



Yoga Relaxation Activity

Savasana— is a relaxing pose that can be done anytime

During ANY stressful event, we activate our sympathetic nervous system; fight or flight - *the stress response*. Many physiological changes occur such as an increase in heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension naming a few. Other systems are suppressed, such as our **immune system**.

Savasana activates the parasympathetic system which reverses the stress response. It not only lowers B/P, heart rate and reduces muscle tension. It also relieves anxiety and fatigue; as well as being a terrific immune system booster.

ARE YOU READY TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM???

1. Lie down on the floor, to maintain proper neck alignment, you may need to place a small pillow or towel under your head.
2. Rotate your legs in and out, and then letting them gently roll to the side.
3. Let your arms fall alongside your body, slightly separated from the body, palms facing upwards.
4. Rotate the spine by turning your head from side to side to center it.
5. To reduce muscle tension, stretch yourself out, beginning with your head. Reach with your head away from your shoulders, press your shoulders towards your waist. Stretch your legs away from your pelvis as if to grow your legs an inch longer.
6. Lift your arms an inch off the floor, palms up, stretching your arms towards your feet. Inhale, tighten, (*if legs tighten, that is okay*) pause and release dropping your arms back to the floor. Allow yourself to completely let go, sinking into a state of quiet. Repeat if necessary. Some people like the sensation of letting go.
7. Now you are ready to relax. *If you have low back pain, a bolster or pillow can be placed under your knees, see photo below.*
8. Shift your attention to your breath. Breathe slowly and deeply from your abdomen. Do not force it. Listen to the sound of your breath, anchoring your monkey mind to the sound of your breath to enhance stillness in the mind. It can be helpful to count your breaths, if the mind wanders start back at one. (*You might get to 3 before your mind takes off again!*)
9. Place a cloth or eye bag over your eyes to aid in relaxation. Take the journey inward, find the quietest of quiet within you, allowing the parasympathetic nervous system to help your body relax and recover.
11. Relax into the pose for 10 to 20 minutes. It is okay if you fall asleep, you probably need a nap! *If it is more comfortable, bend your elbows, and place your hands on your abdomen.*
12. After doing the pose, bend your knees. Roll over to your side and rest momentarily. Finally, into a sitting position to get up.

