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Teacher to the teachers.

Mastering Simplicity

Theme: A Well-Rounded Practice
Physical Focus: Seated, Standing, Prone and Supine
Special Equipment: yoga chair or dining room chair
Poetry/Extracts/Resources: Rumi Poems
Music:

Introduction

• Structuring Your Practice: There are infinite possibilities when structuring your personal practice. One of the most basic ways that we can approach our practice is to do a brief assessment of our experience using the yogic mapping process of the *koshas*. In this geographic mapping of experience we recognize that we are multi-layered. Theses layers include:

1. **Annamaya Kosha** or physical body (our structure)
2. **Pranamaya Kosha** or energy body (our physiology)
3. **Manamaya Kosha** or emotional body (our feelings and emotions)
4. **Vijyanamaya Kosha** or mental body (our thoughts, memories, imagination, insights)
5. **Anandamaya Kosha** or spiritual body (the ground of being)

• Self-Assessment: In a deliberately simplified space, such as sitting, lying down or standing, take a little time to feel into these different layers of yourself. Are there physical sensations that are calling your attention? Is there an energetic patterning that is familiar or unfamiliar? Did you arrive on your mat in a particular emotional state, whether positive or negative? Is your mind quiet or distracted? And out of all these layers of experience is there anything that is standing out?

• Attending with Curiosity: As you proceed into your practice, can you attend to this experience in a spirit of curiosity? Consider using postures and practices to investigate and explore what ameliorates physical, emotional or mental discomfort. After every practice, take a moment to assess again. This can be as simple as standing in Mountain Pose ***(Tadasana)*** or a more dynamic activity such as walking around the room.

Experiential Centering

1. Body Weather Reading: Kneeling or sitting in a chair – wrap a blanket firmly around your abdomen as a way of amplifying the experience of your inhalation and exhalation. Movement from centrifugal movement of attention to centripetal movement of attention. Movement from thinking and sensing to listening and feeling. Draw your attention progressively through each *kosha* (see above) and make a note of which one is asking to be prioritized.

Warming Up

2. Shoulder Release from Child's Pose or alternatively elbows on the seat of a chair while in an all-fours position.
3. Prone Prostration: pressing from the thumb to the little finger, then pressing the hands to feet for 5 counts and releasing on the exhalation. X3
4. Prone Prostration to the left X3, and to the right X3.

Active

1. Upward Puppy Spiral X5
2. Supported Cobra ***(Bhujangasana)***: bolster under pelvis, activating feet, inner thighs, lower back and coming into extension without pushing from the arms. X3
3. Downward Facing Dog ***(Adho Mukha Svanasana)*** X 3, increasing from a three- breaths to a five, then seven breaths stay.
4. Mountain Pose ***(Tadasana)***
5. Figure-8 Loops (primary and lateral)
6. Horseperson's Flow ***(Utkatasana Vinyasana)***:
    - With a block between the lower thighs, cross the arms in front of the body as you flex and bend your knees, and extend the arms over the head as you inhale and rise onto the balls of the feet. Repeat X5.
    - Repeat the same practice, lowering the arms down to the sides on a count of four as the heels descend.
    - Now add the extension of the upper back with the arms in cactus position at the end of the cycle X3.
    - To complete the cycle extend the arms into classical Horseperson's Pose ***(Utkatasana)***.
    - Side Bending Variation: Standing in Mountain Pose, extend your arms over your head and interlock your fingers. Draw your left elbow downwards as your draw the right elbow across. Press your feet strongly into the ground as you extend to the left and right. Then extend to the left, turn to look on the diagonal, extend back to the left and come back to center. Repeat on the right.
7. Tree Pose (***Vrkasana)*** X2

8. Sun Salutations ***(Suryanamaskar)*** X5: progressively increasing the challenge with each repetition and repeating that variation that is most appropriate for you.
9. Side Angle Pose ***(Parsvakonasana)*** X2
10. Warrior One Flow into Revolved Triangle on the third round. ***(Virabhadrasana I Vinyasana into Parivrtta Trikonasana)***
11. Passive back bend over a blanket roll with lower body rotations.

Relaxation

12. The Great Rejuvenator ***(Viparita Karani)*** with lower legs on a chair, pelvis on a bolster, shoulders supported on a blanket, and eye bag to cover eyes. (5-10 minutes)
13. Corpse Pose ***(Savasana)*** 5-10 minutes.

Transition to Everyday Life

• If you are a subscriber to *Mastering Simplicity,* as you return to previous classes in your library, consider how you might tailor them to your own needs. Are there practices within the class that you wish to omit? Are there other practices that you would insert instead?
• Zooming Out/Zooming In: As you progress through a practice session, notice if a particular experience is asking you to zoom in. For instance, as you are practicing a standing posture you may notice that your neck and shoulders are stiff and sore. This might take you into a series of movements or practices that address this. Or, as you begin a more energetic practice you notice that your energy is plummeting. Could you be willing to change plan and shift into more restful postures on the floor? If you've been very fixated on a particular part of your body, what happens if you broaden your attention and do practices that are more general?
• Archive What Works: If you are at the stage of designing your own practice sessions, keep a pen and paper close at hand so you can record your sequences. Over a period of a week, note subtle changes, new ideas, shifts in sequence order, and alterations to your original place.

Resources

• PDF of Restorative Reset (for those of you interested in the baroreceptor reflex in inverted restorative postures).