

Hip Opening Workshop  
Exercises  
August 17th, 2019

# Tadasana



- Stand with your feet parallel and as close together as comfortable.
- Set your thighs back so your butt muscle (gluteus maximus) lifts off the back of the thigh.
- Soften the front of your body letting the bottom of the front of the ribcage lower a little.
- Let your arms hang freely.

# Internal & External Rotation



- Lay on your back with your knees bent and feet flat.
- Set your feet up mat width apart or a little wider.
- Drop the right knee to the midline and left the left knee open out.
- Switch from side to side.
- You can change the distance between the feet to do variations on the exercise.

# BLOCK LUNGES



- Positioned on your hands and knees, step the right foot forward in between your hands. Use two blocks under your hands by your front foot.
- Place a third block underneath the quadriceps muscle of the back leg just above the knee, at the base of the thigh.
- Tuck the back toes and let the weight of the body fall onto the block. Do your best to keep the heel of the back foot pointing straight up toward the ceiling.
- The front leg and hip should not be under any strain. Feel free to make adjustments, turning the foot out or stepping the foot wider.
- You need to stay for 90 seconds to get the full benefits of this pose. But not longer.

# ANKLE TO KNEE FORWARD BEND



- Sit with the legs straight out in front of you. Cross the right ankle over the left knee. Establish a flat back. Bow Forward. If you feel this in your piriformis (side of the butt) this is as far as you'll go. Take deep breaths and then change sides. If you feel this in your hamstring (back of the leg) you will move onto the second stage.
- Keep your right ankle on top of your left knee and bend the left knee placing the left ankle below the right knee.
- Stack your shins on top of one another, right shin on top. The left shin should be hiding underneath the right shin.
- Stay even on both sit bones.
- Flex the feet strongly.
- If you look down between your legs there should be a triangle of open space, the leg should be right on top of one another.
- Extend forward stretching deep into the piriformis. Breath.
- Do the other side.

# ANKLE TO KNEE BACKWARDS



- Not everyone can get into this position. You can also do it with one leg straight and the bent leg ankle crosses over the straight leg knee.
- In a seated position, bend your knees and try to stack your right shin on top of the left. Your right foot should be on your left knee and your right knee should hover or lay flat above your left foot. When you look down between your legs, you should see an even triangle of space between your pelvis and your shins.
- You can loosely belt the legs in a way that doesn't pull them closer to each other but also won't let them separate any further.
- Begin to lean backwards slowly keeping an arch in your lower back. You have to keep the natural arch of the back even if you can only go a few inches. You can go down as far as your forearms, trying to relax and allow the right inner and outer thigh to release passively with each breath.

# STANDING IT BAND STRETCH



- Cross your right ankle over the left ankle while standing. Try to line up the pinky toes as close as possible.
- Bend forward and pay attention to keeping the hyperextension out of the left knee.
- Reach your hands towards the floor or towards a block or blocks.
- Pull the right hip back if possible to go deeper.
- Repeat on the other side.

# TREE POSE



- Stand with your hips and shoulders facing forward and maintain that alignment as long as you are in the pose.
- Bend the right knee and place the right foot as high up the leg as possible. If the pelvis turns backwards to help your foot lift up, turn it back to face forward equally on both sides.
- Tree pose is both a hip opener and standing balance. But it only opens the hips if the pelvis is facing forward as the leg opens to the side.
- Don't worry how high your foot gets on the leg but if it can't get above the knee keep it slightly below. You can press the foot into the leg pretty hard as long as you aren't pressing on the knee joint.

# WALL SIT



- Stand at the wall. The distance between your feet and the wall depends on how deeply you sit down. The knees should never go past the ankle.
- Place a block between the thighs and apply equal pressure through both legs. You can squeeze hard or not, but equal pressure on both legs is key.
- Try to put your back and head against the wall (the head might not happen).
- The lower back and neck should be curved as slightly as possible away from the wall.
- Hold for 30 seconds building up to a minute or longer.

# SQUATTIN

## G



- Stand up straight with feet slightly wider than shoulder's-width apart.
- It is okay to turn the feet out keeping the knees in line with the ankle. Make sure that the feet are turned out equally and not too much. Feel free to hold onto a chair as you begin to explore this exercise.
- Slowly and steadily bend your knees and flex your hips to lower your butt toward the floor. Don't let your knees move forward of the toes. You are trying to squat down backwards.
- Don't worry about how far down you can go at first. Work on maintained alignment and a pain free descent.
- Lower down to the best of your ability and hold for five breaths. Try to increase this over time to 25 breaths.
- An advanced variation is to isolate and engage your pelvic floor muscles while squatting. In this version you try to tone the levator ani (a thick muscle at the top of the pelvic floor).

# STANDING PIGEON



Stand with the feet hip distance apart and parallel.

- Cross the right ankle over the left knee. Flex the right foot strongly (push through the heel).
- Begin to squat. Think about lowering down backwards more than leaning forward. Stick the butt out.
- If you can bring the forearms onto the right shin, place them there and hold.
- Ideally the right shin is parallel to both the front of your mat and the floor.
- Breath.
- Change sides.

# STANDING PSOAS STRETCH



- Bend your right leg behind you and take hold of the right foot with your right hand. Bring your knees in line with one another, keeping the heel in line with your sit bone. If your outer hip is very tight it won't be easy to keep the knees in line.
- Pull the right leg behind you gently. Keep the pelvis and shoulders facing forward and upright the whole time.
- Keep the pelvic floor and the low belly strong as you try to pull the leg behind you through the balanced action of the inner and outer thigh.
- If you have tight hips, it will be difficult to keep the legs aligned as you draw the right leg back. The knee will pull sideways, and it is imperative that you keep the legs in line.

# Upavista Konasana



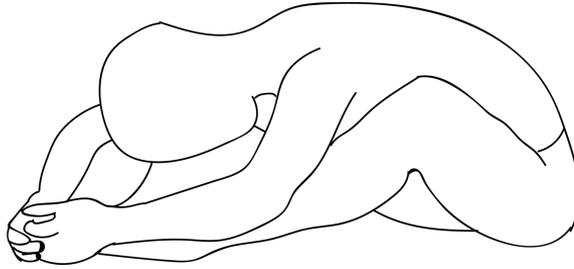
- Sit with your legs spread wide apart. Sit on whatever it might take to get your pelvis in a neutral position where you are on the top or towards the front of the sitting bones.
- If you are long in the back body muscles you will be pitched slightly forward to begin. If not you might need to put your hands behind your hips to try and lengthen the spine.
- Only bend forward if you can do so with the trunk moving as one solid piece.

# Janu Sirsasana



- With the legs spread wide apart, fold the right leg in bringing the foot towards the pubic bone.
- The right knee would like to create an angle of greater than 90 degrees with the opposite leg and hip.
- Turn the trunk over the left leg. Bow forward.
- If the right knee is at an angle greater than 90 degrees the pose is a hip opener, forward bend and twist.

# Tarasana



- Bring your feet together about 18-24 inches away from the pubic bone creating a diamond shape.
- Lengthen the spine to sit up straight.
- Extend forward if you can maintain a flat back keeping your head from moving faster than everything else.

# BADDHA KONASANA



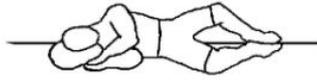
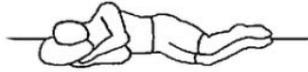
- Sitting up tall, bend your knees, pull your heels towards your pelvis, then let your knees open out to the sides while pressing the soles of your feet together
- If you can't sit upright and extend your spine, sit on a blanket or block to elevate the hips and allow some space for the pelvis to rotate.
- Either stay upright working to lengthen the spine or bow forward maintaining a flat back.
- Then place a block under the feet and repeat the same steps.

# GOMUKHASANA



- You might want to sit up on a block or a few pillows or folded blankets (or towels) to begin this stretch.
- Come onto your hands and knees. Put your right knee in front of your left, both feet sticking out to the sides of you.
- Sit back between your feet onto your support.
- Try to keep the right knee on top of the left. For many of us it will lift and move to the right a bit. That's fine.
- Bow forward. If this seems relatively doable, lower the support. If that is also easy, sit your butt on the floor.
- Breathe.
- Change sides.

# CLAM SHELLS



- Start by lying on your left side, with your knees bent and the right leg on top of the left with the feet together.
- Maintain a neutral spine, engaging your abdominals if you need to.
- Stack the hips and don't let the top hip move backwards. You can even cheat the top hip forward. It is important to differentiate between the leg and the pelvis and not let them move in the same direction.
- From this position, raise your knee slowly engaging gluteus medius. Keep the pelvis and trunk stable. Hold the top position for 5 seconds.
- Lower slowly for five seconds.
- Another option is to raise the top knee slowly, hold for five seconds and then lower slowly only about half way maintaining an active muscle.
- You want to activate gluteus medius and any way that happens for you is the best way.

# SALABASANA



IONS



- Lay flat on your belly. Bring the legs as close together as comfortable. Point the feet, spread the toes and try to get all toenails to the floor.
- Activate the abs pulling the navel towards the spine and the ribcage towards the pelvis.
- Once you get your spine into a good place, choose your arm variation (Hands behind the head is another option).
- Lift the head, neck, trunk and arms up focusing on lengthening the muscles of the lower back as you elevate.

# FROG

## BELLY



- Lay on your stomach. Bend your knees wide out to the side, bringing the soles of the feet together in mid-air.
- The hip bones of the pelvis should be on the floor determining the height of the feet.
- They might be high off the floor. That indicates tight hips. If the feet flop to the floor you might be too loose.
- Draw the knees as high and wide as possible.
- You might feel this in a number of places but often it is the in top of the quadriceps at where the leg meets the pelvis.

# PIGEON



- Starting on your hands and knees, slide your right knee towards your right wrist. Make sure that your right foot moves forward enough to get to the outside of the left thigh. If you fall onto the outside of your right hip, you may need to support that hip with a pillow or folded blanket.
- Slide the left leg straight back and make sure that the ankle is lined up with the knee and hip and that the foot is pointed straight.
- Walk the hands back alongside the hips and then try to and bring your hips towards square. (You will see that when the right leg is in front, the right hip pulls forward. Try to pull the right hip back and bring the left hip forward. You will probably feel more in your right hip as you do this.)
- Bow forward keeping the arms active and find the stretch deep in the right buttock. Take many breaths here.
- Change sides.

# BINDING & SLIDING



- Place a block between your feet and a block between your inner thighs.
- Keep the big toes on the block and do your best to pull your heels slightly away from the block.
- Belt the calves as tight as you can, a couple of inches below the knee around the meat of the calf muscle.
- Draw the knees towards your chest keeping your heels on the floor. Extend the legs back out.
- Try to keep your feet even, pressing through the inner foot and drawing the outer foot back.
- The emphasis on the exercise is inner thigh, outer calf, and mound of the big toe on the inner foot.