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Yoga for Stress Relief

This is a general guide for this topic, not intended to be prescriptive or all-encompassing. Please consult your physician or specialist prior to beginning any program.

Where to focus: Neck/shoulders & Hips, especially the front (hip flexors).

Start: Place yourself into a comfortable position, and focus your breathing into your belly.

Release the feeling of needing to control, and spread your awareness to your entire body.

Keep breathing into the belly for 5 minutes, and try to gently bring wandering thoughts back to your body and breath.

Warm Up: slowly bring movement into the joints and limbs:

- Make small neck circles as if drawing a circle in front of your face with the tip of your nose.
- Circle the shoulders-one at a time- up and back.
- "Stir" the hips.
- Cat/cow the spine.
- Roll ankles and squeeze-release the toes.

Postures: Stand (or sit) tall, and gently "wring out" the spine in rotation, without pulling or forcing.

Inhale arms overhead, breathing through the nose, and exhale a big breath through the mouth "haaa".

Step wide, "goddess pose". As you draw the arms out to the sides and set back, release breath through the mouth with the tongue out "Lion's breath".

Low lunge: Seated on a chair or kneeling, lengthen through the front of the hips on leg at a time.

Release: Return to a liquid, repetitive motion: Cat/cow, stirring, dancing ☺

Relax: Give yourself another few minutes of belly breathing to allow your body and mind to integrate and release.

Remember that you are amazing and beautiful, that your body has done countless amazing things, and that:

Practice creates awareness.

Awareness reveals new patterns.

Repatterning can transform our experience.