



陰 Yin and Yang Land and Water Yoga Experience

Fitnessfest Conference and Expo 2019 Connie Lagerhausen

A beautiful way to end the day, this workshop combines yoga on land with aqua yoga in the pool. Begin with a gentle land-based yoga session that transitions into a relaxing aqua yoga class. Experience the benefits of both modalities and understand how to safely and accurately adapt the movements from land to water. Let go of any tension you might have built up during the day and leave grounded and calm.

Many people avoid yoga because they're not flexible. Land and Aqua Yoga both, strengthens muscles, enhances balance, increases concentration and dials down stress and can give you better posture.

Before you get started: Remember to maintain a smooth and even breath throughout the poses and don't hold any pose longer than you're physically able. You can increase the length and deepness of each pose with practice. One sign that you held a pose for too long is that you don't have enough energy to come out of the position with grace and integrity.

Gentle Yoga (Yang)

This is a gentle class that combines yoga postures, breathing, and meditation. This class is geared toward students who wish to move at a slower pace. Gentle Yoga provides a beautiful way to wake the body up and stretch yourself out.

Yoga provides the means to bring out the best in each individual. This requires an understanding of a person's present condition, personal potential, appropriate goals and the means available. As each person is different, these will vary with each individual. (No Yoga experience is required)

Mountain Pose or "Tadasana"

This pose seems so simple, but it is the basic template for all the other postures. It's a welcoming way to begin connecting with the breath and beginning a yoga practice.

Cat/Cow Posture

Cat and Cow poses go together so beautifully that I pretty much consider them one pose. Come onto hands and knees with your hands directly under your shoulders and knees lined up with your hips. As you inhale arch your back, tilt your head back, and press on the floor with your hands. On your next exhale, pull your belly in, fold your chin toward your chest, and arch your back in the opposite direction. Repeat this for 10-15 rotations – listen to your body! You can see an illustration of the two poses above.

Child's Pose or "Balasana"

This incredibly basic move is a resting pose you can stay in for up to a few minutes.

How to do it: Start with your knees and tops of your feet on the floor with the feet together and touching. With your knees apart, rest your belly and chest between the legs. Place your head on the floor, and stretch the arms out in front of you.

Modification: If your head doesn't reach the floor you can use a block or pillow to rest it on.

Downward Facing Dog "Adho Mukha Svanasana"

You can transition to downward dog right from your hands and knees. Or child's pose Just straighten your legs and push with your palms, letting your head relax to a neutral position. Focus on pulling your shoulder blades together and gently pressing your heels toward the floor. Relax and breathe in this posture for as long as you like! **This** pose is challenging for beginners, but you can make it easier by increasing the distance between your feet.

How to do it: With feet hip-width apart, hinge forward at the waist and press your flat palms into the ground, hips in the air. Your hands should be shoulder-width apart and the arms, shoulders and back should line up in a straight, diagonal line. The hands should be at the front of your mat, and toes should face forward near the back of the mat. At any time, you can take a break by resting in child's pose, and then come back into down dog again.

Modification: For beginners, you can bend your knees to keep the spine long and move some of the body's weight into the legs.

Standing Forward Bend

From downward dog, walk or jump your feet toward your hands, and bring your weight to your heels. You can grab hold of your elbows, let your arms hang, place your fingers or palms on the floor, or even grab hold of your ankles or calves. Try any of these variations to find the forward bend that you like best. To come out of this posture, roll your spine up, one vertebra at a time, until you're standing up straight. Bring your head up last, taking a deep inhale as you lift your chin up to a neutral position.

Mountain Pose

is an active pose that helps improve posture, balance, and calm focus. Its name comes from the Sanskrit words "tada" (meaning "mountain") and "asana" (meaning "pose"). *Tadasana* is the foundational pose for all standing yoga postures and full inversions, such as Handstand and Headstand. It is the pose from which every other standing pose in your practice is born! The alignment, muscle movements, and mindset you learn in *Tadasana* are applied every time you do a standing yoga pose. So, it's important to learn how to do it correctly. Once you understand the proper form of Mountain Pose, it will be easier to gain and maintain the alignment for all other standing poses.

Warrior II

From standing, walk or jump your feet apart. You want a nice, wide stance – more than shoulder width apart. Turn your right foot toward the right wall, and turn your left toes in slightly. Bend your right knee, bringing your thigh as close to parallel to the floor as you can. Inhale as you raise your arms, so they are parallel to the floor, then turn your head so that you're gazing out past your right hand. Stay here for 10 deep breaths, then reverse your feet and repeat on the left side. Come back to standing up straight, feet together, when you're done.

Tree Pose or "Vrksasana"

This is a one-legged balancing pose. The pose builds confidence and can help to center the mind. It's not easy to think about your stress when you're balancing on one leg!

How to do it: Stand on one leg and bring your foot up to your ankle, shin, or thigh depending on your flexibility. You can put a hand on the wall for balance or even stand with your back against a wall. If you feel very centered, lift your arms into the air to create "branches" for your tree.

Bridge Pose

This posture stretches and strengthens without being too strenuous. Begin on your back with your arms by your sides, and bring your feet close to your bottom. Press your feet into the floor and tense your bottom, lifting your butt and lower and middle back off of the floor. You're going for a straight line that begins at your knees and goes all the way to your chest. Hold for 10 deep breaths, then release slowly back onto the floor.

Savasana

Savasana may not feel like a proper yoga posture, but it's actually just as important as every other pose in this series. The time you spend in savasana helps your body absorb the benefits of the poses that you just did, and at the end you'll feel refreshed and energized. Lie on your back with your arms by your sides. Let your feet roll out, and gently close your eyes. Think about relaxing every part of your body, from the top of your head and your forehead all the way down to your fingers and toes. Relax and breathe here for as long as you like. If you fall asleep in this posture, no one needs to know.

Namaste: final thoughts closing your practice

*see below; for barefoot work done in both the land and aqua portions

Aqua Yoga (Yin)

Aqua Yoga benefits include the same as those on land including physical, mental, emotional and spiritual benefits. Yogis discover improved health and fitness, as well as an increased mind-body connection and mental awareness. Because water allows a greater ROM and supports the body, some students may gain even more flexibility and find new balance in some water-based poses. Students who are unable to participate in a land-based yoga program may gain self-confidence and a newfound sense of wellness.

Aqua environments are calming and inviting. There is a natural serenity associated with water, and this improves the mind-body connection and readies the mind for a more peaceful, meaningful meditation. Final

Savasana (corpse pose) and breathing in Mountain Pose are extremely nurturing in the tranquility of the water.

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North Star Pose

Water and its wisdom comes to us from the stars so we start in North Star Pose with an inhale. Stand with your feet greater than hip-width apart; bring your hands together in prayer over your head

Warrior II Pose

Exhale and land in Warrior II by bending into your right leg and stretching your arms open wide. Connect to the earth by grounding through your feet. Feel the earth beneath the water, plant yourself.

Flowing Warrior Pose

Keep your lower body planted while you let your upper body and arms flow like seaweed. Feel the watery nature of your spine.

Half Moon and Half Moon Bow Pose

Breathe deeply and shift your weight into your front foot. Stand to balance letting your back leg float effortlessly in the water coming into Half Moon Pose. Reach back and take your lifted foot into your hand and discover the connection between the moon and water that flows through your spine.

Savasana :Release the pose and come to rest on the surface of the water in a standing Savasana.

Namaste: To seal your practice, give gratitude through your heart to water.

***Barefoot Information:**

I truly believe that the best form of footwear is already attached to your body. That's right, I'm talking about your feet and the best and shortest way to share this information is to quote my mentor:

"One of the greatest benefits to working out barefoot would be the sequencing that happens between the foot and the core," explains podiatrist, Emily Splichal: EBFA, DPM, MS, CES. Barefoot training forces you to use your pelvic floor muscles, which means that you're strengthening your pelvis and hip stability. We, maintain dynamic balance by

detecting vibrations from the ground we walk on,” “By being barefoot we are able to feel and sense these vibrations better, which leads to improved balance.” Dr. Splichal recommends doing 30 minutes of barefoot training two to three times a week. What’s great about practicing your workouts barefoot is that anyone can do it — as long as you're free of injuries.

If you’re a complete beginner it is best to start off with simple balancing exercises as presented to you in the workshop and there is no better place to practice balance but in land-based yoga and the aqua environment.

Sources: Eichenseher/Tudor Yoga Journal, March 2015

Spilichal, Emily, : EBFA, DPM, MS, CES, Barefoot Strong ISBN;978-0-692-38090-1, 2015

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