

The Blooming Heart

YOGA SERIES

with Jennifer Reis

W O R K B O O K

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Welcome!

Welcome to The Blooming Heart Five Element Yoga® Series and Workbook – a space where you can nourish and tend to your heart’s energy, wisdom, and intentions. I am so excited that you have chosen to take this journey with me!

Our practices are designed to help you connect with your Heart, your wise truth-teller, to awaken your inner compassionate witness, and cultivate Heart qualities. You will softly restore while opening the physical and energetic pathways of the Heart.

> This Workbook is a companion along your path. I offer you here Heart wisdom from Traditional Chinese Medicine, Yogic and Buddhist perspectives, as well as practical information and practice sheets to deepen and expand your journey.

> The Worksheets and Coloring Journey are an opportunity for you to integrate what arises through reflection and creativity.

May The Blooming Heart help you nurture kindness, joy, forgiveness, and love – the seeds that dwell naturally within the heart – so they may bloom in your own unique and beautiful way.

Jennifer xo



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Salutations, blessings and deepest gratitude to all of our teachers, and our teachers' teachers, all the way back to our own ancestors, and Ancient India and Ancient Asia from where this knowledge and inspiration springs!

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The Blooming Heart

All About the Heart



The Heart as Your Guide to Renewal and Joy in Our Practices

The Heart is more than an organ – it is an ancient guide that holds our deepest wishes and desires. Across traditions, the Heart is honored as a center of wisdom and higher mind, offering countless pathways into its vast landscape.

In Yoga, the Heart is seen as the seat of the higher mind, a place of clarity and witness awareness. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the Heart and its paired Pericardium meridian energy channels reveal both physical and spiritual dimensions of health, showing us how the flow of energy directly influences vitality and emotional balance.

Your Heart is also the antidote to negative self-talk, mental spin, and the heavy weight of depression. When nurtured, it becomes a source of clarity, balance, and joy, reminding you of your innate capacity for renewal.

Through our time together in **The Blooming Heart** **Tending Your Inner Garden** Series we will explore these rich entry points into the Heart:

- Anahata Chakra – awakening the bhavanas, the seeds of compassion, forgiveness, joy, and love.
- Heart & Pericardium Meridians – awakened and nourished through movement, asana and Shiatsu self-massage.
- The Heart as Witness – the higher mind, where the Vijnanamaya kosha offers clarity, insight, and deep inner listening.
- Sankalpa – your Heart's intention statement: finding your Heart's deepest wish and allowing it to remind you of your potency.
- Yoga Nidra – a pathway where the Mystical Heart becomes alive, opening doors to profound rest, deeper knowing and insight.
- Bhavana – watering the positive seed qualities that live in the Heart of every person.



Signs of a Heart Out of Balance

This summary lists how a person may feel in body, energy, health, mind, and emotions when the Heart is out of balance, drawing from Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Heart and Pericardium meridians and Anahata Chakra from Yogic wisdom.

In the body:

- Tightness or constriction in the chest
- Tension in the upper back, shoulders, arms, or hands
- Heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat
- Poor circulation (cold hands/feet)
- Shortness of breath or shallow breathing

In energy:

- Feeling depleted, sluggish, or heavy
- Feeling scattered, restless, or overactive
- Weak connection to life's rhythms and natural flow

In health:

- Insomnia or disrupted sleep
- Overheating or excess internal heat (inflammation, flushing, sweating)
- Digestive irregularities connected to stress or anxiety

In the mind:

- Difficulty concentrating or focusing
- Racing or erratic thoughts
- Indecisiveness or confusion

In emotions:

- Irritability, frustration, impatience
- Feelings of loneliness, isolation, or disconnection
- Emotional coldness or inability to express affection
- Excessive excitement or mania
- Lack of joy, enthusiasm, or inspiration



A Balanced and Joyous Heart

This summary lists how a person may feel in body, energy, health, mind, and emotions when the Heart is balanced, drawing from Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Heart and Pericardium meridians and Anahata Chakra from Yogic wisdom.

In the body:

- A relaxed, open chest and easeful posture
- Warm hands and feet with steady circulation
- Smooth, calm breathing
- Fluid, graceful movement in shoulders, arms, and hands

In energy:

- Steady, balanced vitality throughout the day
- A sense of lightness and spaciousness in the body
- Feeling centered and grounded even during busy times

In health:

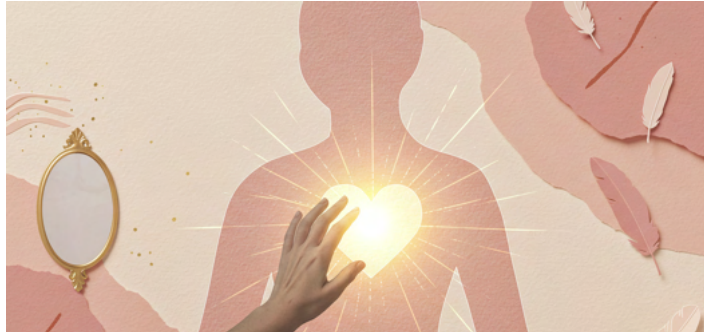
- Restful, rejuvenating sleep
- Harmonized digestion, free from stress-related upset
- Healthy internal warmth without excess heat or inflammation

In the mind:

- Clarity, focus, and thoughtful decision-making
- A calm, steady mental state
- Ability to hold multiple perspectives with ease

In emotions:

- A natural sense of joy and appreciation
- Warmth, kindness, and genuine connection with others
- Acceptance, forgiveness, and compassion toward self and others
- Inspired, enthusiastic engagement with life



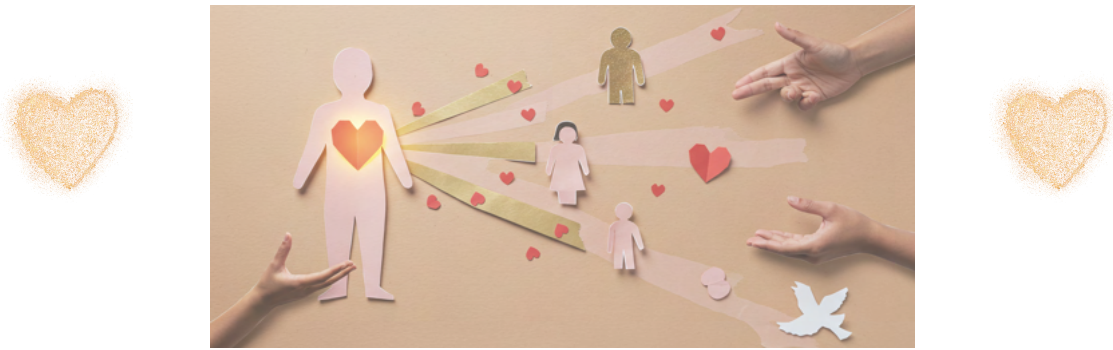
The Important Role of the Heart as the Higher Mind

In the realm of yoga philosophy, the heart holds a significant position as the center of consciousness and deep knowing as the Higher Mind. It is considered the gateway to our innermost essence. Surprisingly, this spiritual heart does not possess a specific physical location within the human body. Instead it exists everywhere within us. The physical heart is an organ pumping blood, but this spiritual heart is the seat of our consciousness, a reservoir of wisdom, love, acceptance and intuition.

The heart, however, takes on a contrasting role as the center of the inner mind, representing our emotional and intuitive nature. It transcends the limitations of the senses, delving into the depths of our being. It is in this space that profound insights, compassion, and a profound understanding of ourselves and others arise. The heart holds the key to a realm beyond the sensory realm, where we can tap into a higher level of consciousness.

As we contemplate the interplay between the heart, mind, and body, we realize that the body is a tangible and observable instrument. Its structure and functioning are widely agreed upon and form the foundation of our physical existence. On the other hand, the heart and the mind are an intangible force, an ever-present companion that shapes our perceptions and experiences.

In our journey towards self-discovery and understanding, it is crucial to explore the depths of our hearts and the boundlessness of our minds. By cultivating awareness and delving into the wisdom residing within the heart, we can access a profound knowing that transcends the physical realm.



The Important Role of the Heart as the Higher Mind

Simultaneously, by embracing the expansive nature of the mind, we can gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Through the integration of heart, mind, and body, we can embark on a transformative journey towards a more harmonious and authentic existence.

VIJNANAMAYA KOSHA

'Witness' or 'Heart-Mind' is the part of us that represents our wisdom higher mind sheath. It encompasses the realm of knowledge, discernment, and deep understanding.

With our yoga practices, we can shift our perspective from the Thinking-Mind into seeing and experiencing the world from the Heart-Mind, where we 'observe with love and acceptance all that is', and thus create spaciousness.

It is within this precious space that we are able to 'be with what is', instead of trying to manipulate and change everything all the time. This in turn helps us to both clear clutter out of the mind, and also not build and accumulate more thoughts and thus clutter. This allows a deeper understanding into the nature of the mind, heart, and the whole person, as well as gives us access to spiritual wisdom and insight into one's True Nature.



The Blooming Heart

Perspectives from
Traditional Chinese Medicine

The Meridian System

of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) evolved over thousands of years in China and other Asian countries where numerous theories were developed. Approaches employed in TCM are aimed at bringing health and balance to both Yin-Yang energies, and the Five Elements. Methods have included acupuncture, acupressure, shiatsu massage, diet, movement, energy practices like *Tai Chi* and *Qigong*, as well as herbal preparations.

Yin Yang Theory originates from Taoist philosophy as a basis for understanding human body and its relationship to the outside world. All things in Universe are governed by opposing yet interdependent forces Yin - Yang, which is very similar to Ida - Pingala concept in yoga philosophy:



- *Yin = means the 'shady side of the hill' representing the feminine: cooling, restorative, sleeping, and healing.*



- *Yang = means the 'sunny side of the hill' representing the masculine: warming, active, and dynamic.*

Energy channels are called *Meridians* and thousands were discovered in the human body. The first imaging of meridians has recently been developed and we can now see them! This is exciting news for those who need physical proof of their existence. They are imaged residing in the fascia (soft tissue that wraps around every organ, bone and body part).

Fourteen main energy channels are named and worked with in TCM. The meridians are paired - one yin and one yang channel - and together each pair activates and balances one Element and Season. Each meridian is associated with an organ in the body.

Meridians can be activated in our Five Element Yoga® practice with yoga postures, rhythmic movement, self-massage, acupressure, breathing, meditation and yoga nidra. You will learn where your meridians are and how to practice with them to improve your health, wellness, prevention, mood and outlook in this series.

Yin & Yang

Restorative and Active Modes

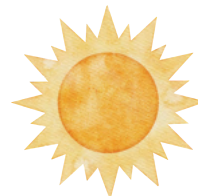


Yin and Yang represent the dynamic balance of all life – rest and action, receptivity and expression, softness and strength. Both are essential to well-being; when we cultivate yin, we nourish stillness, restoration, and inner listening, while yang supports vitality, movement, and outward engagement. Together, they help us maintain harmony in body, mind, and heart, allowing us to meet life with resilience and ease.



YIN

- Governs Left nostril and Left side of the body.
- Right brain hemisphere.
- Feminine, restorative, healing, calming, and cooling.
- Sleep and rest.
- Negative polarity.
- Parasympathetic nervous system.
- Introversion.
- Lunar force.
- Nighttime hours most active.
- Chitta (consciousness)
- Imagination, subconscious.
- Subjective.
- Sattwa (balanced).
- Color - Blue.



YANG

- Governs Right nostril and Right side of the body.
- Left brain hemisphere.
- Masculine, active, stimulating, dynamic, exerting, and warming.
- Activity and outward flow of energy.
- Positive polarity.
- Sympathetic nervous system.
- Extroversion.
- Solar force.
- Daylight hours most active.
- Prana - Chi.
- Logic, conscious.
- Objective.
- Rajas (activity).
- Color - Red.



Heart Meridian

Traditional Chinese Medicine

The Heart Meridian (HT) The Heart is the Sun of the body. An organ of fire where the emotions tend to move, flicker and change, the Heart can suffer when we are overstimulated, overexcited, and overactive. In TCM the concept of Shen 神 is intimately connected to the heart. Shen means "spirit" or "mindful" encompassing the mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of a person. The heart, known as the "Emperor" or "Ruler" of the organs, is seen as the house of Shen. When the heart is in balance, a person experiences joy, peaceful sleep, and a composed mind. Heart represents warmth, inner glow, generosity, connection, ease and openness.

The Heart Meridian and energy points can help to treat chest pain, heart palpitations, high blood pressure and anxiety; encouraging the blood to flow; and allowing the spirit to sparkle! We can protect the heart by maintaining a calm mind, moderating physical activity, and avoiding extreme emotions, cultivating calm, slow, mindful living - all of which can be ignited with our practice on the mat!



Absolute Fire

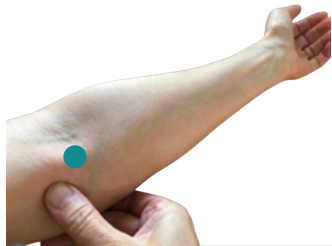
Active from 1am-3pm: Heart (11am-1pm)

Heart Meridian: This is the primary meridian associated with the fire element. It governs the heart organ, which is central to the Fire Element's association with warmth, vitality, and circulation. The heart also plays a key role in mental and emotional well-being.

Location

The Heart (HT) Meridian has nine points. It begins in the Heart organ, emerging externally in the center of the axilla (armpit), then runs along the inner - medial aspect of the upper arm, continues down to the elbow, travels along the forearm, and reaches the wrist, palm, and ends the inside of the little finger at the corner of the nail.

Heart & Pericardium Meridians



PC 3 - Marsh at the Bend

- Regulates Heart and circulation.
- Cools heat in the blood.
- Good for hives, fever, heat stroke, thirst, and restlessness.

PC 6 - Inner Gate

(ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT POINTS IN THE BODY)

- **Regulates the entire chest.**
- Helps indigestion with **nausea**, acidity and heartburn.
- **Calms** mind and emotions and expands tightness in chest.
- Relieves heart pain, angina.
- Good for anxiety, depression, emotional issues, and **insomnia**.
- Good for motion sickness and morning sickness.

PC 7 - Great Mound (Source Point)

- Regulates the heart.
 - Treats insomnia.
 - Regulates stomach.
 - Reduces fever.
- (try in combination with PC 6)

PC 8 - Labor Palace

- Regulates the heart.
- Clears heart fire.
- Clears the brain.
- Relieves pain in wrist: good for carpal tunnel syndrome.
- Good for anxiety, panic attacks and mental confusion.



HT 8 - Lesser Palace

between 4th and 5th metacarpal bones. (Look below for more info)

HT 5 - Penetrating Interior

- Regulates heart rhythm.
- Calming spirit.
- Good for depression, heart arrhythmia.
- Strengthens heart.
- *Press with thumbnail.*

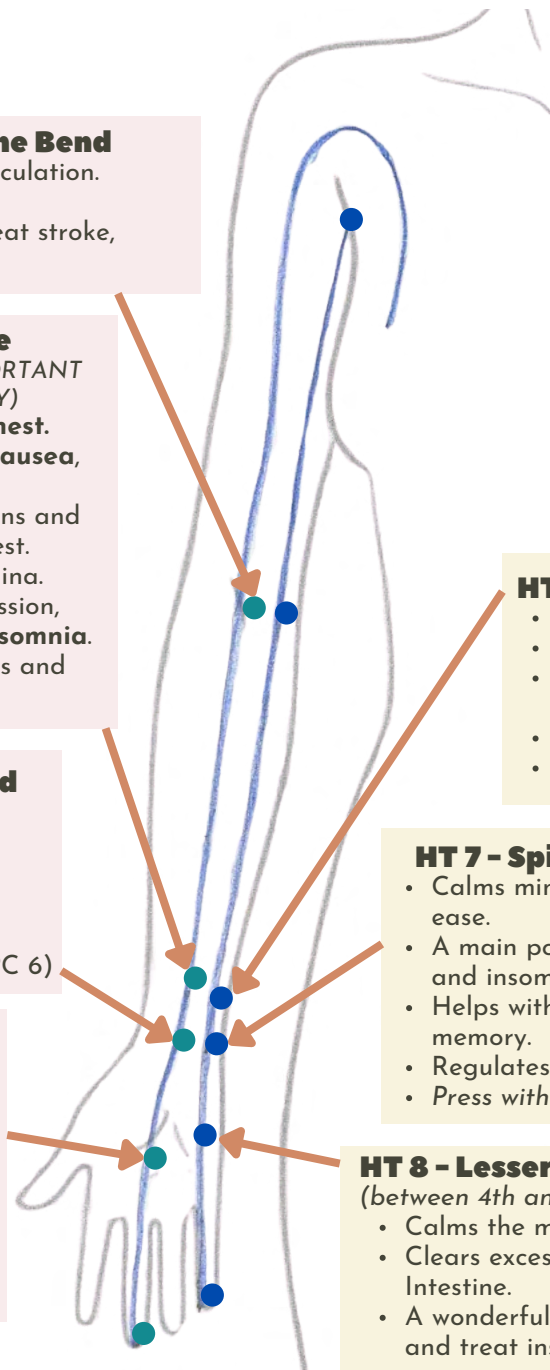
HT 7 - Spirit Door (Source Point)

- Calms mind, relaxes and helps one feel ease.
- A main point for treatment of anxiety and insomnia.
- Helps with: heart palpitations, irritability, memory.
- Regulates and strengthens heart.
- *Press with thumbnail.*

HT 8 - Lesser Palace

(between 4th and 5th metacarpal bones)

- Calms the mind and regulates the heart.
- Clears excess heat from Heart and Small Intestine.
- A wonderful point to mellow out irritability and treat insomnia.



Yin Meridians: Heart & Pericardium

Traditional Chinese Medicine



Yin Meridians offer balance to the activity of Yang by creating coolness, moisture, easy flow of energy, and calmness. Yin is characterized by healing, receptive, and nurturing qualities embodying qualities of stillness, rest, and inward focus. Yin is connected to the physical form of the body including tissues, organs, and fluids, and it nourishes and supports the body's structure.

Traditionally, Yin is linked to feminine qualities such as softness, gentleness, and compassion, representing the archetype of the nurturer and caregiver.

Located on the *front* of the body, and the *inner* aspects of the body, such as the insides of the arms and inner legs, Yin Meridians form half of the twelve main channels. Organs that are interior and solid, like the heart, are considered Yin organs..

Pericardium Meridian

Traditional Chinese Medicine

The Pericardium Meridian (PC) The Pericardium is said to be the Heart's ambassador who brings joy, allows us to communicate feelings, and protects the Heart from emotional pain in relationships. Pericardium accomplishes this by calming the Mind and balancing the emotions. The Heart being vulnerable to heat, the Pericardium absorbs that extra heat to protect it.

Pericardium Meridian and energy points can clear heat, calm the mind, and promote blood circulation. Heat reduction helps with all Heart and Blood disorders. This meridian also eases tightness, pain, or emotions in the chest.



Supplemental Fire

Active from 7-11pm: Pericardium (7-9pm)

Pericardium Meridian: The Pericardium (also called Heart Protector or Heart Constrictor) is a double-walled physical casing or sack around the heart organ that anchors and protects it. The protection it provides to the heart is both physical and emotional as it helps to stabilize the emotions. It also helps regulate the flow of energy (Qi or chi) in and out of the heart.

Location

The Pericardium (PC) Meridian also has nine points. It begins in the chest, emerging externally near the nipple, then runs along the center of the inner arm, passing through the elbow crease, and continues down the forearm between the tendons to the wrist, palm, and tip of the middle finger.

Activating the Meridians

with Five Element Yoga®



Five Element Yoga® offers numerous ways to activate the meridians which in turn helps them to attain health and balance. These practices work by improving circulation in the meridians, the energy points, as well as strengthening, releasing and revitalizing the soft tissues surrounding the meridians.

Self-Massage and Shiatsu:

- Sweeping or brushing (firm touch, not too light: think of activating tissues that are deeper than the skin like lymph, fascia and muscles)
- Rubbing briskly with the hands.
- Squeezing and releasing; kneading.
- Percussives and Tapotement: tap, clap, or thump with fists, fingertips or cupped hands.
- Pressure of body weight into the floor as in yoga postures; rocking and rolling point of contact of body on floor (e.g.: rolling on back side to side or front to back).

Energy Point Touch:

- Press and release (counting 1-6) for 2 minutes or more.
- Press and holding for 2 minutes or more.
- Percussives or Tapotement: tap, clap, thump with fists, palms, or fingertips the energy points.

Yoga Postures and Rhythmic Movement:

- Stretches meridians and soft tissue.
- Releases tension from meridians, points and soft tissue.
- Strengthens the muscles and surrounding soft tissues around the meridians and points.
- Pressure of body weight into the floor as in yoga postures; rocking and rolling point of contact of body on floor (e.g.: rolling on back side to side or front to back).

Shiatsu



Self-Massage



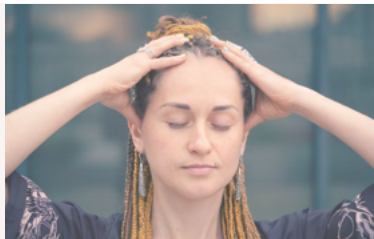
Shiatsu means 'relationship' and 'finger pressure' in Japanese and refers to healing massage, originally called Anma and is one of the oldest systems, found to date back 10, 000 years. Shiatsu is based on Traditional Chinese Medicine with Meridians and focus on balancing the Five Elements within organs that are paired together (one yin organ and one yang organ for each element).

Thumbs and fingers, elbows, knees, and feet are all used to apply pressure to the energy channels called Meridians, as well as the 365 energy points on the meridians called Tsubos. The primary energy is coming from the hara navel center area that extends outward through the body parts to apply pressure, thus very little muscular work is used in the fingers, limbs, shoulders, hips to practice Shiatsu (think of Tai Chi and Qigong movements).

These ancient healing practices can take a lifetime or many lifetimes to study and to understand - go slow with patience and do not feel like you need to comprehend everything, and all the channels and points, in order to practice this - much of the understanding happens over time as you practice it.

Self-Shiatsu can very effectively be practiced on oneself. The energy channels and points can be cleared of congestion and activated with pressure delivered from:

- fingers, fists, hands, elbows, etc.
- props like tennis balls, rolled up yoga mats, massage rollers, etc.
- the weight of the body in yoga postures.



Shiatsu Tips



How To Practice Shiatsu Self-Massage

Activating the MERIDIAN energy channels and the ENERGY POINTS is easy and anyone can do it! Stay tuned into your body, the sensations, and the effects that you feel both during and after.



Shiatsu on MERIDIANS

- Press gently but firmly along PART OF the Meridian, or the ENTIRE LENGTH of the Meridian.
- Press with your fingers, hands, fists, knuckles, forearms and elbows.
- Either press and hold; or rhythmically press-and-release along the channel.
- LEAN your body weight into your pressure from your Hara navel center.
 - This creates a rocking motion that is soothing to your nervous system and allows you to apply Shiatsu from your CENTER rather than from your limbs or joints. Limbs and joints are sensitive and need to be protected when you practice self-massage and you can do this by letting them be a vehicle of the chi - prana energy from your center.
- You can also stimulate the meridians by rubbing, sweeping, squeezing, kneading, or Tapotement (which is tapping thumping, clapping etc).



Shiatsu on ENERGY POINTS (Tsubos)

- Press into and then release, or circle points, for 1-2 minutes or more.
- You can use any body part or prop (tennis ball, roller, massage tools...) to press into the ENERGY POINTS.
- When pressing and releasing try counting from 1 to six slowly as you sink into the pressure.



NOTE: Pregnancy - do not press points or massage feet or ankles because it can induce labor.



The Blooming Heart

Five Element Yoga®
Practices



Five Element Yoga®

Five Element Yoga®, developed by Jennifer Reis in 2007, weaves together the rich traditions of yoga, Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, yoga therapy, and nature's wisdom. We are nature! The goal is balance and harmony within oneself, connecting you with your inner nature and inner rhythms.

According to the ancient wisdom of yoga, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether are the archetypal building blocks that compose everything in the Universe, including nature and the human body. Wellness depends on the balance of these internal five elements. Five Element Yoga® helps you realign your elements to find natural rhythm resulting in increased balance, health, happiness and wellness.

This potent practice invites you to celebrate your body with yoga postures, flow with yogic breathing, revitalize your energy with mudras, detoxify and find inner balance with self-massage, get creative with integration techniques, and find deep rest yoga nidra. For all levels including beginners.

Join Jennifer!

JENNIFER'S ONLINE STUDIO

*Series, Workshops, Trainings and On-Demand Classes
(includes CEs YACEP)*

*Five Element Yoga® Teacher Training
40-hr CEs YACEP Certificate Training. Open to Everyone!*

JenniferReisYoga.com for more info



Guidelines

for practicing Five Element Yoga®

Give Yourself Permission

Make sure everything you do feels good for you during your practice. Give yourself permission to alter and adapt this practice to make it feel just right each moment. That includes use of props or resting at any time. Take time to integrate after your practice by drawing, journaling, sitting quietly, or other ways that help you to reflect on what you felt and discovered.

How to Practice

- Breathe deeply, but comfortably: 3-Part Breath (belly, ribs, collarbones).
- Move your body in the rhythm of your breath.
- Flow with slowness, grace and ease, never pushing.
- Rest when you need to.
- Repeat circles, rotations, movements numerous times slowly with awareness.

When to Practice

You may like to practice **any time of day** (except right after a meal because you're digesting). Good practice times are:

- Upon awakening
- Before lunch
- Before dinner
- After work
- Before bed
- TAKE YOGA BREAKS - 1-5 minute practice breaks throughout your day!

Cultivating Your Practice

- You can create your own practice flows with this Workbook!
- You can practice short to longer sessions of 1-minute to over an hour, or anything in between. Practicing for even ONE MINUTE will help your health, happiness and vital energy. Regularity of practice will have the most potent affect.
- YOGA BREAKS: You may like to take shorter breaks throughout your day by setting a timer/app every hour or so, to remind you that its PRACTICE TIME!



The Blooming Heart

Five Element Yoga®



I have carefully selected practices to nurture your Heart's energy, bringing it into balance and supporting your emotional and energetic well-being. These practices can help you reconnect with your heart's natural qualities of compassion, joy, and spaciousness – and may be especially helpful anytime you are experiencing:

- feelings of agitation, irritability, or restlessness
- tension or tightness around the chest or heart
- discomfort in the neck, shoulders, arms, wrists, or hands
- poor circulation or fatigue
- difficulty sleeping
- overstimulation or a sense of being overwhelmed
- sluggish or unsettled digestion
- low spirits or lack of inspiration
- disconnection from your heart's intentions and desires
- muddled or scattered thinking

Our Blooming Heart Yoga Practices

Each Blooming Heart yoga practice invites softening protective layers, tending your hearth's inner landscape, to gently awaken the seeds of kindness, forgiveness, joy, and love that already reside within your heart. Our practices include:

- Rhythmic Movement, Yoga Postures, Mudras, Meridian Self-Massage & Breathing and Sounding practices.
- Moving slowly, mindfully, creatively with joy. Keep practices simple and uncluttered helps thoughts clear, turning Fire Element into a gentle and soft warming light that circulates through you.
- Targeting Heart Areas: Chest & Upper Back, as well as Fingers, Hands, Wrists, Arms, Shoulders, and Neck.
- 'Haaaaaaa' Sound: calms and soothes Heart Energy, releases anxiety, transforms negative emotions into positive ones promoting love, joy and compassion.
- Laughter: laughing is the sound of Fire and reflects it's connection to the Heart which is filled with Joy.

The Blooming Heart

Five Element Yoga®

MUDRAS



Medha Dirgha Swara

Long Song of Wisdom

"I Release Limitation and Open to Infinite Possibility."

Opens and massages the chest and heart while expanding breath. Allows one to be with feelings and emotions with love and kindness. Helps with fear, stress, anxiety. Fosters self-confidence within self, others and the world. Opens one to new possibilities and a positive outlook.



Tejas Mudra

Radiant Inner Light

"My Heart-Light Guides My Way."

Helps Increase energy in the heart and chest.
Enhances qualities of the heart: love, unconditional love, compassion, kindness, generosity. Kindles inner light.

Instills optimism and enthusiasm. Invites heartfelt devotion to the positive.

The Blooming Heart

Five Element Yoga®

MUDRAS



Anjali Mudra

Divine Offering

"I Surrender to My Heart's Deepest Wisdom."

or "Namaste."

Invokes divine union within. Allows senses to draw inward to retreat into calm, silence and balance. Balances all chakra wheels of energy, especially the heart. Fosters feeling wholeness and unity with all that is.

Namaste literally means 'I bow to', 'I bend to' in an act of reverence and heart centered kindness towards oneself and others. Bowing helps us surrender to the divine within.



Padma Mudra

Lotus Flower

"My Heart Blooms Open in the Warmth of Living."

Opens and reveals one's wholeness in body, mind and spirit. Brings heart energy upward into higher chakras. Good for depression. Heals the heart and all its emotional wounds. Supports the health of cardio-respiratory and immune systems.

The Blooming Heart

Five Element Yoga®

MUDRAS

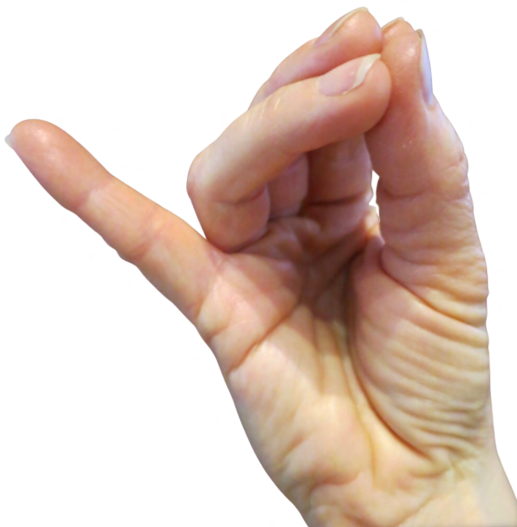


Kapota Mudra

Dove

"I Float in the Sea of Tranquility in the Center of my Heart."

Helps to expand spaciousness in the chest and around the Heart. Breath opens like wings of a Dove naturally on the inhalation. Allows one to be with feelings and emotions with love and kindness. Calms fear, stress, and anxiety. Opens one to feel the sacredness of every moment, and increases gratitude.



Hansi Mudra

Inner Smiling One

"My Inner Smile Awakens the Joy that has Always Been Here."

Helps to reveal our inherent positive seed qualities like kindness, love, unity, generosity and more. Instills optimism and enthusiasm. Allows tension to release from the jaws (helps TMJ). Uplifts energy and breath to chest to support breath, immune system and heart health. Improves mood and connects us to our eternal Inner Smile.

The Blooming Heart

Five Element Yoga®

MUDRAS



Vajrapradama Mudra

Unshakable Confidence

"I Trust in Myself and in the Loving Heart of the Universe."

Opens and massages the chest and heart while expanding breath. Allows one to be with feelings and emotions with love and kindness. Helps with fear, stress, anxiety. Fosters self-confidence within self, others and the world.



Hridaya Mudra

Heart Gesture

"I Listen to the Wisdom of My Heart."

Helps you to cultivate a deepened connection with your heart and it's truth and it's wishes as you allow your Heart's Wisdom to arise. Palm centers and hands have energy channels and point that support and heal the heart: you are making a circular connection of healing energy back into the spiritual heart center at the mid-line of your chest.

Supports the health of cardio-respiratory and immune systems.

Blooming Heart Pranayama

Nadhi Shodhana - Alternate Nostril Breath



Place your Index and Middle fingertips between the brows.

1. Use your Right thumb to close your nostril.
2. Inhale through your Left nostril, then close the Left nostril with your Ring finger.
3. Release the thumb and exhale through the Right nostril.
4. Inhale Right nostril, then close this nostril.
5. Release Left nostril and exhale through the left side.

This is one cycle. Try 10 cycles and notice how this helps to make you feel relaxed. ~BalanceActive Pingala Nostril with Left Restorative Ida Nostril for prana and Nervous System Balance. Regulates and balances blood pressure. Reduces metabolic rate. Teaches cells how to work more efficiently. Greater surface area of lungs are utilized.

3-Part Breath - Dirgha Breath



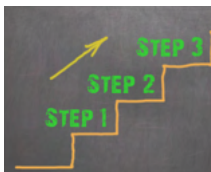
Place your hands on your belly and chest to feel your breath in body. Breathe through your nose:

- INHALE smoothly into the 3 parts of the torso:
 - Belly
 - Ribs
 - Collarbones
- EXHALE smoothly all of your breath out, gently drawing navel towards the spine at the bottom of the exhale.

Breathe like this for 1 minute or longer. Practice 3-Part Breathing in yoga postures, rhythmic movement, or on its own. ~Helps you to breathe more fully and slowly, both strengthening and releasing the muscles and soft tissues in the torso used for breathing. Massages digestive and other organs. Works out the muscles and soft tissues important for breathing. Enhances airflow to lungs. Synchronizes body and breath.

REVERSE DIRGHA BREATH: Inhale Collarbones > Ribs > Belly (great for asthma and upper respiratory issues).

Step Krama Breath



This is similar to 3-Part Breath but adds Kumbaka holding along the way:

- INHALE 1/3rd of your breath and PAUSE.
- INHALE 1/3rd more of your breath and PAUSE.
- INHALE final 1/3rd of your breath and PAUSE.
- EXHALE all of the breath out slowly.

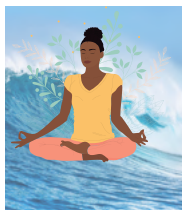
Continue for 1 minute or longer.

**If it is uncomfortable to pause the breath then either forego this breath or make pauses very brief so that it feels comfortable.*

~Helps to isolate three areas of the torso and lungs to breathe deeper.



Blooming Heart Pranayama



Ujjayi - Victorious or Ocean Sounding Breath

'Victory' in this breath is over the fluctuations of the mind, and the breath as Ujjayi controls both the speed and volume of the breath.

- On both Inhale and Exhale, contract the epiglottis in the trachea creating the signature hissing sound (think ocean or Darth Vader).
- You may like to hold Jnana Mudra as shown in picture with Ujjayi.

~Although warming and activating, Ujjayi induces subtle tranquil states of mind. Baro receptors on the carotid arteries at the back of the throat are activated and send messages to the brain and heart to reduce blood pressure: good for high blood pressure. Helps throat issues, asthma, bronchitis, anxiety,

*Note if you have a headache, or Ujjayi makes you dizzy, do not practice.

HA!

Hara Breathing - HA Breath - Kapalabhati

There are numerous variations of this breath from rapid laughing like 'HA-HA-HA', to closed mouth Kapalabhati through nostrils. Technically, these are known as cleansing 'kriyas' rather than pranayama. You can practice seated, standing, and also in yoga postures:

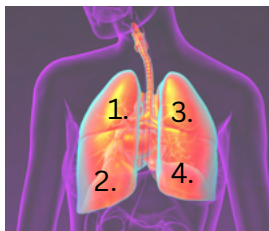
- HARA BREATH:
 - a. Hands on belly, inhale through the nose, and exhale HA sound.
 - b. Empty Coat Sleeves - Rapid Twists with HA exhale.
 - c. Pulling Prana - Inhale arms up overhead and exhale HA as you pull your hands towards belly. Great in Goddess Pose.
- HA-HA-HA BREATH: Inhale as you squeeze shoulders upward towards ears and exhale HA as you drop the shoulders. Begin with slow repetitions that get faster and faster. (fun - sounds like laughter!)

- KAPALABHATI and ALTERNATE NOSTRIL KAPALABHATI Skull Shining Breath: Sharp Exhale out through nostrils (like blowing out a candle), passive Inhale happens naturally on its own through the nostrils.

~Diaphragm and abdominal core are strengthened. Blood flow to brain is increased. Clears air passages and energy channels as well as cleanses lungs. O2 concentration increases. Increases blood flow. Massages internal organs. Aids healthy gut, digestion and elimination. Releases held emotions in diaphragm and chest. Helpful for lethargy,

**CONTRAINDICATED FOR HEART DISEASE, UNMEDICATED HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, STROKE, RECENT ABDOMINAL SURGERY, INJURY, PREGNANCY. MAY INCREASE MENSES FLOW WHEN MENSTRUATING.*

Quadrant Breath



Breathing into each of the 4 quadrants of the lungs brings greater awareness to the different areas of the lungs and surrounding sensations. Breathe deeply into each quadrant separately including what surrounds it. Try this breath on the chest/front body; then the back body:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Top of Right Lung. | 3. Top of Left Lung. |
| 2. Bottom of Right Lung. | 4. Bottom of Left Lung. |

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HALF MOON POSE

Ardha Chandrasana

In standing position, place feet hip distance apart or closer for more intensity. Sweep arms overhead and interlace fingers together, pointing outward through index fingers. Press hip out to the side keeping knees straight as can be. Roll shoulders back and down. Look up 1/4 turn underneath the upper arm. Breathe into side body and feel ribs expanding. Practice on both sides.

Options: Bend elbows; Bend elbows and place hands on head; Keep hands on the waist. Practice seated on a chair.



SEPARATING HEAVEN & EARTH

Feet hip-distance apart, legs straight.

1. EXHALE: Right palm faces upward, reaching out through the heel of the hand, and press Left palm facing downward to the ground to separate Heaven and Earth. Reach arm towards sky, or gently arc to the side as in photo.
2. INHALE: Spiral - Sweep Right hand in front of your navel, and Left hand in front of your heart space.
3. EXHALE: Reach up through Left palm, Right palm pushes down towards the ground.

Continue 3 or more slow repetitions.

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BREATH OF JOY

- Inhale: touch opposite shoulders with hands.
- Inhale: open arms wide like wings.
- Inhale: arms overhead touching all fingertips together.
- Exhale: 'HA' as you bend knees, leaning forward, sweeping arms behind you like a skier, letting all the air out. Let your head go, looking between the knees. (Option: if you can't lower head below heart, or for dizziness, place hands on your knees to keep head up).
- Inhale rise up and continue repeating 5-10 times. Fun!



PALMTREE POSE TALASANA with PRANA MUDRA

1. **Inhale lift up** onto tip-toes while reaching your arms out to the sides and up overhead (or bend elbows to Goddess arms). Point 'peace' fingers upward in Prana Mudra to help lift energy upward like candle light flickering.
2. **Pause holding your breath in** softly in *kumbaka*. (only if that feels good for you).
3. **Exhale and lower heels** and arms downward together slowly, placing palms on heart center to rest. Try two more repetitions imagining that you are a geyser, or candlelight uplifted into the air!



GODDESS PULSE

Straight legs wide apart with feet pointing 45° towards corners of the room:

- Inhale: Slowly sweep arms overhead touching opposite elbows.
- Exhale: Slowly with a soft sound of 'Haaaaaaa' as you bend knees into Goddess legs and sweep arms outward in a large circle, then down in front of belly clasp opposite elbows.

PRANA VAYU

Upward Current



Uplifting and revitalizing, PRANA VAYU gifts you with buoyancy! As you **INHALE**, you can easily feel this upward wash of energy through your body, like a fountain that nourishes your lungs, heart and spirit. Systems energized are respiratory, immune and cardiovascular.

*Prana and Apana are the two most influential vayus: yoga practices can unite them to bring perfect balance.

Constitutionally each person tends to have either more Apana-Earth energy, or more Prana-Air energy, thus daily practices are key in cultivating balance between the two.

HELPS: Depression, lethargy, giving up.

AIDS: Posture and spine; immune, respiratory, and cardiovascular system; great for all respiratory issues.

CORRESPONDS TO: Air Element & Heart Chakra.



PRANA MUDRA
Vital Life Force

*"My Inner Fountain
Uplifts and Energizes
Me."*



BHUJANGASANA
Cobra Pose

MORE POSTURES:
Backbends like: Dancer, Warrior, Anjaniasana, Bridge, Sphinx. Sidebends like: Half Moon, Side Warrior. Palmtree balancing pose.



PRANAYAMA

Thoracic breathing
(breathe into chest and upper back).

MORE PRANAYAMAS:
Lengthen each Inhalation. Kumbhaka: pause Inhalation for a few seconds.



HEART CHAKRA

Anahata 'unstruck'



Located in the center of the chest, Anahata is the middle in the ladder of the Chakras. The name Anahata refers to the 'unstruck' purity of sound of love and acceptance within the heart. The lotus flower has twelve emerald green petals with a star made of two triangles representing balance: one represents the upper three chakras, and the other the lower three chakras.



QUALITIES: Unconditional love, universal love, compassion, forgiveness, wisdom, witness, acceptance, openness, balance, and appreciation of beauty.

HELPS: Mistrust, sadness, loneliness, isolation, self-focus, negativity, separation and feeling closed.

AIDS: Heart health and issues, immune system, lungs, respiratory issues.

CORRESPONDS TO: Air Element, and Prana Vayu.



THORACIC BREATHING

Breathe into ribs and chest slowly. Notice the upward feeling of flow.

MORE PRANAYAMAS:

Lengthen each Inhalation. Kumbhaka: pause Inhalation in chest.



PURNA HRIDAYA MUDRA: *Open Heart*

"My Heart is a Deep Cave of Compassion."

(Note: Fingertips are interdigitated in this mudra).



YAM Bija Seed Sound

HEART CHAKRA

Anahata 'unstruck'



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PURNA HRIDAYA MUDRA *Open Heart*

"My Heart is a Deep
Cave of Compassion."
YAM Bija Seed Sound

(Fingertips are
interdigitated).

MORE MUDRAS:
Adhi, Apana, Pranidhana.



PARIGHASANA *Sacred Gate Pose*

Other Options: hand on head
or hip; Half Moon Pose.

MORE POSTURES:

All Backbending and Side
bending poses. Lateral Angle.
Downward Dog.



THORACIC BREATHING

Breathe into ribs and
chest slowly. Notice
the upward feeling of
flow.

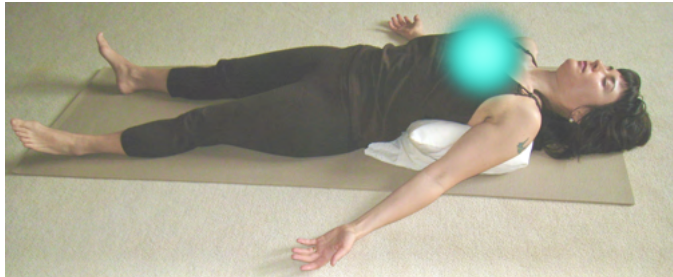
**MORE
PRANAYAMAS:**
Lengthen each
Inhalation. Kumbaka:
pause Inhalation in
chest.



HEART CHAKRA



Restorative Yoga Poses



SUPPORTED FISH POSE

Matsyasana

Rest on back with prop underneath your shoulder blade area (folded bed pillow, rolled firm blanket, bolster & blocks, etc). Arms 45° out to the sides with palms facing upward. Tuck your tail, then relax your whole low back. Other options: prop under your knees, under your head, tucking your chin gently.



RESTING HALF MOON

Ardha Chandrasana

Rest your head on a prop and your ribcage over props. Arms are overhead; or top arm relaxed bent over a prop. Bottom arm can also be placed straight in front of chest on the floor. Knees bent, or legs can be straight with top leg stacked on bottom leg.



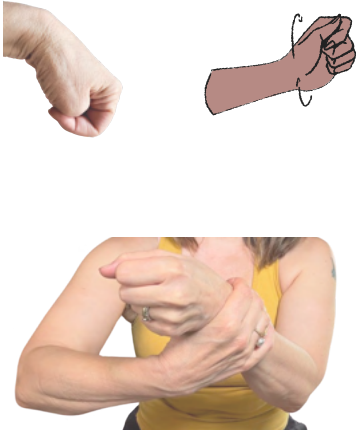
HEART HUG

Hug a soft folded blanket or other prop. Rest on your side with props under head and between knees. Hold this pose on the other side as well. Or rest on your back with props under knees or knees together in Constructive Rest Pose.



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AWRIST CIRCLE VARIATIONS

Arms: Stretch arms horizontally in T-pose; or reach arms in front at shoulder height; or hold hands in front of chest.

Hands: Make loose fists with thumbs in centers of palms or outside of palms.

Action: Make slow circles with wrists in one direction and then the other.

Option: hold wrist with fingers like a bracelet, then circle wrists to help activate all 4 Fire Meridians.



WINDOW WIPE SEMI-CIRCLES

Reach arms straight out in front of shoulders with fingers spread wide. As though you are washing a spot on the window, circle palms upward and downward slowly.



INTERLACE FINGER OPENER

Interlace fingers:

1. Exhale: Reach arms straight out in front of you; Inhale bring hands towards Heart. Continue with more reps.
2. See-saw: Reach arms straight out in front of you. Then reach one wrist upward a few inches, then the other wrist upward. Continue with more reps.

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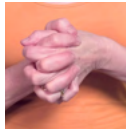


WRIST OPENERS IN TABLE POSE

In Table Pose, spread fingers super wide. Make small circles with hips to flow circling pressure into wrists. Try these hand variations:

1. Point fingers outward to sides of mat and circle hips.
2. Point fingers toward your knees and rest here or make very small hip circles; or try one wrist at a time with other arm bent and 'tent' fingers out to the side.

Option: Roll the end of the mat up and place heels of the hands on roll to reduce angle of stretch.



INFINITY WRIST CIRCLES

Interlace fingers and slowly circle one way many times, then the other way.



PRAYER POSE STRETCHES

Up-Down: Place palms together in Prayer Pose Anjali Mudra. Open fingers wide apart to open and stretch. Slowly wheel palms downward toward belly, then upward again. Continue with slow repetitions.



Side-to-Side: Press Right hand fingertips into Left hand fingertips to stretch inner wrist. Pause and breathe. Then Left presses Right. Continue with slow repetitions.



INTERLACE PULL THROUGH

1. Stretch arms out straight in front of chest placing palms in 'twisted prayer' then interlace fingers.
2. Bend elbows and draw hands to belly, then to chest.
3. If it works for your body you can also straighten arms out straight in front of chest (inner elbows will face upward).
4. Then go back through with interlaced hands back and forth a few times.
5. Repeat with the other wrist on top in 'twisted prayer'

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ALL TIE ARM STRETCHES

Hold a yoga tie or belt keeping your wrists very straight - try not to bend them. Keep shoulders down and away from the ears as best you can.

- Arc side to side slowly.
- Twist one way and the other.
- Keeping hands wide apart on the tie, bring arms up overhead and behind you. Then reach arms up overhead again, and forward to your thighs.

SIDE WALL PALM CIRCLES

Reach arms into T-position out to the sides as though you could touch the walls. Try 10-20 repetitions in both directions with all or any of these movements:



1. WAVE HANDS: open fingers wide and WAVE like you are cleaning a spot on the wall.
2. POINT FINGERS DOWNWARD and WAVE HANDS.
3. SMALL ARM CIRCLES: open fingers wide with heels of the hands pressed towards the walls and make small circles with straight arms that are about 5".
4. ARM CIRCLES a bit wider: try 10" circles.

CLEANING UNDER THE TABLE

Standing or lying on your back: Cup elbows with hands in front of shoulders. Reach elbows to the Left and look Right. Slowly return to center. Then elbows Right and head loos Left. Repeat with breath many times. *Also try circling the arms around.



CLEANING UNDER THE TABLE

For Chest expansion and Upper back and Shoulder blade strengthening. Keep elbows at the waist, palms face upward:

- Exhale: bring pinky fingers towards each other.
- Inhale: keep elbows into waist and imagining you are cleaning the underside of the table, sweep your hands back, drawing your SHOULDER BLADES gently towards each other and down your back.



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1



2



SEAGULLS

1. Interlace fingers behind the head. Draw elbows towards each other and lower chin towards chest.
2. Inhale: Open elbows wide and lift upward through chin and chest.
3. Continue with more repetitions.

1



2



UPLIFTING THE SKY

1. Inhale: Interlace fingers in front of belly. Slowly inhale hands up overhead, palms facing skyward.
2. Exhale: Arms out to sides wide with a soft Haaaa sigh sound releasing stress.

Options:

- Pause palms overhead and gently reach them back into a soft backbend.
- Gently hold your breath in a *kumbaka* when hands are overhead (only do this if feels good for you).

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CACTUS ARMS

- Stand against the WALL with shoulder blades, arms, head and buttocks touching the wall, heels are off of the wall; or SUPINE lying on your back on the floor.
- Arms in 'Cactus'. Do not force hands to touch the wall or floor. Draw shoulders and shoulder blades down and away from the ears, and keep elbows shoulder height at all times during this flow.
- **#1** - EXHALE lower RIGHT forearm forward counting '3-2-1'. (*NOTE Keep elbows touching the wall or floor. The hand will not go down as far as you probably 'want' it to go - only bring it as far as feels good. Make sure to not push into any discomfort or pain).
- INHALE '1-2-3' to lift arm back into cactus arms.
- **#2** - Turn your head towards the arm as it rotates forward.
- **#3** - Turn your eyes the opposite direction.

Practice 3-5 sets alternating with each arm.

REST for a minute with arms at sides.

EAGLE ARMS - UP & DOWN - TICK-TOCK



Wind arms around each other in front of you, or cross arms over and clasp opposite shoulders (option to hold a strap with both hands). Remember to switch arms. Breathe between the shoulder blades:

- UP & DOWN: Slowly lift and lower elbows with your breath.
- TICK-TOCK: Keep elbows near the chest and tick-tock your hands side to side like the hands of a clock.



COWFACE ARMS Gomukhasana

Begin by patting yourself on the back - yay you! Then clasp Right elbow and press it downward, walking fingers down the spine. Stay here and breathe. If you want to go further, release Left arm behind you and either clasp the right hand, or use a strap between the hands (hint: most people will need a strap).

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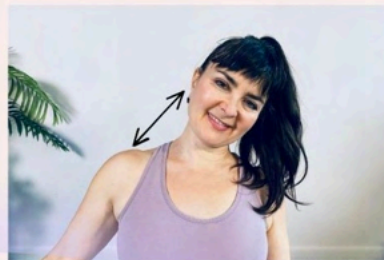


ELEVATOR SHOULDERS

Sit on the floor, cushion or chair in a way that is comfortable and allows you to have a straight spine:

- **INHALE:** Raise both shoulders towards ears counting silently 1-2-3.
- **EXHALE:** Lower shoulders to starting place counting silently 3-2-1.

Practice 3-5 Sets.



Somatic Side Neck Opener

Stand, or sit in supported way that is comfortable and allows you to have a straight spine:

- **EXHALE:** Draw **LEFT EAR** towards shoulder and **LEFT SHOULDER** towards ear.
- **INHALE:** Imagine you have bubblegum stuck between your ear and shoulder and slowly pull it apart: Both ear moves away from shoulder and shoulder moves away from the ear on the **LEFT SIDE**.

Practice 3-5 Sets on the Left Side; then 3-5 Sets on the Right Side.

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SPHYNX



Place elbows directly underneath your shoulders with upper arms perpendicular to floor. Legs str close together but not touching. Press pubic bone down. Roll shoulders back and draw shoulder blades together and down gently. Gaze towards top of the mat with chin slightly tucked (unlike picture which has neck in a bit of hyper-extension).

Option:

- Place a rolled blanket under ribs and try breathing into it to strengthen diaphragm and breathing.
- Place a cushion or folded blanket under your pelvis to ease low back tension or pinching sensation.

COBRA Bhujangasana



Place palms underneath your shoulders, tuck elbows in and roll shoulders down and away from ears. Press pubic bone down, lengthen through crown, and slowly peel upward, keeping elbows BENT 90° (do not straighten arms in this pose). Option: place cushion under hips and lift up with greater buoyancy!

BOAT POSE Navasana



Lying Prone on your belly, arms out 45° from hips with palms facing downward, legs close together - press downward through tail and pubic bone and as you Inhale lift up! You can lift head, chest and all limbs, or play with lifting only legs or only arms. Float up and down with Inhale-Exhale, or hold pose and fill your chest with deep breaths.

Option: Vamanasana Pose - spread arms and legs wide apart like a starfish for more expansion and spaciousness.

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WATER WHEEL & JANUSHIRSHASANA HOLD



1. Exhale: With one leg straight and other leg knee bent to side, slowly Exhale arms reaching gently over the outstretched leg.
2. Inhale: Let hands touch foot or leg and draw the hands along the leg to smooth it towards your belly.
3. Continue with more repetitions: like a rolling wave washing upwards on your leg.
4. Hold Janushirshasana forward fold maintaining a straight spine.

Options:

- Sit upon a cushion or blanket.
- Roll a towel up and place under straight leg.
- Place a cushion or block under the bent knee.

DOWNWARD FACING DOG Adhomukhasvanasana



Fingers are spread wide and feet wide apart. Press into heels. Reach tailbone downward towards heels. Expand shoulder blades wide and breathe between shoulder blades to feel the expansion in ribs & chest.

Options:

- Legs straight or knees bent slightly or deeply for low back comfort.
- Rest on your forearms instead of hands.
- Table Pose is a good alternative to dog for greater ease.

PUPPY STRETCH & CHILD Garbasana



1. **PUPPY:** From Table Pose, walk hands forward, chest hangs like a hammock, keeping buttocks in the air. Option: bend elbows and rest hands in Prayer Pose behind the head.
2. **CHILD ARM STRETCH:** Sit on heels with arms stretched overhead and fingertips in 'tent' position to push into floor.
3. **CHILD:** Sitting on heels, place forehead at height appropriate for you with props (hands, cushion, block) or rest forehead on the floor to activate YINTANG energy point between brows to calm, relax, and clear mind and spirit. Options: place a cushion or blanket between ankles or between thighs and calves for knee comfort.

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THREAD THE NEEDLE



From Table Pose, reach arm underneath opposite shoulder to touch side of the head, shoulder and arm on the floor:

1. Rest here, breathe, and option to make arm circles with upper arm, or even hold opposite thigh to deepen twist.
2. You may like to begin with one leg out to the side.
3. You can make this dynamic with repetitions and breath flowing arm up and then under, then up and under etc.

REVERSE TABLE



Point fingers either toward heels, away from heels, or use fists. Feet are hip width apart, hands shoulder width apart, lifting hips upward, and if it feels good in your body, release head slowly back. Take many deep breaths. Release slowly when ready.

CAMEL POSE Ustrasana



1. Warm-up: On your knees, tuck toes behind you, placing your hands with fingers pointing downward on your low back - press your hips forward, rolling shoulders back, keep your chin close to your collar bones (don't drop head back).
2. Half Camel Ardha Ustrasana: Reach one hand back onto the ankle with toes tucked or foot pointed back. Press hips forward and lift chest, rolling shoulders back. Keep chin close to chest. Option: lift opposite arm as pictured here.
3. Camel Ustrasana: Reach both hands back onto ankles, press hips forward, roll shoulders back. Head can go back if that feels comfortable to you.

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Release chest tensions, improve postural alignment, nourish your heart and thymus gland, expanding more openness through your chest and lungs with these poses! Keep shoulders rolled back, and draw shoulder blades gently downward away from ears. Great for upper respiratory issues and viruses. Breathe into your chest imagining a flower blooming in your heart.



PIGEON POSE Kapotasana

From Sleeping Swan, hands under the shoulders, press upward like a slow wave, extending outward through crown and lengthening spine as you rise up. Roll shoulders back and down. Make sure pelvis is level to the floor and one hip is not higher than the other. Gently draw thighs bones towards each other.

Options:

- Hands on floor, beside the hips.
- Reach one or both hands back to back leg.
 - Bend back leg and hold in Mermaid Pose.
- Place soft prop under pelvis to ease the sensations.



CAMEL POSE Ustrasana

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3. Camel Ustrasana: Reach both hands back onto ankles, press hips forward, roll shoulders back. Head can go back if that feels comfortable to you.

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GATE POSE Parighasana



From table pose, extend one leg outward to the side. Inhale and roll up to one-legged knee stand. Level pelvis to the floor with your hands. Slide one hand down the straight leg, and sweep the other arm overhead arching. Practice on both sides.

Options:

- Place upper hand on head or waist if your shoulder is sore.
- Use padding underneath knee if it's too much pressure.
- Sweep upper arm and hand down to the floor on bent knee side to come into Balancing Half Moon on your knee.

SIDE ARC CHILD Variation



Sitting on heels, place forehead at height appropriate for you with props (hands, cushion, block) or rest forehead on the floor to activate YINTANG energy point between brows to calm, relax, and clear mind and spirit.

Options:

- Cushion or blanket between ankles or between thighs and calves for knee comfort.
- SIDE ARC CHILD: Walk hands slowly over to one side to stretch ribs. Then walk slowly to the other side.

BANANA POSE



Lying on your back, bring feet as wide apart as the mat. Lift one leg and cross it over the other at the ankles. Arc your spine over towards that same side of the mat to create an arc like a banana or crescent. Reach arms over head and interlace fingers pointing index fingers out. Practice on both sides.

Options: Experiment with the arms: bend elbows into 'cactus arms', or place arms along side body with palms facing upward, or clasp your bent elbows overhead.

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YOGA MUDRA



Feet wide apart and slightly pigeon toed, from standing sweep arms chest height behind you in a big circle and interlace fingers. Inhale and lift hands upward behind you. Exhale with a straight spine and lengthening through crown of the head, fold forward. Reach arms overhead towards the floor as you hinge forward.

Options:

- Hold a strap with hands wide apart or place interlaced fingers on low back for tightness or intense sensations.
- Rest forehead on the wall or back of a chair if you cannot lower your head below your heart, or for dizziness, or for osteoporosis.



WARRIOR Virabhadrasana with Arm Variations

Step one foot back and bend forward knee over the ankle (not over the toes). Back foot is either >pointing straight ahead with heel lifted, or >toes out to the side with heel on the mat. Or you can kneel in Anjaneyasana with knee on the ground.



3



4



Options:

1. **Warrior:** Inhale arms up into a big 'V' pose up overhead, draw shoulders down.
2. **'W'-Wings:** Pull elbows towards waist in a 'W' shape, lifting heart, with shoulder blades down. Either hold arms here, or flow arms up and down in repetitions with breath.
3. **Arms Back:** Reach hands behind you and interlace fingers together (see picture above for Yoga Mudra hands), pointing index fingers, and gently lifting arms and chest upward.
4. **Kneeling Warrior Anjaneyasana:** Arms in 'V', or 'W', or hands on knee, or Dynamic (blue pants photo): One hand on the chest, reach the other arm back and look in that direction. Then bring that hand to the chest and sweep the other hand back. One More: Reach arm up to the Sun, then 'thread-the-needle' with same arm under bent knee and repeat many times.

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DANCER Natarajasana

1. Bend knee and clasp inside of one foot. Raise other hand straight up towards sky.
2. Stay here; or fold forward at hip crease.
3. Stay here; or lift back foot upward towards the sky.
4. Practice other side.



FLYING WARRIOR Tuladandasana

From Dancer release foot, flexing out through the heel, and level hips to the ground. Arms go out to the sides like wings. Or reach them overhead by the ears, or hook thumbs together behind you and lift arms upward.



GODDESS with BEAR TWISTS

Feet very wide apart and point towards the corners of the room, begin with hands on hips pulsing upward and downward and bending the knees to the rhythm of your breath to loosen joints and warm up legs. Then, sink into Goddess Pose, pressing knees wider and further back with arms in cactus pose. Place hands on knees or thighs. As you Exhale, reach shoulder towards opposite knee, looking over your shoulder. Inhale and slowly come back to center. Exhale to the other side. You can make this as gentle or intense as feels good for your body.



LATERAL ANGLE Utthita Parsvakonasana

Feet wide apart with forward foot pointing straight, and back foot at a 35' angle, bend the forward knee 90' so that the knee is directly over the ankle and not over the toes.

Bend elbow and place on forward knee. Make large arm circles with upper arm. Rest in the pose with arm near upper ear, making a long angle between back foot and lifted arm.

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Lateral Side Bends open the ribs to stretch intercostal muscles, as well as underarms, shoulders, arms and hands awakening Heart Meridians. Side stretches can be intense, thus practice gently, and do not hold the poses too long. Keep extending through your spine, keep your chest open, and chin slightly lifted, and try not to collapse forward. Use a deep 3-Part Breath with softening your body as you exhale.



DANCING WARRIOR Virabhadrasana

Feet wide apart with forward foot pointing straight, and back foot at a 35' angle, bend the forward knee 90' so that the knee is directly over the ankle and not over the toes.

- Extend arms out to the horizon line and look over bent knee.
- Then sweep back arm and hand down to rest on back straight leg and lift forward arm up to the sky. Option: arc back.



LATERAL ANGLE Utthita Parsvakonasana

Feet wide apart with forward foot pointing straight, and back foot at a 35' angle, bend the forward knee 90' so that the knee is directly over the ankle and not over the toes.

- SIDE WARRIOR: Extend arms out to the horizon line and look over bent knee.
- DANCING WARRIOR: Sweep back arm and hand down to rest on back straight leg and lift forward arm up to the sky. Option: arc back.
- LATERAL ANGLE: Bend elbow and place on forward knee. Make arm circles with back arm. Rest in the pose with arm near upper ear, making a long angle between back foot and lifted arm.

BALANCING 1/2 MOON: Reach forward hand down to floor above the foot 2' or so, lifting back leg up into the air. Straighten both legs. Lift upper arm upward towards the sky! Option: keep hand on waist; extend arm over ear. Look down, to side wall, or up at your thumb.

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Open, strengthen and assist energy flows through your chest, upper back, shoulders, arms and hands. This aids in decongesting and moving the energy through the chest, shoulders and Meridians.

CAT & DOG Variations



- **WAVE or CAT & DOG:** Exhale round your spine - Inhale lift tail and chest. Continue slowly with breath rhythm.
- **LATERAL CAT WAGS:** Tail, spine and head side to side, lifting feet and swiveling them side to side, looking at the feet over the shoulder.
- **BARREL ROLL:** Roll torso from belly button around in circles slowly one way and then the other way (not shown here).

DOWNWARD FACING DOG

Adhomukhasvanasana

Fingers are spread wide and feet wide apart. Press into heels. Reach tailbone downward towards heels. Expand shoulder blades wide and breathe between shoulder blades to feel the expansion in ribs & chest.

Options:

- Legs straight or knees bent slightly or deeply for low back comfort.
- Rest on your forearms instead of hands.
- Table Pose is a good alternative to dog for greater ease.
- **GET ACTIVE:** Move slowly from Downdog into Upward Facing Dog or Puppy Stretch.



PUPPY STRETCH & CHILD Garbasana

PUPPY: From Table Pose, walk hands forward, chest hangs like a hammock, keeping buttocks in the air. Option: bend elbows and rest hands in Prayer Pose behind the head.

CHILD: Sitting on heels, place forehead at height appropriate for you with props (hands, cushion, block) or rest forehead on the floor to activate YINTANG energy point between brows to calm, relax, and clear mind and spirit. Options: place a cushion or blanket between ankles or between thighs and calves for knee comfort.



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'Apana' refers to the downward current of vital life force energy that flows like a waterfall to aid in relaxation and grounding. Twisting Poses are great for nourishing all inner organs and their functions, since you are both massaging internally, and benefiting from the 'squeeze and soak': as you release fresh energy and fluids are said to flow into the organs.



1. ARDHA APANASANA: Resting on your back, bend your right knee, interlacing your fingers on your knee or under the knee on the thigh if your knee is tender. Gently draw thigh towards belly. Breathe deep belly breaths sensing the massaging action of the ascending colon and transverse colon. *For comfort of low back, the left knee can bend with foot on the floor.

Options: Folded blanket under head for comfort. Folded blanket between thigh and belly if you feel a pinching sensation in the hip flexor muscles in the hip crease area.

2. To intensify, lift either nose to knee, or left leg, or both.

3. APANASANA: Practice with both knees in at the same time which will massage transverse colon even more.

4. To intensify, lift nose to knees; 'hug' arms around knees, or tuck hands under knees.

SUPINE TWIST

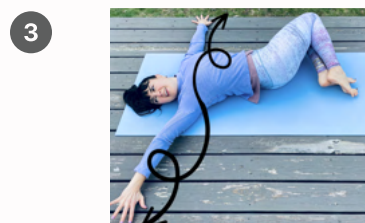
Lying on your back, keep shoulder blades flat on the ground to help chest open and expand as you slowly rock legs to one side and look the opposite direction, stretching arm out along the floor, or hold bent knee.

Options:

1. Both knees bent and 'stacked'; or straighten bottom leg as in picture below.

2. Circle one arm at a time all the way around you touching hand to the floor like a clock.

3. With arms in 'T' position, wring them out slowly by turning on palm down, and one palm upward with arm twisting repetitions.



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These poses can deeply relax the body and teach us how to meditate through the body. You may notice emotions arising to surface - this is a time to create space to be with what you feel - and know that tears and feelings are normal and okay.

PROPS: Use lots of props and get as comfy and cozy as you can! It's wonderful to throw a blanket over yourself once you get into the poses. Breathe and let go.

Restorative reduce stress, release muscular tension, improve mobility and flexibility while balancing the nervous system as it elicits the Relaxation Response - parasympathetic NS and tones the Vagus Nerve.



Queen Bee RECLINED HEART OPENER

From sitting, lay back on the end of a bolster, couch cushion or stack of 3 pillows or blankets (optional block/prop under far end of the bolster to angle it into a wedge). Rest your head on a blanket, chin gently tucked. Arms are 45° out to the sides, palms upward (place blankets or towels under hands). Palms turn upward out to the sides.

Options:

- Legs can be straight and extended or knees bent with feet on the floor.
- Diamond Pose: bring feet together, knees open, thighs rest on blocks or blankets.



RESTING HALF MOON

Rest your RIB CAGE over a bolster or 2 pillows, making a gentle arc like a rainbow. Bend knees, or straighten legs long. Rest head on a folded blanket, or your lower arm. Top arm can be rest in front of your chest, or straight overhead. Practice on both sides.

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SUPPORTED FISH

Rest on your back with a pillow folded (or cushion or block) under the SHOULDER BLADES. Open arms out to 45° from your hips, palms turned upward to open chest and shoulders. Options: blanket or block under head; cushion or bolster under knees; use block under shoulder blades and block under head instead. Rest and restore.



SUPPORTED BRIDGE Setubandhasana, **WATERFALL** Viparitakarani, & **HALF SHOULDER STAND** Ardha Sarvangasana

Supported Bridge: Lift hips to place a firm cushion or pillow folded under hips, arms out 45° from torso, nothing underneath the head.

Waterfall: From Supported Bridge, lift one leg into the air, and then the other, keeping the legs straight like candlesticks, and feet apart about 4". You may like to rest your heels against the wall. Palms turn upward out to the sides with arms 45° from torso.

Half Shoulderstand: This is not a restorative, but affects you like a restorative. Lying on your back rock your knees into chest and place hands on low back. Walk elbows closer together for better support and alignment. Lift legs up into the air. Keep bend at hips.

Gratitude

A powerful method of stopping negative thoughts is to focus on the good and the positive, as this can easily be overshadowed by thoughts, fears and concerns in the mind. Studies have shown that gratefulness is associated with lower risk of depression, anxiety, and improved health and relationships.



Gratitude tips and hacks

Spending only a few minutes of acknowledging what you're thankful for can improve your mood and uplift your spirits! There are many ways to count your blessings. Read on to find how you can incorporate more gratitude into your everyday life:

- 1. Gratitude Journal: Every morning or evening, write in a gratitude log or journal 5 things you're grateful for.**
- 2. Thank You Note: Write a Thank You note to someone who has helped you recently.**
- 3. Appreciation of Others: Close your eyes and think of people for whom you are thankful.**

With practice, this process will become second nature and you will more automatically see the positive in your day-to-day life. It is important to look for gratitude with intent because the brain tends to focus on the negative during times of stress. Being able to override this is a powerful tool.

Another stage of looking at gratitude, is to be thankful for adversity. Through overcoming challenges, you get an opportunity to grow. It is hard to go through something tough, but you will emerge stronger, and have learned something important.



Metta Loving-Kindness Meditation

Numerous studies have provided evidence that Metta Loving-Kindness meditation has the ability to restructure the brain in a positive way. Metta means 'positive energy and kindness towards self and others' in the Pali language from northern India and closely related to Sanskrit.

Engaging in this easy and simple practice requires only a few minutes of your day and can shift your perspective. Simply find a calm space, sit quietly, and intentionally direct benevolent and empathetic thoughts towards yourself and others (family and friends; someone with whom you have tension or a conflict; those around the world who are suffering).

Feel free to use these phrases below. Give yourself permission to change these, or make up your own phrases. Repeat each line three times aloud or silently.

May I be free of worry and fear
May I feel safe and protected
May I be well in body and mind
May love fill me and surround me
May I know peace and be at ease

May you be free of worry and fear
May you feel safe and protected
May you be well in body and mind
May love fill you and surround you
May you know peace and be at ease

May all beings be free of worry and fear
May all beings feel safe and protected
May all beings be well in body and mind
May love fill and surround all beings
May all beings know peace and be at ease

Divine Sleep® Yoga Nidra

developed by Jennifer Reis

There is nothing required but to lie down and listen.

Experience deeper levels of inner peace and health than you ever imagined possible.

Give yourself permission to rest, balance, and restore, tapping into new sources of energy.

This inspired guided meditation will awaken your whole being, allowing you to enjoy life fully.

Be supported, held and nourished as you discover profound peace and vibrant health.

What is Divine Sleep® Yoga Nidra?

Grounded in the wisdom of yoga, proven with evidence-based research, and adapted for modern life, Jennifer's yoga nidra meditations will allow you to find your calm, improve your health, outlook and your sleep.

Divine Sleep® Yoga Nidra is a guided meditation that systematically guides you through each level of being including your physical, energetic, mental, emotional and spiritual layers that are known as the five koshas.

Through the use of relaxation, breath awareness, body sensing, nature imagery, and soothing music, Divine Sleep® invites you to connect at each level, without asking you to change or 'fix' anything. This is true meditation - there is nothing to do but to notice with gentle awareness all that you feel and discover within yourself as it arises. This practice supports you to feel empowered and whole exactly as you are now: it reveals your deepest wisdom and wholeness to you.

Jennifer's celebrated style of science and creativity offers a practical practice you can use daily to restore your body, health and energy, calm your mind and emotions, and achieve better sleep.

**20-minutes of yoga nidra can feel like
2-3 hours of sleep!**

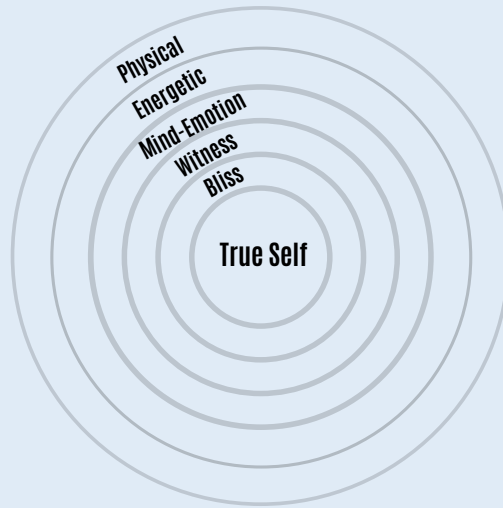
Practicing Divine Sleep® Yoga Nidra

All you need to do is lie down and listen! Get comfy with pillow and blankets. Practice can be done at anytime of day or night (if you are practicing right after a meal, then either sit up or lie on your left side to support your digestion). 12-45 minutes is all that is required. (Listen in bed when practicing to the 'Insomnia' track to put you to sleep!)

Divine Sleep® Yoga Nidra

Five Koshic 'Levels of Being'

The koshas are an ancient map of the human being from the Upanishads 700-500 BCE, India. Each koshic level is a doorway that opens you to your next level, helping you connect with your Whole Self.



Yoga Nidra Research

Stanford, UCLA, Yale, Harvard, Walter Reed Army Med Center, Ohio State University, Medical College of Ohio, Banaras University and other reputable research institutions, show that regular practice of yoga nidra meditation offers a viable means of prevention, and reversal of numerous ailments and illnesses including cardiovascular, stress-related illness, chronic pain, and psychosomatic conditions.

Yoga nidra can strengthen the immune system, regulate high blood pressure, balance flight or fight, assist endocrine system, and improve sleep and aid insomnia. Yoga nidra supports all stress related illness which accounts for 99% of illness today. (studies from pubmed.com).

Practice with Jennifer Reis, the Creator of Divine Sleep® Yoga Nidra:

- > Divine Sleep® Yoga Nidra Teacher Training
 - 40-hr Certificate Training open to Everyone!
- > Yoga Nidra Thursdays - Zoom Live-Online
- > Jennifer's Online Studio: WORKSHOPS, SERIES, & TRAININGS.
 - > In-Person RETREATS at Kripalu Center.

Savasana

Resting Pose for Yoga Nidra

Savasana means 'corpse pose' implying you're trying to get as relaxed and comfortable as is possible!



"Lying full length on the back like a corpse is called Savasana. With this asana, tiredness caused by other asanas is eliminated; it also promotes calmness of the mind."

~Hatha Yoga Pradipika, dating 1350 CE

Relaxation is a doorway to your bliss state. Savasana pose will help open that door! What is important is to find comfort in Your Body and the props and supports that You need now, which will change over time.

Savasana pose is supine, simply lying on your back on a yoga mat or blanket. You can modify it with numerous props. You can practice side lying position for pregnancy, snoring, discomfort, or to soothe coughing. Lying on your left side helps keep your uterus off of your liver. Sleeping on the left side also improves circulation to your heart and allows for the best blood flow to the fetus, uterus, and kidneys.

You can also practice Savasana in a seated posture. Whether you choose to keep your eyes open or closed is always an option. The important thing is to give yourself permission to do what feels most comfortable for you in the moment and to change position anytime you need to.

Savasana

Resting Pose: Optional Props & Positions



Make sure your body feels supported, comfortable, and warm, as the body cools down when you become relaxed and the nervous system shifts into parasympathetic mode. "Swaddling" yourself like a baby with blankets, cushions, and bolsters can create a weight on your body, helping you to feel and sense the outline of your body and keeping you feeling more grounded rather than light and floating. Be experimental with props and try different ways each time. Try to keep all body parts and props symmetrical.