

Benefits of yoga for children and youth -

- Develops flexibility, strength, stamina, agility, balance, coordination
- Promotes mental and physical health
- Promotes concentration, self-discipline and develops inner strength and clarity. Breath control is an integral part of yoga and meditation. Breath meditation teaches children to deepen and slow down their breath and be calm and inward focused. It is a valuable skill that they can utilize their entire lives.
- Builds cooperative skills and good social behavior by working with a partner or in a group.
- Promotes positive communication and good listening skills which foster self- respect, compassion and respect for others.
- Builds self-confidence.
- Encourages children's creative imagination and self-expression.

Yoga is a quiet activity. In the peace and stillness of quiet, we notice and feel inside ourselves. Our brain can relax, our nerves can settle, our heart can be happy and we can feel alive. Only when we quiet of voice can the mind go quiet as well.

QUIETLY, set up mats in 4 circles (approx. 25 – 30 people per circle), cross-legged, knees touching (one circle can be a standing circle for those uncomfortable with sitting without props)

Opening: “go to that quiet place inside of you”

SY:

May I dwell in an open heart

May I attend to whatever clouds the heart

May I be awake in this moment just as it is

May the awakened heart be extended to all beings

Or

MY:

May all beings be peaceful

May all beings be happy

May all beings be safe

May all beings awaken to their true nature

May all beings be free

Or

EY:

Today, I appreciate, a healthy body and a peaceful mind.

Asana Practice

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Warm-up:

Pavanmuktasana (hug knees into chest...wind releaser 😊), eka pada pavanmuktasana (hug one leg at a time), single leg lift and lower, Cat, cow, downdog, walk-the-dog, uttanasana.

EY:

- Yoga Circuit - pass the cards
- Yoga Board Game – move yoga mat spaces according the die roll. One mat space has meditation cushion on it with “tornado timer” (approx. 30 seconds), bell and one die.

Partner Poses:

Sit cross-legged, facing partner –

- Twists (right arm behind back, left arm holds partner’s right hand)

Sit cross-legged, back to back –

- Side-to-side bends
- Forward bend/backbend

MY/SY: Move mats to front facing individual set up.

Sun Salutations A & B

JOY

How can we cultivate JOY in our lives? Meditate on JOY.

Closing:

Legs Up the Wall – Viparita Karoni

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Om: the universal sound; the heartbeat of the universe

Shanti: Peace

Peace: past, honoring our teachers from long ago

Peace: future, honoring the teachers that have yet to touch our hearts

Peace: present, honoring this moment together

Time did not permit us to cover the following list of random poses or explore yoga philosophy in any great detail. I do, however suggest that you search for these basic postures in books or on-line as they are excellent ones to learn and incorporate into a variety of pose sequences.

You may also search for photos of Sun Salutations A & B as reminders of those sequences that we did practice ☺ a simple google of “sun salutations” or “surya namaskara” should get you to those diagrams.

I have included information on the Limbs of Yoga for those of you interested in learning about how yoga is more than just physical activity.

Random Poses (building sequences):

- Cat
- Cow
- Dog
- Mouse
- Queen’s Chair
- Cobra
- Tree
- Triangle
- Half Moon
- Warrior I
- Warrior II
- Warrior III
- Eagle
- Crane
- Bug
- Peacock

Patanjali, an ancient Indian sage, wrote the Yoga Sutras, the guiding principles of Yoga practice. He described Yoga as consisting of eight limbs:

Yamas – ethical disciplines (the do nots)

Niyamas – self observations (the do's)

Asana – postures

Pranayama – breath control

Pratyahara – sense withdrawal

Dharana – concentration

Dhyana – meditation

Samadhi – a state of joy and peace

Yama and Niyama are the ethical precepts set forth in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras as the first and second of the eight limbs of yoga. They are the foundation of practice without which no spiritual progress along the path of yoga can be made. Many people come to yoga initially as a physical exercise and only later begin to understand the profound spiritual effect it has on our lives. But to establish these spiritual effects firmly upon our mind-stream, to embed them within our consciousness, they must be grounded on the bedrock of ethical behavior. Our practice **begins** with Yama and Niyama, and **extends** into asana and the other limbs of yoga.

Yamas and Niyamas

Sanskrit	English	Translation
Ahimsa	Non-violence	Don't hurt
Satya	Truthfulness	Don't lie
Asteya	Non-stealing	Don't steal
Brahmacharya	Loyalty	Don't be sexually unfaithful
Aparigraha	Non-greed	Don't be greedy
Sauca	Cleanliness	Clean living
Santosha	Contentment	Be happy, satisfied with what you have
Tapas	Fire, Austerity	Be committed to maintaining a strong mind & body
Svadyaya	Self-study	Introspection
Isvara pranidhana	Surrender of self	Belief in a higher, divine source

Ahimsa -- Non-violence. Not harming other people, oneself, the environment. Tolerance even for that which we dislike. Not speaking which, even though truthful, would injure others.

Satya -- Truthfulness. Satya means not intending to deceive others in our thoughts, as well as our words and actions.

Asteya -- Non-stealing. Not taking that which is not given.

Brahmacarya -- Sexual responsibility. Loyalty. Not being sexually unfaithful. Regarding others as human beings rather than as male and female bodies. The spirit of this precept is conservation of energy for the purpose of spiritual practice. This includes not only sexual restraint, but protecting our energy for instance by avoiding endless chattering with no clear purpose.

Aparigraha -- Abstention from greed. Not coveting that which is not ours. Avoid unnecessary acquisition of objects not essential to maintain life or spiritual study.

Niyama: Principles of Individual Discipline (Do's)

Sauca -- Cleanliness. Not only external cleanliness of the body, but attending to internal cleanliness such as avoiding the impurities of anger and egoism. Moderation in diet.

Santosa -- Contentment. Not spiritual complacency, but acceptance of the external situation we are allotted in this life.

Tapas -- Austerity; strict, rigorous. Deep commitment to our yoga practice.

Svadyaya -- Self-study. Spiritual self-education. Contemplation and application of the scriptures or sacred texts of our chosen path.

Isvara pranidhana -- Surrender of the self to the Divine. Acknowledgement that there is a higher principle in the universe than one's own small self. Modesty. Humility.