

OPENING TO SUBTLE BODY AWARENESS

May this āsana sequence awaken you to a deeper and more refined experience of your yoga practice.

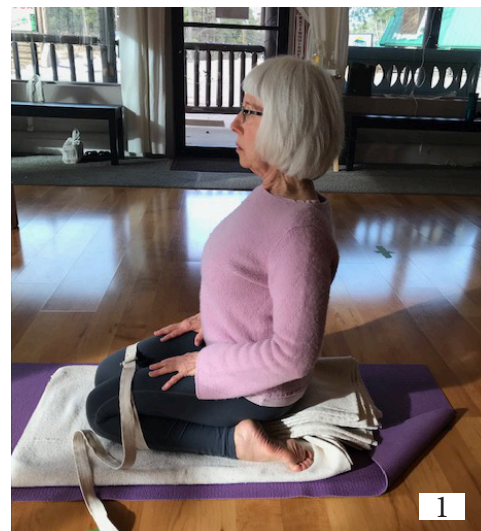
Sit in Virasana to begin

Head Diaphragm Breathing HDB

Observe “releasing the brain in on inhalation; releasing the brain out on exhalation.”

This subtle movement of the brain may or may not be apparant to you at first, yet it serves to draw attention to the more subtle effects of the breath during practice.

You may observe the subtle movement of the brain “releasing out on inhalation and releasing in on exhalation”. If so, reduce the intensity of your practice.



Virasana (1) - the following actions are also to be applied throughout the sequence.

Thighs rotate inwardly; top thighs away from each other; frontal hip bones toward each other; femurs move toward the earth. Slightly untuck the pelvis for natural curve in the lumbar spine without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. HDB.

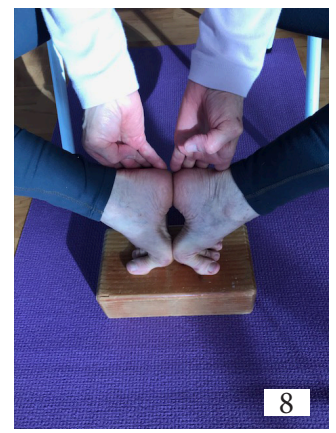
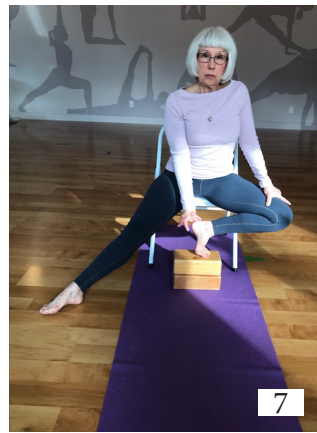
Access the Pelvic Floor - pelvis on block (2); with the movement coming from the floor of the pelvis, slowly lift the thighs up till perpenducular to the floor without hardening the abdomen or the lumbar spine, and slowly lower the feet down (3) Isolate the work deep in the floor of the pelvis. HDB. Practice without hardening the eyes, inner ears or tongue. Repeat using one hand on your belly, one on your lumbar.(4) Practice without any grip in the belly or lumbar.



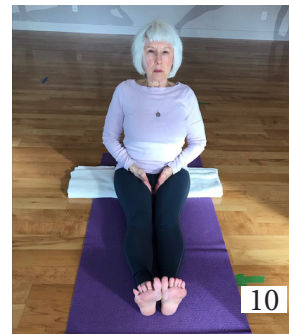
Supta Tadasana (5) - From the pelvic floor lift the perineum up towards the spine; maintain the other actions. Equalize the work in the 2 legs and 2 hip bones; let the difference in the 2 sides guide you throughout this sequence. Hold for 1-3 minutes. HDB *Explore lifting the perineum more energetically than physically while keeping the sense organs quiet.*



Mūla Bandhasana from a Chair - sitting on the chair place feet in baddha konasana on the floor (6) or on blocks (7); move inner heels forward to open thighs from the hips (8); hip bones move toward each other. Press outer side of feet toward each other and lengthen femurs toward the floor. HDB. Hold without hardening eyes, inner ears or tongue. *Observe the natural internal lift from the pelvic floor (mūla bandha); release and allow. For more seasoned students incrementally take more height under the feet and/or lower the hips keeping the femurs lengthening toward the floor. Stop if there is knee pain. The movement in the hip joint must determine your progress going deeper.*



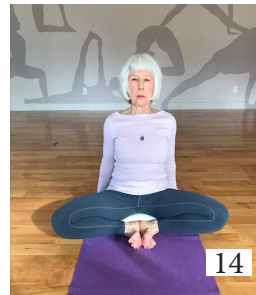
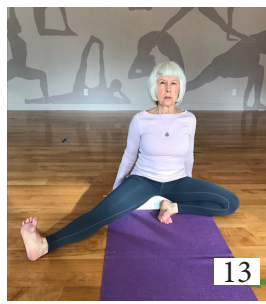
Dandasana - frontal hip bones move closer and closer to each other. (9) Top inner thighs move away from each other (10) without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. HDB. Release the breath into the floor of the pelvis. *For more seasoned students lift the perineum back and up toward the spine (mūla bandha). Use discriminating awareness to find the space between the sacrum and pubis. Does the breath drop to the floor of the pelvis? Find balance between the physical & energetic work.*



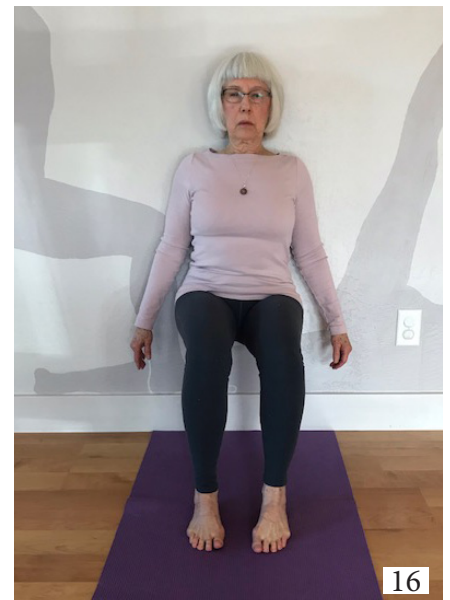
Upavista Konasana (11) - repeat above actions. From the pelvic floor lift the perineum up without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. HDB. Imagine the action if the sensitivity isn't there yet. *For more seasoned students: mūla bandha lifting the perineum back & up. Imagining is often the first step to awakening the sensitivity. Can you create space in the pelvic floor even with the imagined lift of the perineum?*

Baddha Konasana - Bend each leg to completely seal the shin and thigh, (12) then from the hip, rotate out to take the knee down as in Mūla Bandhasana.(13) Pressing heels toward each other, make femurs longer and shins shorter.(14) Inner groins and thighs should not fall forward. Belt can be used to draw inner thigh & groin back. (15) Release the breath to the floor of the pelvis. *For more seasoned students: mūla bandha.*

Practice energetically, not muscularly, without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue.HDB



Utkatasana at the wall - (16) take the femurs down until parallel with the floor; sitting bones move up toward the chest; frontal hip bones move toward each other; keep natural lumbar curve with slight untucking of pelvis. Work from the floor of the pelvis. Release the tailbone into the space between the sacrum & pubis. Hold the pose more energetically and less physically without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. **HDB** *For more seasoned students: mūla bandha. Does the energetic movement of mūla bandha go all the way up behind the sternum?*



Utthita Trikonasana - at wall (17); turn R leg out; R buttock tucks deeply under. Keep inner thigh and groin close to the bone in order to access the breath in the floor of the pelvis. *See (15) Baddha Konasana photo.*

Hold the pose energetically, not so muscularly, without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. **HDB.**

Repeat to the L. *For more seasoned students: mūla bandha.* To hold the pose more than 3-5 minutes use head support.(18) *Watch any tendency to perform the pose as you've ever done before. Discover anew!*



Utthita Parsvakonasana - at the wall turn the R leg out (19) ; R buttock tucks deeply under. As you extend the trunk & revolve the spine, draw the inner R thigh into the bone & move the L inner top thigh laterally to the bone. See that the breath drops deep into the floor of the pelvis. Hold the pose energetically, not so muscularly, without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. HDB
For more seasoned students: mūla bandha with breath moving up behind the sternum.



Seated Twist I. - Baddha Konasana . Inhale, turn to the R (20), then extend toward the L, supporting the head in front of the L leg (21). Use a chair if the body isn't open enough to extend down in front of L leg (22). Deeply tuck the L buttock forward. To release the R knee down, move the L sitting bone toward the R & if possible *mūla bandha*. HDB
Releasing is the key to this posture. Penetrate the pose with your awareness to deepen the breath into the floor of the pelvis. Repeat to the other side.



Seated Twist II.- Baddha Konasana/Virasana legs. L leg in Baddha Konasana (23); R leg in virasana tucked close behind R buttock (24). Keep virasana leg close in. Inhale, lift and turn R, then extend down to the L in front of L leg (25) (*as you would in Parivṛtta Jānu Śīrṣāsana*). Extend the Virasana thigh bone and move the L sitting bone toward the R sitting bone. *Mūla Bandha* to drop breath into floor of pelvis without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. HDB. Repeat to the other side.



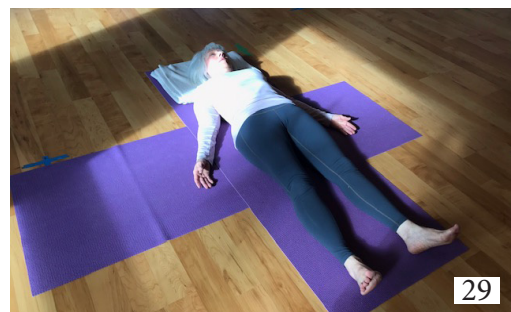
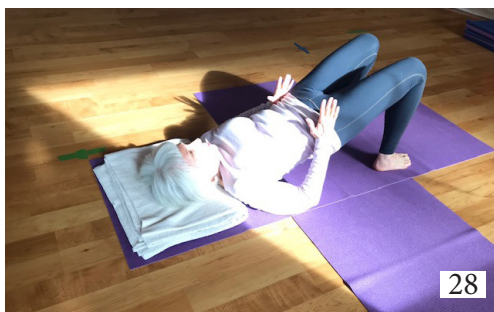
Adho Mukha Svanasana - head supported (26); same actions as in all previous poses with slight untucking of pelvis; flesh of buttocks move toward the floor. Release the femurs back. Energetically - not physically - with your imagination, lift the perineum back and up toward the inner face of the sternum without hardening the eyes, inner ears and tongue. *Can you move beyond your image of the pose and deepen energetically?* HDB



Setu Bandha Sarvangasana - lie down with knees bent; lift your hip bones straight up toward the ceiling, place bricks under sacrum. Hip bones keep moving up as you release the sacrum slowly onto the bricks. Extend the legs without losing the frontal hip bone action and without shortening the lumbar spine (27). Keep the eyes, inner ears and tongue passive. Move the sternum in the direction of the head, not the ceiling. Ribs and abdominal organs rest toward the spine. HDB *How is the Head Diaphragm Breath showing up now? Is the brain releasing in on inhalation and out on exhalation?*



Savasana - lie down with knees bent; then lift the sides of the hips straight up toward the ceiling (28). Then keeping the sides of the hips moving up, lower the buttocks to the floor and extend the legs. Keep the hips moving up as you release the legs and arms to the side. Then release everywhere (29).



Lauren Barnert-Hosie CIYT, IAYT, has been practicing Iyengar Yoga since 1988 and teaching since 1998. Her primary teachers are Carolyn Belko and Ramanand Patel. Open Spaces Yoga Center in Lakeside, AZ, founded in 2001 has been her teaching home for classes, workshops, yoga therapeutics & philosophy classes. Her husband and meditation teacher, Ken Hosie, has been a student of Iyengar Yoga for 26+ years. Integrating practice into life and awakening to more subtle awarenesses has been her inspiration in life and in her teaching.

