

FREEDOM YOGA & RELAXATION



Social Media Updates
by Carolyn.

As you may know, I have introduced a beginners yoga class on Thursday afternoons in Yorkley Community Centre 2-3.30pm. I would love your help in spreading the word please as I hope to increase numbers in the class. Please point people in my direction if they aren't certain that the class will be right for them. I am very happy to chat to people.

A few people have asked me if I am continuing classes in August. I will be running classes as normal for the first two weeks of August and taking the last two off.

Hopefully, by the time this Newsletter lands in your inbox, it will include a link to take you direct to the class booking page.

Since my last newsletter, I have been posting on my Yoga Facebook page continuing following my theme of "yoga alphabet". The last newsletter included posts relating to letters A to C. Here is the post content for letters D to J.

D
Continuing my Alphabetical journey through yoga terms, D offers up lots of choice but I chose Dandasana - seated staff pose. A sneakily tough base pose. It's tough to hold the pose for long.
How do you get on with this one?

Dandasana (Staff Pose)

1. HIPS: internal rotation, square
SIT BONES: grounded equally

2. KNEES: active, pulled up
FEET: ankles and big toes together, toes pointed up

3. SPINE: lifted from base, straight, active back and front

4. CHEST: broad and lifted upwards

5. HEAD AND NECK: aligned to shoulders and chest

6. SHOULDERS: broad, rolled back and away from ears

7. ENGAGED: hip flexors, pelvic floor, core
NAVEL: pulled in and up to support back

8. GAZE: in front
BREATH: inhale/exhale naturally
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Garudasana (Eagle Pose)

1. LEGS: (R): lifted, wrapped over the other, knee facing front, active foot arch, toes engaged, tucked behind the calves and pointed down (L): bent, knees active, pointing front, foot grounded-taking body weight, active foot arch, toes engaged and pointed in front

2. HIPS: (R): engaged, internal rotation, lifted (L): engaged, neutral, taking the body weight

3. ARMS: bent, at shoulder level in front, elbows pointing down, right behind left, palms together, fingers engaged

4. CHEST AND RIB CAGE: broad, lifted upwards
CHIN: aligned to chest

5. SHOULDERS: engaged, internal rotation

6. SPINE: lifted from the base, lengthening upwards towards upper back, a bit inclined in front

7. ENGAGED: calves, hamstrings, quadriceps, hip flexors, gluteus, core
NAVEL: pulled in and up to support back

8. GAZE AND BREATH: in front at a point, inhale/ exhale naturally
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E
Reaching the letter E in my yoga alphabet journey, I offer up "Eye pillows". Really useful in relaxation. A little weight provided by these bags over the eyes reduce light and through a comforting gentle pressure stimulates a parasympathetic response via the vagus nerve. The cotton bags are filled with linseed or similar and can be lavender infused. I used to have a supply available to for students to borrow during classes but have had to withdraw these for hygiene reasons. I do have a small stock of new ones at £6 each if you would like to buy one. Please get in touch if you would like one. If I buy more, I think the price will have increased.



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F

F in my yoga alphabet is Flexibility. Yoga is great for improving flexibility. We tend to think of flexibility of body but a flexible mind and attitude is just as important. Physical flexibility reduces chance of injury, reduces tension and pain. We do, however need to balance our flexibility with strength.

A flexible mind allows for resiliency and adaptability and ability to "go with the flow". Working on the yoga mat with our body helps us view our mindset too. We use the breath and our posture work to foster a balance between strength and flexibility of body and mind.



Garudasana (Eagle Pose)

3. ARMS: bent, at shoulder level in front, elbows pointing down, right behind left, palms together, fingers engaged

2. HIPS: (R): engaged, internal rotation, lifted (L): engaged, neutral, taking the body weight

1. LEGS: (R): lifted, wrapped over the other, knee facing front, active foot arch, toes engaged, tucked behind the calves and pointed down (L): bent, knees active, pointing front, foot grounded-taking body weight, active foot arch, toes engaged and pointed in front



4. CHEST AND RIB CAGE: broad, lifted upwards
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6. SPINE: lifted from the base, lengthening upwards towards upper back, a bit inclined in front

7. ENGAGED: calves, hamstrings, quadriceps, hip flexors, gluteus, core
NAVEL: pulled in and up to support back

8. GAZE AND BREATH: in front at a point, inhale/ exhale naturally
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G

letter G In my yoga alphabet!

Garudasana translated as Eagle pose (garuda - eagle and asana - posture).

Eagles - powerful and strong yet with potential for humility. We associate eagles with being focused, having clear vision, determined and patient.

The version of Garudasana shown here is a balance and requires preparation of body, focused mind and steady breathing. We need to be absolutely in the present. The practice builds strength of core and legs, flexibility, stability and focus.

We can also do Eagle pose lying on the floor or sitting on a chair. We can use supports and even do it in two halves! We work to find a version to suit the body that shows up on your yoga mat that day!

Many people assume yoga teachers can do all postures perfectly! That is a myth. This is one posture I personally love but my knees do not! My prosthetic knee joint does not move in a way that allows me to the version shown here and my other knee needs me to modify.

H

In my yoga alphabet H inspires me to write today about the term Hatha.

Hatha yoga is the the basis of of the yoga I teach. Although, like many yoga teachers, our teaching adapts and incorporates other things as we continue learning and developing. Hatha is derived from the Sanskrit ha, which means "sun," and tha, meaning "moon". However, I have read that the literal translation of hatha is "force".

What ever the interpretation of the meaning of the word, Hatha yoga traditionally offered a philosophy for life, encouraging us to view the way we relate to our external and internal experiences on our path toward inner peace. Have you heard of Patanjali who wrote yoga sutras around 400AD? In these, Patanjali describes Hatha yoga as an eightfold path, consisting of eight mind-body disciplines. It is believed all other styles of physical of yoga such as Ashtanga, Iyengar, vinyasa originated from Hatha yoga.

Hatha yoga, has been practiced for thousands of years. It is believed to have begun on the borders of India and Nepal and therefore with links with Hinduism and Buddhism.

Hatha yoga in recent times developed as a physical practice, typically including asana (yoga postures) and pranayama (breathing techniques).

Hatha yoga does in fact encompass far more than the above physical practice.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras list the eight limbs of Hatha yoga (as below) as a road map towards achieving strength and health of body, emotionally and physically, a calm and peaceful mind and freedom from suffering. The goal being a compassionate understanding and interconnectedness with all that surrounds us and our true self.

1. Yamas - Five social observances: ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truthfulness) asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (chastity) and aparigraha (non-possessiveness).
2. Niyamas - Five moral observances: saucha (purity), santosha (contentment), tapas (self-discipline), svadhyaya (self-study), ishvarapranidhana (devotion or surrender).
3. Asana - Yoga postures.
4. Pranayama - Breathing techniques as a means of controlling prana (vital life force energy).
5. Pratyahara - Withdrawal of the senses.
6. Dharana - Concentration.
7. Dhyana - Meditation.
8. Samadhi - Enlightenment or bliss.

Although these limbs are listed and referred to as a "path", I don't believe they (certainly the first 7) are intended to be followed sequentially but rather explored and absorbed into daily life.

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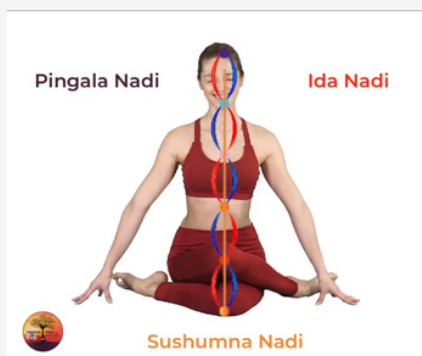
I

letter I in my yoga alphabet

Ida nadi is one of the three main nadis, or energy channels, in the body. Ida Nadi is a Sanskrit term translating as comfort channel. In yoga we aim to keep energy or life force flowing as freely as possible through the nadis to maintain health of body and mind. The ida nadi is believed to travel the length of the spinal cord, weaving in and out of the chakras. Ida nadi is sometimes referred to as chandra or moon nadi as it is associated with the lunar energy. It is said that the body has 72,000 nadis but I believe this huge number is a representation of the fact that we don't really know how many there are but there are an awful lot! The three main nadis are the ida, pingala and sushumna. These originate in the muladhara (root) chakra and weave up the spine.

Yogapedia offers this lovely description. "Ida and pingala are mirror images of each other. The ida nadi is known as the left channel because it flows to the left as it leaves the root chakra and runs to the left nostril. Pingala flows to the right, from chakra to nostril. Sushumna is the center channel and it travels straight up the spine through the center of all the chakras. Ida nadi controls all mental processes as it transports prana to the nervous system, which calms the mind and relaxes the body. It is associated with introversion, feminine energy, the right (creative) side of the brain, and the left side of the body. Ida nadi energy must be balanced by the pingala energy, which is linear and logical. A major focus of Hatha yoga is balancing these nadis. For example, someone with a free-flowing ida nadi who has a blocked pingala nadi may be

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J
Reaching letter J in my yoga alphabet offers me the chance to show you Janu Sirsasana (Head On Knee Pose)
The name comes from the Sanskrit words 'Janu' meaning 'knee', 'Sirsa' meaning 'head' and 'asana' meaning 'posture'. This pose is a forward fold pose bringing the head towards the knee while bending the upper torso from the hips. (Please note, you don't have to get your head onto your knee! Remember - how the pose feels to you and what you are learning about you as you do this is the important journey). This pose is considered a great hip opener and it also opens the hamstrings.
Head To Knee Pose is considered a base pose as head to knee pose variations can be derived from this pose. Head To Knee Pose helps boost energy in the body and hence can be included in flow yoga sequences.

Head To Knee Pose works the following areas:

- * Lower Back
- * Core (Abs)
- * Gluteus
- * Hamstrings
- * Hips
- * Neck

As with most poses, there are lots of variations and ways we can tweak with props to better suit your body at the time of practice. Its one of those poses that may very well feel very different when you take the pose on the second side.

<https://bookwhen.com/freedomyogaandrelaxation>

More of my yoga alphabet coming soon.

Oh and one more piece of news, I have written a blog! It has now been added to my website. I don't like the word "blog" so have called the page in which it sits "Carolyn's Musings". Have a peep. I hope to be writing more musings going forward. If there is a yoga related subject you would like me to cover, do let me know. Here is the link to the page
<https://www.freedomyogaandrelaxation.co.uk/carolyns-musings>

Carolyn

