



Connecting

BREATH & MOVEMENT

A Master Class With Gary Kraftsove



THE PRACTICE

Begin in sukhāsana (easy pose), a comfortable seated posture. Notice habits in attention.

Bring attention to spine and sit bones.

Notice sacrum.

Notice lumbar/thoracic/cervical spine going from lower to upper.

Repeat this noticing, going from upper to lower this time.

Bring attention to the tip of the nose, deepen inhale, lengthen exhale, engage ujjāyī breathing.

Then on exhale, bring attention below the navel and tighten the belly. On inhale, expand the rib cage and release the belly at the top of the inhale. Repeat.

Relax all effort.

SAVASANA

(CORPSE POSE)

Come out of the seated position to lie on the back in śavāsana (corpse pose). Bring your attention to the tip of the nose and deepen the inhale and lengthen the exhale. Expand the chest on the inhale and relax completely on exhale.

Inhale and raise your arms over your head and pause a moment. Exhale and lower the arms back to your side.

Inhale lifting the arms over the head for about 4 or 5 counts. Exhale the arms down for 4 or 5 counts.

Inhale lifting the arms over the head for about 5 or 6 counts while flexing the ankles. Exhale the arms back down for 5 or 6 counts while releasing the ankles.

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Bend the knees, lift the right knee and place the hand on it. Lift the left knee and place the hand on it for apānāsana.

Inhale and expand the chest. Exhale for a 4 or 5 second count, bending the elbows and pulling the thighs into the chest.

Inhale, expand, pressing the knees and thighs out. Repeat, increasing to a 5 or 6 second count, suspending at the end of the exhale for a moment. Repeat, increasing to a 6 or 7 second count, suspending the breath at the end of the exhale for 2 or 3 seconds.

Pause completely.

BALASANA

(CHILD'S POSE)

Come to your knees. Inhale for a 4 or 5 second count, raising the arms completely. Exhale for a 4 or 5 second count, sweeping the arms out and down into bālāsana (child's pose).

Inhale for a 5 or 6 second count, raising the arms completely and exhaling for the same count, sweeping down into child's pose.

Deepening the inhale for a count or staying with the 5 or 6 second count, raise the arms over the head and exhale for the same count, sweeping the arms out and into child's pose.

From the knees, lower the arms and come to the belly with the forehead on the floor, elbows and palms on the floor.



BHUJANGNASAN

(COBRA POSE)

Inhale into bhujangāsana (cobra pose) and exhale to the floor.

Inhale into bhujangāsana and hold the pose for one second. Exhale to the floor.

Inhale into bhujangāsana and hold for two seconds. Exhale to the floor.

Inhale into bhujangāsana and hold for three seconds. Exhale to the floor.

Inhale into bhujangāsana and hold for four seconds. Exhale to the floor.

CAKRAVAKASANA

(RUDDY GOOSE POSE)

Push up into cakravākāsana (ruddy goose pose) and prepare to eventually move into child's pose.

Inhale for a 4 or 5 second count, arching your back. Exhale for a 4 or 5 second count while rounding your back and lowering into child's pose. Repeat once for the same count.

Inhale for a 5 or 6 second count, arching your back, and exhale for a 5 or 6 second count, rounding back into child's pose. Repeat once for the same count.

Inhale for a 6 or 7 second count, arching your back, and exhale for a 6 or 7 second count while rounding to the floor. Repeat once for the same count.

JATHARA PARIVRTTI

(RECLINING TWIST)

Exhale the knees to the right while turning the head to the left. Pause for a moment. Inhale to center.

Exhale the knees to the left while turning the head to the right. Pause and breathe. Inhale to center.

Repeat this motion several times.

TIP: Use the exhale to deepen the twist.

URDHVA PRASARITA PADASANA

(KNEES TO CHEST)

inhale the arms over the head and exhale the arms to the floor.

Inhale the legs to the ceiling and exhale the legs into the chest.

Now inhale both the arms and the legs up and exhale both down.

Repeat, staying for one breath in the extended pose, flexing the ankles and stretching the arms on inhale and exhaling back down. Then repeat one more time.

Bring one foot to the floor, then the other.

SETU BANDHASANA

(BRIDGE POSE)

Inhale into setu bandhāsana (bridge pose) and exhale back to the floor.
Repeat, lifting the arms over the head and exhaling them back to your sides.

Lift one knee up to the chest and then the other to repeat the apānāsana variation we did early in the practice.

Inhale, then exhale the knees to the chest.
Inhale the knees away from the chest.
Repeat 3 or 4 times.

Extend the legs into śavāsana and rest completely. Stay here for a short time and tune into the energy pulsating in your body.

SUKHASANA

(EASY POSE)

Notice habits in attention.
Bring attention to the spine and sit bones.
Notice vertebral bodies coming out of the sacrum.
Notice lumbar/thoracic/cervical spine going from lower to upper.
Repeat this “noticing” going from upper to lower.

Exhale and tighten the belly. Inhale, expanding the rib cage and releasing the belly at the top of the inhale.

Release the breath entirely and come into stillness.

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