

Finding Deep Release in Paschimottanasana (Seated Forward Fold)

When I first started doing yoga asanas, I remember my teacher telling me I must have been a yogi in a past life as the poses came so naturally to me.

It wasn't that I was the most flexible student, but he noticed in me a true dedication and passion for the experience and how even the first time learning an asana series, I seemed to intuitively know what to do.

I found great relief in many of these poses, and always felt a great lightness when the practice was over. Most people have one or two poses that are difficult to master. This is no different for me, even after all these years of practice.

Even though I'm not really very good at it, in terms of gently gliding my forehead to my shin, I love Paschimottanasana (Seated Forward Fold). I love it because it gives me a sweet relief, even if bittersweet, that very few things in life can.

I humbly bow down in this pose because when I really get into it, an emotional tightness is released and, at those times, tears flow from my eyes, down my shins and drip to my mat. Tears likely come from the primitive gestalt; with my head bowed, I let go of the past and stretch into the future, while being aware in that very moment.

After you have warmed up with a few Sun Salutations, sit in [Dandasana](#). Bring the flesh away from your sits bones and get really grounded. Keep your feet flexed, legs straight and thighs activated, shoulders back, and belly pulled in toward the spine. As you reach forward, hold your big toes with your thumb and forefingers, or wrap your palms around the sides of

your feet.

For the first few breaths, your gaze is on your big toes. With each inhalation stretch your spine longer, bringing the crown of your head farther from your sits bones. On the exhale, fold down a little further. After you've done this 3-4 times, keeping your back as straight as possible, on your next exhale, allow your forehead to come to rest on your shins.

Of course if this is the first time you are doing this pose, you may not make it that far. That's ok. Fold down as far as you comfortably can. And breathe. Allow yourself to relax but also keep engaged. Remember to keep your shoulders relaxed and your back straight. Breathe here for at least 5 full breaths, then on an inhale lengthen your torso upward slowly and on the exhale release your hands and come to sit.

The intense stretch that this pose gives to your entire body helps improve digestion by stimulating the liver, kidneys, ovaries, and uterus; it soothes headaches and anxiety as well as reduces fatigue; it helps keep blood pressure down, insomnia at bay, helps relieve mild depression; and more.

[source](#)

This amazing pose can bring you a deep sense of inner calm.

5 Yoga Asanas to Strengthen Your Hip Flexors

As a society we are very productive. We spend seriously countless hours sitting at a desk, typing away or pushing papers. As a society we are really comfortable. We spend too many hours sitting on the couch watching tv or scrolling the

phone.

Neither of these scenarios help out our hip flexors. What's a hip flexor, you ask? It is a set of muscles that connect your lower back to the upper legs: the iliacus and psoas major muscles (aka iliopsoas), and the rectus femoris (part of the quadriceps).

The hip flexors' job is to allow you to bend at the waist and to bring your knee up toward your chest.

People with hip flexor pains and strains generally get it from not moving their bodies enough (sitting for too long), but it can also happen if you overwork the muscles, like can sometimes happen when running, playing sports, and even dancing.

The usual indicator of hip flexor strain is pain at the front of the hip. The muscles can be torn just a little, or a lot, which makes it difficult to walk without a limp.

If you have to sit a lot for work, besides aiming to get up for a few minutes every hour, you can also aim to incorporate the following yoga asanas into your practice to help strengthen and lengthen these critical muscles.

Taking time to stretch slowly will really pay off in the end!

Camel Pose / Ustrasana

Kneel on the floor with your knees hip width apart and tuck your toes on the floor, with your heels high. Keeping your shoulders open put your palms on your lower back and start to lean back. Remember, keep your heart up as you bend your back to reach your hands onto your heels, with your fingers pointing toward your toes.

Breathe deeply for 30-60 seconds as you imagine your chest

lifting up. If you can't get your hands all the way to your heels, just keep them supporting your lower back as you bend your head back. When you come back up, do so slowly, and after you've done the pose 3 times, sit down on your shins and lean forward into child's pose for a few breaths to counter that lower back stretch.

High Lunge

This one is easy and really effective at strengthening and stretching the hip flexors. Step your right leg back and put your hands to the ground on either side of your left foot. The ball of the right foot holding your body steady. You are looking for a right angle in your left knee, so adjust the spacing between feet accordingly.

Your torso should be on your left thigh; your back straight and engaged, like the right leg. Stay here for 30-60 seconds and then repeat on the other side. Do this a few times on each side. You can go to Downward Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svasana) between each interval for a break.

One-Legged King Pigeon Pose II / Eka Pada Rajakapotasana II

I know, I know, this pose isn't for everyone, but just try it out, even the first half of it. Best recommendation is to start in Staff Pose (Dandasana – sitting with legs extended in front of you). Bend your right knee and place your foot in front of your sitting bone. Tilt to the right and turn your left leg straight back behind you, fully extended, shin down.

Your right foot and left knee will take your weight, and you can find stability by allowing the right knee to move forward past the right toes. In that balance, reach one arm up and bend the elbow back in order to hold onto the left foot. Bring the other hand to the left foot, and keep your elbows pointed at the ceiling, and like Ustrasana, keep your heart lifted.

When you are ready, allow your head to bend back so that the top of your head is at the ball of your left foot. Breathe

here for 20-30 seconds, then slowly come back up, release slowly, then repeat on the other side.

Upward-Facing Dog Pose / Urdhva Mukha Svanasana

Well, you probably know how to do this pose, so I'll keep it short. This is easiest to come into from Downward Facing Dog (Adho Mukha Svasana). Keep your wrists directly below your shoulders, and make sure that your shoulders are not slumping over here.

Your thighs should be off the floor, and the muscles fully engaged. It helps to turn your thighs in slightly, and the elbow creases facing forward. Look straight ahead and breathe for a couple breaths. You can move in and out of Downward and Upward Facing Dog (Adho and Urdhva Mukha Svasana) a few times, or just come down to lay on your belly between each time.

Revolved Side Angle Pose / Parivrtta Parsvakonasana

Start with your legs almost 4 feet apart. Toes of left foot pointing forward, toes of right foot pointing to the right; heels aligned. Bend your left knee until it is at a right angle. As you exhale, turn your torso to the left and reach your right hand down to the ground, to the left of your left foot. Bring your left arm up over your ear. Keep your right leg active as you press the thigh upward and extend strongly into the floor with your heel.

Some people find it difficult to keep the right foot flat on the ground. Keep it as low as possible, and work toward getting it flat over time. Remember, we're working on hip flexors here, so it is important to concentrate on supporting that growth. Obviously repeat on the other side, and hold for 30 seconds on each side, for at least 3 times on each side. This pose is also really great for digestion, and will help those who experience pain in their lower back.

If done with care and control, this set of five poses can be done in under 20 minutes. You might not find time every day to do them, but if you can try 3-5 times per week, you will do a great service to your dear hip flexors. Happy movement!

What We Can Learn from Sri Anandamayi Ma

If you don't know about this amazing woman, this Indian Saint, a Sage, some say a Guru, I am very happy to be the one to share a little about her with you! Anandamayi Ma was born in 1896 in East Bengal to highly spirited parents who named her Nirmola Shundori (Immaculate, Beautiful Goddess); her mother is said to have had frequent dreams of gods and goddesses during pregnancy and her father was a devotional singer.

As a young girl, her cheerful disposition inspired people around her to nickname her *Hari Ma* (Mother of Smiles) or *Khusir Ma* (Happy Mother). Anandamayi means "Joy-permeated" in English. She was sensitive and religious as a child and was prone to ecstatic feelings when she heard the sound of religious chanting.

Throughout her life she maintained these traits and people began to hear what she was saying as incredibly profound. She remained celibate during her marriage and her husband eventually became her devotee. She was not trained to be a guru, but because of her ecstatic states, she was seen as such. She didn't claim to be a guru, but rather said, "I am the same" woman later in life as she was as a small child.

Anandamayi Ma spoke about detachment from the physical realm and from specific religious devotion. Through her travels from

town to town, she provided guidance and comfort to those who came to see her. Always welcoming everyone, she radiated bliss and acceptance. She inspired her devotees to serve others and to see themselves as divine beings.

Too bad such inspiring people are so hard to find these days. Someone truly accepting of everyone, who radiates with unlimited love and light, and inspires us to do well onto others. We could use more of these leaders in our world.

I hope you will follow these links to learn more about Anandamayi Ma and will dedicate a meditation or more to her wise life and light.

[The Children of Ma Anandamayi Foundation](#) works to give impoverished children in India a chance to learn and be part of a spiritual community. The link here provides more information on Anandamayi Ma.

[The Essential Sri Anandamayi Ma](#) is a great book that gives a wonderful history of her life, and includes many incredible photographs of the Indian Beauty.

And, if you can spare 30 minutes, here is a tracking-challenged documentary on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2aCc6i-TkM>

And finally a couple quotes:

“To find the Beloved is to find my Self, to discover that God is my very own, wholly identical with myself, my innermost Self.” ~ Sri Anandamayi Ma

“Realization must be all-comprehensive, all-embracing, and one must recognize one’s Self in everything.” ~ Sri Anandamayi Ma

Trouble Sleeping? Try the 7-4-8 Breathing Method

I don't usually talk about this, but after I was unexpectedly fired from my job of 18+ years, I felt the stress.

Where will I come up with the money for the mortgage? How will I find a job locally that will pay the same as I was making? Will I be able to make it?

It isn't surprising that I was losing hair and losing sleep.

During that time, I tried several techniques to help me sleep, and the need for trying was serious as on many days I was waking up at 4 in the morning and just couldn't get back to sleep.

One of the methods I tried, and I found worked best for me, is the 7-4-8 breathing method. Simply put, you breathe in while counting to 7, then keep your breath in for 4 counts, and finish by slowly breathing out for 8 breaths.

It takes some practice to go slowly but then you can absolutely reap its benefits.

This method was apparently pioneered by Dr. Andrew Weil, who recommends exhaling completely before you start and make a "whoosh" sound from your mouth as you do so. Then close your mouth and breath silently 7 inhalations, keep the breath in for 4 counts, and then 8 exhalations. Do this 4 times total, or repeat until you fall asleep.

The movement of your body will send a signal of relaxation and calm to your mind. The regulation of your breath also helps relax your muscles as oxygen fills the lungs deeply.

Being truly focused on the three part count means your mind can't get distracted by our daily burdens such as bills to pay, mouths to feed, or lessons to teach.

Using this method, I find that by concentrating on the count that my body feels heavier and if I can be really still, I start to perceive my mind moving in rhythm to my breath and then fade screen.


This breathing technique has been shown to provide calm for overly anxious people.

When exposed to a triggering situation, anxious individuals can benefit from slowing down their breathing to help them keep focused on, well, nothing.

At least hopefully not whatever was making them anxious.

Some people say if you are using this for anxiety (and I guess when you are alone!), that each time you finishing exhaling to blow out your mouth so that your lips flap and make a fluttering sound. I haven't seen why this is suggested, but my guess is that it gets the anxious energy out all the more fully.

If you are experiencing difficulty sleeping, try this method and see if it helps you fall asleep more quickly.

Download Heather's free 15-minute guided meditation to help you sleep! 

Face Yoga to Banish Wrinkles

I've never been one to worry much about wrinkles or sagging skin as I've gotten older. I tend to see wrinkles as an indication of wisdom and life experience. But furrowing my brow is something I don't like the look of on my face, and it started to bother me when I started to see lines form between my eyebrows. I didn't even know how much I furrowed my brow until my mom said something about it to me as I was getting my wedding dress fitted years ago. As I stood there in a small dry cleaning shop in Brooklyn, she said to me, as I was looking at myself in the mirror, "You know, you should really work on that scowl." I wasn't irritated and didn't even feel all that stressed, but I finally realized that this was one of those unintentional habits I'd formed. Though I can't stop time, I can be attentive to moments when I scowl and see if it is possible to just stop myself. A few years ago I learned about face yoga (which earlier I didn't even know was a thing.) What I walked away with most from trying it out was that it really helped me recognize when I am scowling just purely because I felt the muscles I'd been working out during the exercises. I want to share with you some tips for face yoga, otherwise known as face exercises. There are people trained in this form, so I won't pretend to be an expert, but I'd like to share a few tips that I learned to get you started.

The Owl helps keep the forehead firm, and reduces lines and wrinkles.

Form a "C" shape with your thumbs and index fingers and place the edge of your hand around your eyes – with your index fingers just above the eyebrows and your thumbs on your upper cheeks. Look up as you open your eyes wide. Pull down slightly your index fingers as you try to raise your eyebrows at the same time. Keep the resistance going for two seconds. Repeat 3 times.

The Frown Buster helps reduce lines between eyebrows and firm the forehead, while also relieving tension.

With your fingers slightly spread, put your fingertips on your forehead, with your index finger nearest your hairline and your little fingers just touching your eyebrows. Allow your eyes to open wide, but don't raise your eyebrows. Gently pull your fingertips away from each other (to the side). Hold the tension for for 10 seconds and then repeat two more times.

Shifty Eyes gives the optic nerve a workout and firm up the muscles around the eye that cause wrinkles. This exercise also helps boost circulation. Standing (or sitting) while relaxed with your shoulders back and spine straight, look ahead. Keep your body position and move only your eyeballs. First look as far to the right as possible (again without moving your head) and then look straight ahead. Then look as far to the left as possible and then back to center. Next look as high up as you can, move through the center ahead of you, and then look down as far as possible. Close your eyes for 2-3 seconds after you have looked in all four directions and then repeat again two times.

I would suggest you start with these easy moves to help your face muscles to naturally keep wrinkles away. It has been a long time since I've done these exercises regularly, but recall that if you do a full face yoga routine six times a week, you will see results on the seventh day. People who do this regularly say you will easily look five years younger. While I don't do a full face yoga routine often, by performing these exercises with some regularity helps me much more quickly catch myself from scowling, or wrinkling my forehead in general.

In a future post, I will also share some tips for eye yoga. Back when I was doing eye yoga on a regular basis, my eyesight improved so well I was able to stop wearing glasses! It is amazing what your body is capable of in really a very short

amount of time, and with almost no effort!

3 Yoga Poses to Make You Sturdy

There are so many good things we can do so simply, and for free, for our bodies and mind. Yoga is one of them. It doesn't matter if you are super athletic, or barely get off the couch, you can do yoga poses.

This morning during my own practice, it occurred to me that yoga can be so simple. My earliest days of practice was in the Ashtanga tradition, so I knew asanas to be rigorous and make me sweat.

Taking time to appreciate each pose and how your body interprets the movement is of course important. In just a few minutes, you can do these three poses and your day will be brighter and you will be stronger. Another good habit.

Tadasana/Mountain Pose

If you are just starting out, step up from the couch, and simply stand erect in Tadasana. This is Mountain Pose. Stretch your shoulders back and lift your heart. Tuck in your sacrum (that's the little triangular bone at the end of your spine) just slightly, and keep your core engaged. Your thighs should also be engaged.

A trick to ensure you are really standing steady is to lift your toes, just standing on the base of your foot. If you can keep your balance here, sway just a little to feel the

strength within you. Then go back to keeping your mountain firm. Stretch your toes out and place them down, ideally with each toe standing on its own, not touching another.

Your arms are also firm and straight, some teachers say erect fingers touching, others say give each finger some room (like the toes). Be here and breathe for 5-10 deep inhale and exhalations.

Tadasana

- Improves posture
- Strengthens thighs, knees, and ankles
- Firms abdomen and buttocks
- Relieves sciatica
- Reduces flat feet

Downward Dog/Adho Mukha Svanasana

The most iconic yoga pose is Downward Dog. Basically, if you can make a big upside down V with your body, you are doing it. The main idea is to keep your back and legs straight, but relaxed. Like Tadasana, your whole body is engaged.

A good way to get into the pose is from being on hands and knees. This way you can get a proper alignment. Make sure your knees are directly under your hips and your hands are slightly forward of your shoulders. Index fingers parallel, but the other fingers spread wide. Tuck your toes under and bring your hips up.

As you extend your knees, keep your heels high off the floor, but work towards getting them close to the ground. Make sure your sitting bones are extending toward the ceiling. Keep your shoulders back, and core engaged.

Breathe deeply and keep a gentle gaze on your belly button. If you feel your neck straining to do that, gaze instead between

your knees or toes.

Downward Dog, adho mukha svanasana

- Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression
- Energizes the body
- Stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves, arches, and hands
- Strengthens the arms and legs
- Helps relieve the [symptoms of menopause](#)
- Relieves menstrual discomfort when done with head supported
- Helps prevent osteoporosis
- Improves digestion
- Relieves headache, insomnia, back pain, and fatigue
- Therapeutic for high blood pressure, asthma, flat feet, sciatica, sinusitis

Sukhasana

Sukhasana, or easy pose, is basically meditation pose. Sit cross-legged and put your hands on your knees, palms up or down.

If palms up, you might like to touch your index finger and thumb as you cup your hand. This is Jnana Mudra, which creates an opening effect and allows for a receiving from the divine source.

Universal consciousness is represented by the thumb and individual consciousness is represented by the index finger. Their unity represents the union of divine self with individual self.

As you sit in this posture, with your eyes closed, keep your inner gaze at a spot just above between your eyes. Keep your

spine erect, shoulders relaxed, core in, but not forced; the top of your head parallel to the ground.

Breathe slowly and if your mind wanders, you might find some focus by counting 1 to 10 over and over. Stay seated in Sukhasana for as long as is comfortable. Those just starting out might feel a foot fall asleep after 10 minutes or so.

If it is uncomfortable to sit directly on the floor, then find a cushion (small or tall, hard or soft depending on your comfort), or even a chair is fine if the discomfort is too distracting. The more important thing is to keep your spine straight, and your mind calm and focused on nothing. This is easy pose, afterall.

[Sukhasana](#)

- Calms the brain
- Strengthens the back
- Stretches the knees and ankles

Looking to get started and want to follow along with a great teacher? Check out Yoga with Adriene's [Foundations of Yoga](#) video series on YouTube! In this video she explains these three poses, and more. Her demeanor will get you off the couch and practice right away with her! You will find so much amazing information!

Did you know that stress, weak digestive system muscles, and physical inactivity can work together to cause constipation? If you are having trouble with this issue, be sure to read the article [Yoga for Constipation: 14 Yoga Poses For Relieving Constipation](#) on Jen Reviews. This sequence of poses, including some powerful twists, will undoubtedly rid your body of toxins and get your system *flowing*!

What does Om mean?

Om, or rather Aum, is a mantra. Saying it causes a vibration in your body that, if done properly, can provide a deep feeling of relaxation and even bliss. A simple translation would be 'source' or 'universal consciousness.' But Om is really a sound, one that was originally used to describe how a rishi, or sage, felt during deep meditation. The sound causes precise sound vibrations in your body so that as you chant om, your body is providing a calming awareness on all levels: physical, mental, emotional, *and* spiritual.



If you've never chanted Om out loud for at least a minute, you should really give it a try. Like right now. Use the great description below from Yogapedia as you move through one Om. Then say it again. In fact, say it a few times. Keep your eyes closed as you say it, back erect, ideally with your palms facing upward. As you make the sound, recognize how your body feels; from how your throat sounds to the sensations felt throughout your sitting body in this present moment.

- **A (aahhh)** – This syllable represents the origin of all sound, connecting us to our individual selves, or egos. This resonance should come from the back of the throat where the tongue finds its root in our physical being.
- **U (oooh)** – This syllable represents the energy of the mind and the universe. This vibration invokes balance and clarity as it passes from the back of the tongue toward the lips.
- **M (mmmm)** – This syllable invokes the sensation of

oneness between the corporal body and the universe. Practitioners close their lips around the sound to experience the vibration throughout their head and body.

- **Anagata (silence)** – This significant phase of the Om invites yoga practitioners to fully experience the blissful state of silence and the sense of unity it transmits.”

<https://www.yogapedia.com/definition/4957/om>

Now wasn't that refreshing? If you really observe your body as you move through this unique sound vibration, you might recognize that the vibration starts in your chest, moves through your throat, and reaches your head. The silent sound at the end allows that vibration to continue up and out into the world. The thought of that makes me smile. All of us giving our calm vibrations out into the world, to all people.

In Sanskrit, the lower curve represents the dream state, the upper curve represents the waking state, and the middle curve represents deep, dreamless sleep. The crescent shape above stands for the veil of illusion (“maya”) and the dot represents the transcendental state. When your spirit passes through the veil and rests in the transcendental, you are liberated from the three states.

The symbol of Om represents Brahman, the source of all manifest existence. Brahman is incomprehensible, so a symbol helps us identify or recognize the Unknowable. The symbol is recognized to represent the Trimurti, the trinity of supreme divinity in Hinduism, which is typically recognized as the gods Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the transformer).

Om's vibration gives us empathy with the cosmic vibration, which allows us to be connected universally. Furthermore, when we say Om along with a group of others, the vibration is felt even more deeply. Imagine a time when everyone gives their

best without any desire for something in return. Om reminds us to be our best, and have high regard for others, because it provides a naturally centered, calm, relaxed effect on your body, mind, emotions, and spirit.

I encourage you to bring chanting Om into your daily practice. No equipment needed, just your dedicated attention and an open heart will reap you many benefits for time to come!

7 Chakras

When we meditate, we provide an opportunity for our body and mind to connect with the universal oneness that brings us all together on this planet right now. As good as meditation is for each of us, it is good for the world!

Meditation on our chakras helps bring balance also in specific areas. Chakra, an ancient sanskrit word, means vortex or wheel. There are seven main energy centers in our body; each one corresponds to an area on our body and has emotional implications.

Unbalanced, or blocked, chakras can cause emotional and physical problems. Meditation helps bring our chakras in balance, which enables our body and mind to function ideally, and be calm, healthy, and compassionate.

The seven chakras

Red – Muladhara / Root Chakra – Meditation: “Vam” / “I am”

Located at your root; represents grounding, survival, fatigue, inner state is stillness and stability, balancing this chakra gives energy to the physical body, controls fear, increases

overall health and helps in grounding. Imbalance: low self esteem, low energy, lack of trust

Orange – Swadisthana / Sacral Chakra – Meditation: “Lam” / “I feel”

Located just above root of genitals; biji (seed) mantra, sacral, desire, pleasure, sexuality, passion, creative block, low sex drive, balancing associated with sexual vitality, physical power. Imbalance: feeling uncreative

Yellow – Manipura / Solar Plexus Chakra – Meditation: “Ram” / “I do”

The abode of fire just above the navel center; confidence, intuition, will, wisdom, power, poor digestion, low self-esteem, inner state is laughter, joy, anger. Balancing this chakra helps calm emotions and tension to help better use intuition. Imbalance: angry and helpless, unable to finish tasks

Green – Anahata / Heart Chakra – Meditation: “Yam” / “I love”

Located at the heart center, in center of chest, above of air, *jiva* (individual soul), form of flame , heart, love, compassion, heart disease, fear of intimacy, helps to balance circulatory system, heart and thymus, also promotes universal oneness. Imbalance: feeling unloved

Blue – Vishuddha / Throat Chakra – Meditation: “Ham” / “I speak”

Located above of ether at base of throat, power , expression, creativity, communication, blue, thyroid problem. Imbalance: difficulty expressing feelings

Indigo – Ajna / Third Eye Chakra – Meditation: “So hum” or “Om” / “I see”

Located between the eyebrows, realm of mind, imagination, psychic ability, intuition, awareness, headaches, depression, poor intuition, balances pineal gland. Imbalance: indecision

Violet – Sahasrara / Crown Chakra – Meditation: “Hamsah” / “I understand”

Located at the crown. Visualize *jiva* in the form of a flame. Visualize white light, connection, wisdom, spirituality, understanding, will, promotes thought. Imbalance: loneliness, depression, apathy

Allow your thoughts to leave your mind. Incorporate chakra breathing into your meditation practice occasionally and see how powerful it can be.

Start slowly. Pick one of these chakras that you see having a slight imbalance. It might be an area in your body where you have a pain, or it may be an emotional issue. Reflect on your individual self and see where you can use some focused attention and self-compassion.

Sit in a position in which you can be comfortable for 20 minutes. With your eyes closed, allow your mind's eye to focus on the chakra that you want to bring in balance. Breathe into the chakra. Inhale deeply, exhale slowly. Keep breathing, and then say the associated mantra above. Go ahead and speak it out loud. If that feels awkward, say it in your mind. On every exhale, for 16 times, say the mantra and keep your mind focused in that area of your body.

Be mindful of the feelings that emerge. There may sometimes be

difficult memories or regrets that come to mind. See these as opportunity for growth. Let them be in the past, and use them as a lesson to be better next time and feel the equilibrium emerge. The more often you can give attention to your imbalances, the sooner you will be fully balanced. Give yourself the time to sit often and focus on areas of disruption in your life and give yourself balance. Constantly work at it and you will reap the rewards. And those around you will reap the benefits as well.

If you care to go beyond meditation to balance chakras, you can also consider chakra stone healing, reiki, and crystals.

5 Minute Meditation

Most days it seems there is just never enough time. But finding 5 minutes daily to find inner peace can really be quite manageable.

If you make it intentional, setting aside 5 minutes a day is easy. Over time, you might challenge yourself to add 1 or 2 minutes more each day, slowly but surely, and in really no time you will be up to 20 or 30 minutes daily, which will provide you with so many benefits.

THE METHOD

Set aside time each day, preferably at the same time daily, to give yourself a relaxing moment. Your phone should be turned to mute, or better yet, placed in another room.

When you close your eyes, be sure to relax your mind and body. As you breathe in and out, envision any tension in your body being released. The energy might find its way out through your hands, your feet, or perhaps your head.

Watch the stress flow away as you focus on your breath. If you find your mind wandering, count from 1 to 10 and repeat as often and as slowly as possible. As thoughts enter your mind (distracting you), go back to 1 and keep counting up.

You can also focus on the feelings in your body such as a discomfort in your right knee, or realizing your back is slouching, or your chin is dropping. Keep your mind as present as possible, which will enable you to keep your mind still.



MAKE IT STRONGER

Once you accomplish 5 minutes a day for a week or 10 days you will see how easy it is to incorporate this simple benefit into your life. You will be sure to go back to your day feeling relaxed and refreshed and probably even proud of the steady accomplishment.

Be sure you sit in a comfortable position with loose clothing. Don't focus on if you are doing it right, just go back to the counting and breathing. Keep your mind in the present moment, wherever that might be.

Don't judge, just be. And relish these few moments that you give to yourself, which makes you a better human.

Namaste.

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