Karuna Yoga Newsletter

YOGA THERAPY
BALANCING THE CHAKRAS WITH YOGA
THE SEVEN CHAKRAS

Since September we have been balancing the seven chakras by addressing one chakra each month with specific yoga postures, adopting a specific mudra and chanting a Bija mantra relating to that chakra.

Of course, we are not all the same and people need to work on different chakras. Some people need to spend more time grounding themselves by working on postures for the root chakra. Others need to work on developing their power by focusing on the solar plexus while others need to work on opening the heart chakra.

Working with the chakras in yoga is designed to put you more in touch with yourself. It is from within you that you'll find your own answers and to discover which chakras you need to work on.

The general guideline is to follow the path of the chakras from bottom to top.
Start with centering and grounding yourself – root chakra – Muladhara.
Then get things moving by lubricating the hips and joints – sacral – Svadhisthana.
Warm up and generate energy – solar plexus – Manipura.
Soften your breath to open the chest and upper body – heart – Anahata.
Attune your energies with chanting or sounding – throat – Visuddha.
Focus your attention on something beautiful – third eye – Ajna.
Go deeper into your own consciousness and into meditation – crown – Sahasrara.

You may decide to do a daily routine that incorporates all seven chakras or a weekly routine that focuses on one chakra each day. You may feel you need more grounding on a particular day, so you do postures for the root chakra. If you have low energy and feel lethargic, then you need to work on boosting the solar plexus. If you are always busy, do some restorative postures by lying down in Supta Baddha Konasana or Supta Padangusthasana.

Listen to your inner guidance and do what feels right for you. Namaste.

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YOGA POSTURES FOR THE CHAKRAS
Building up postures from root to crown. Here are some examples.

Sit quietly and adopt the Gyan mudra with the tip of your index finger touching the tip of your thumb. Hands on your thighs and your back straight. Breathe slowly and deeply for a few minutes and then chant AUM three times to give you emotional and spiritual balance. This will help to ground you.	
SUPTA PADANGUSTHASANA Use a yoga belt to energise the legs. Start by stretching the hamstrings. Then take the right leg first to the right and then across the body to the left to open the hips and stretch the inner thighs for the sacral chakra. Then repeat with the left leg.	RORY EARNSHAW
ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA (downward dog) This is a whole body stretch which also warms you up and generates energy in the solar plexus. Move forward into plank or into upward dog and then back to downward dog.	
BHUJANGASANA (cobra) Start in Sphinx posture with lower arms on the mat and elbows below your shoulders. If your back is ok, press into your hands and slowly lift your elbows as you stretch the front of your body. Keep a soft bend in your elbows. This opens the chest and upper body for the heart chakra.	
NATARAJASANA (lord of the dance) Hold your ankle with your hand or use a belt. Establish your balance and keep your gaze on a point as you extend forward. Promotes mental clarity, reduces stress, strengthens the legs, opens the chest and shoulders for the heart chakra and also opens the throat chakra.	
SALAMBA SIRSASANA (headstand) **SALAMBA SARVANGASANA (shoulder stand)** **VIPARITA KARANI (legs up the wall)** Practice your favourite inversion postures at the end of your yoga practice before savasana. Focus your attention on your breath. In Viparita Karani start by breathing deeply into the kidneys and then the circular breathing by inhaling and taking your breath up the spine and exhaling down the front of the body pulling in the uddiyana bandha.	MICHAEL VENERA
SAVASANA (corpse or relaxation posture) Always finish with Savasana as you completely surrender into stillness, letting down into the earth and allowing your body to integrate your practice.	MARTIN SCONDUTO