to be.



Breathing: Nasal/Mouth as in Pilates Breathing.

- Inhale and walk your hands out to the top of the mat and spread your fingers with the index finger forward.
- Push the heels of your hands against the mat.
- Place knees under hips and feet hip width apart with knees soft to start.
- Exhale and push the hips away from the hands, lift the buttocks high, making an inverted V shape.



- Rise up onto the toes and gently march one foot down. Then alternate the other, stretching the hamstrings for 10 counts while inhaling and exhaling.
- Gently rise again on both sets of toes and push heels towards the mat.
- Widen your shoulder blades and feel them move towards your tailbone.

Watch Points: Placement of hands, inverted V position from side view, let the head drop.



Contraindications: Wrist issues, carpal tunnel, shoulder issues, late pregnancy, high blood pressure, headache, detached retina.



Exercise 5:

Spine Stretch or Child's Pose with Extended Arms



Aim: To stretch the spine, hips, thighs and ankles. To stretch shoulders, hands and wrists.

This is perfect as a rest and stretch between all exercises from Down Dog to floor work and especially after back exercises and it leads and flows into Cat Stretches. Perfect for relaxation of the body and mind when feeling stressed.

A wonderful release for tired arms, hands and back. Enjoy this pose between sessions.

Breathing: Inhale/Exhale through the nose and relax into this pose



- Move to the floor from Down Dog.
- Either spread the knees or keep straight ahead depending on weight, pregnancy and knee condition.
- Bring the front of torso to rest on the thighs if possible and forehead to or on the floor.
- Stretch arms in front. This can also be a chance for a wrist stretch by firstly lifting the fingertips and then lifting the wrists.
- The arms can also be along the side of the body.



- Keep the toes rolled under for a dynamic stretch of the toes as well and then preparing for a Cat Stretch.

Watch Point: Lengthen arms as far as comfortable, knees hip width or separate further, particularly if pregnant for more comfort.

Contraindications: Knee issues and recent hip replacement and shoulder issues with extended arms.

Arms can be placed by the side of the body.



Exercise 6:

Cat Stretch (Maraiiasana)



Aim: Release for back muscles and promotes spinal awareness. Just think how a cat moves and the wonderful flexibility of their spine.

Strengthens wrists and shoulders, massages the digestive organs and improves digestion.

Kneeling in the all 4's position also aids postural stability and an awareness and strengthening of the core muscles against gravity.

This is a way of gaining core strength if unable to do roll ups or crunches, as well as improving blood circulation.



Again as your blood is circulated and your mind is opened to the wonderful creative potential in you, this pose will balance spine, strengthen core and release tension throughout your body.

Think of those wonderfully agile, but relaxed cats.

Breathing: Inhaling through nose and exhaling through mouth or nose.

- From all fours form a table top, in neutral spine with your hands under the shoulders, shoulder width apart and legs hip width apart.



- Eye gaze to the mat with lengthened neck and in neutral spine. Inhale and raise your chin, push your navel towards the floor and raise your tailbone.
- Exhale, drop your chin to your chest, arch your back and tailbone under.
- This flexion and extension can be repeated 3 or 4 times and return to neutral spine.
- Roll the toes under and lift back up to Down Dog and walk hands back to feet and roll up to standing.



Watch Points: Knee and arm placement on all 4's.

Contraindications: Back, neck, knee issues.

This Ebook is a collaboration between Jill Healy-Quintard, Yoga Teacher at bodyandbalance & Global Healing Exchange

