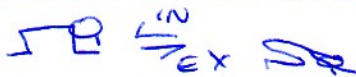


MO Yoga Home Practice Strength & Balance

Body Awareness: Standing with eyes unfocused or gently closed. Start focusing on your body from the feet up. Noticing how your weight is distributed from soles of feet, through feet, ankles, legs, pelvis, rib cage, through neck and head. Notice any areas of tightness and discomfort. Sense where your centre of balance is.

Breath awareness/warm-up: Continue standing with feet hips distance apart, knees soft. Do gentle whispering breath, focusing on exhale. Feeling the connection between the breath (inhale helps to lengthen the spine and create space between vertebrae; exhale, pulls belly in and helps sense of strength in core and connection to earth - sense of balance. Take 12-24 breaths like this.

- 1) **Table to child's pose:** inhale, lengthen spine through crown of head, forehead pointing to mat; exhale, pull belly in, round lower back as you glide hips to heels, forehead to floor, bending arms. Repeat 8 times.



- 2) **3-leg width Cobra (strengthening lower back and sacral muscles):** Lie face down, forehead on floor, arms beside body or behind back, feet and legs close together. On inhale, lift chest and lengthen spine through top of head (keep forehead pointed to floor). Exhale, keep length and come down. Repeat 3 times. Take a free breath. Widen legs to 6 inches only. Repeat 3 times. Take free breath. Widen legs to 1 foot and repeat 3 times. Rest with head at side and legs at comfortable width, heels opening to side.



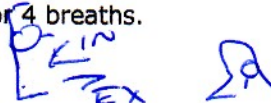
- 3) Repeat #1.

- 4) **Balance postures:**

- a) **Warm up circles:** Stand with feet hips distance apart, knees soft, hands in front of chest in prayer position and eyes closed. Make small circles to right, shifting weight to front, side, back and front of feet, feeling muscles you are working because knees are bent. Do 4-6 circles in one direction, then repeat in other direction
- b) **Tree posture:** Put most of weight on right foot with knee bent. Place left heel above right inside ankle with left knee turned out. Focus gaze on floor 8 feet in front of you and breathe. Allow every exhale to help you feel more connected through your right foot to the floor. Every inhale, feel your spine lengthen through the top of your head.



- 5) **Standing Forward Bend:** Inhale, sweep arms to side and overhead, exhale, bend knees, lead with chest with arms in airplane at side until come to forward bend with chin tucked and back rounded. Repeat 8 times and then stay down for 4 breaths.



- 6) **Chair Posture:** Stand with feet hips distance apart and knees soft. Inhale reach hands forward as you "sit back" into an imaginary chair, sticking your butt way out behind you and bending your knees deeply. On exhale, push through your feet and come to standing with arms at side. Keep knees parallel throughout the movement. Repeat 6 times and stay in chair for 4 breaths on the sixth time.



- 7) Repeat Standing Forward Bend.

- 8) Rest in standing posture.



Note: practices are designed for M. Olmsted students. You are responsible for your own safety and well being. Marcia Olmsted: x6185; <http://moyogastudio.com>; yogameko@gmail.com