

Yoga for Editors

Ancient Wisdom for a Modern Profession

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Welcome to Yoga for Editors. Articles about many of the topics discussed in this short session are, or will be, available on Active Voice Online. If you have any questions now or in the future, please write ChristaBedwin@gmail.com. I'll gladly answer your questions to the best of my knowledge.

Part 1: Healthy Back, Healthy Body

As many chiropractors will tell you, the health of your back is essential to the health of much of the rest of your body. As editors, we abuse our backs simply by remaining immobile in front of our computers for so much of the day. The key to back health that I would like to deliver to you in this session is to pay attention to the mobility of your back. Spend time to make sure that you spend a little time each day moving your back in healthy ways.

1. Posture advice from belly dancing
2. Cat-cow (back and core strengthening, mobility, and balance)
 - straight
 - arm and leg extensions
 - balanced with eyes closed
3. Downward facing dog (in fact, good for almost all that might ail you!)
 - normal - attending to back (hips high)
 - normal - attending to legs (bent, and pushed straight)
 - leg extension/hip opening
4. Swimmer's Pose (back strengthening)
5. Cobra pose/Upward facing dog pose (flexibility, awakening)
6. Plank pose (core and back strengthening) Remember, "find lightness at the top of your plank."
7. Twists (mobility, purification)
8. Child's Pose (back mobility, rest, calming)
9. Happy Baby (back massaging)

Part 2: Alertness Tricks

Another pitfall of working at the computer all day can be that our blood gets sluggish and our minds get dopey. Caffeine is often applied, but doesn't always have an effect. Yoga offers a few caffeine-free ways to perk yourself up.

1. Kundalini breath

Skull Brightener Breath: <http://www.yogajournal.com/poses/2452>

2. Kundalini breath with repetitive movement

- twists
- back bend, back flex
- legs, arms

3. Back-bending poses (upward dog, cobra, camel, bridge, wheel)

Part 3: Stress Relief

Yoga also offers some magic for body-health stress relief and relaxation in your day. A good yoga workout that gets your blood pumping and your breath moving will often leave you feeling wonderful, but certain poses can also be used in quiet or anxious moments.

1. Legs up the wall pose: This incredibly simple pose has numerous benefits, and feels fantastic. Use a folded towel if this increases your comfort. This pose not only calms you down, it can help you get to sleep, as well.

2. Loosening shoulder tightness, belly-dancing style.

3. Child's pose: widely regarded as one of the magic poses of yoga.

4. Forward-bending poses

- sitting
- standing

Part 4: Checklist: Ways to Add Yoga to Your Work Day

Fill this in during the workshop or in your spare time. Feel free to copy and distribute this page freely.

Current Behaviours:	Healthier Behaviours:
<p data-bbox="235 514 576 556">What do you do each day:</p> <ul data-bbox="284 577 787 1291" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="284 577 787 661">• during your breaks from paying work?<li data-bbox="284 693 560 735">• for your posture?<li data-bbox="284 766 535 808">• for your knees?<li data-bbox="284 840 527 882">• for your back?<li data-bbox="284 913 511 955">• for your hips?<li data-bbox="284 987 592 1029">• for your shoulders?<li data-bbox="284 1060 787 1102">• to make your heart glad every day?<li data-bbox="284 1134 787 1218">• to fill your lungs with Joy and fresh clean breath each day?<li data-bbox="284 1249 714 1291">• to get your lymph circulating?	

Suggestions:

Take ten-minute yoga breaks. Do reinvigorating yoga such as a round of Sun Salutations or Kundalini movements, or rest in forward bend or child's pose and breathe deeply. Your body will tell you what it needs, if you open your heart to listen.

Take dance breaks... put on Eastern music from YouTube and let your backbone slide!

Take idle moments (waiting in line, or sitting in traffic) to breathe, read your body from inside, and meditate. Even 90-second snatches of breath and attention can have a focussing, calming, healthy effect on your day.

Philosophy of Yoga

The First Principle:

Yoga is for you, yourself.

Don't do it to show off to anybody else.

Discount, absolutely and immediately, any advice that does not ring true for you. Any instructor who tells you that there is one and only one way to do a pose, or tries to tell you to do something that hurts, does not know very much.

You and only you are the expert on your own body.

Yoga is a time for you to get reacquainted with yourself.

It seems selfish, but in fact yoga restores you, and then allows you to give the world more of your ultimate gift -- yourself.

*Check in with your body and your mind and **be** totally selfish and self-centred during your yoga practice!! The centering and nurturing that you do for yourself during the time you spend "on the mat" can help you to be a healthier, more loving and giving person off the mat.*

For example, I never force my body into lotus pose (the classic sitting cross-legged with feet on top of thighs), because it does not feel good on my knees. However, after consultation with a physiotherapist, I know that straight-legged stretches, even if they hurt a little occasionally, and sitting on my heels (a position that took me several months of working on it to be able to do, after more than a decade of bad knees) helps my knees to stay healthy. **Always** pay attention to pain in your body to moderate any pose, and never use the person beside you to gauge your own success.

Further Resources

YouTube. Without expending any money, travel time, or much energy, you can get a feel for a variety of yoga styles and find out what kind of yoga suits you. For example, you can find Sun Salutations (Surya Namaskara) led in Hindi by a half-naked guy in India, or by a buff, hard-voiced, Type A American in LA, or led gently and softly by a very relaxed and calm senior citizen in Scandanavia. Note, however, that Sun Salutations have the greatest benefit if you actually get out of the chair and onto the floor and DO them instead of sitting open-mouthed in astonishment in front of the computer screen!

Music for yoga: For a start, enter "Deva Premal" or "Krishna Das" in the search window of YouTube.

yogajournal.com is a fabulous resource to read about the correct alignments and intentions of the poses. This website also provides remedies for many ailments, emotional and physical, good life philosophy and wisdom, nutrition, and a multitude of other yoga-inspired writings.

Nutrition: Deepak Chopra's audio book: **Weight loss: the complete mind/body solution**, has many interesting Ayurvedic ideas on nutrition and healthy eating. I think it's definitely worth a listen for some mind fertilizer.