

hundreds of other yoga teachers in the style, “cannabis can make people *want* to do yoga.”

Using the 15-Minute Enhanced Yoga Practice below as a springboard, feel free to explore the ways *your* body—with its unique genetics and biography—wants to move and breathe itself into greater aliveness. It’s deeply ingrained in many of us who were socialized female to look outside ourselves for validation that our efforts are worthwhile and that we’re doing it right. But try, with gentleheartedness for that part of you that still wonders whether your yoga practice, career, parenting style, relationship, or entire life looks the way it’s supposed to, and *just trust yourself*. Your body is the temple here, not an ashram in India or a mountaintop yoga retreat center. Your inner Knowing is the guide.

15-MINUTE ENHANCED YOGA PRACTICE

Elevating and Centering

- ◇ Decide how you would like to consume cannabis for this elevated yoga experience. Aim for a microdose, or a moderate one, so you can stay fully present.
- ◇ Take a deep breath. Set a simple intention for this period of practice, like to *be fully present to my mind and body*, or to *be kind to myself*.
- ◇ When you’re feeling the effects of the cannabis, take a tall, cross-legged seat on your yoga mat. Use a blanket or cushion under your sitting bones if it helps you hold the seated posture with more ease. Place your palms on your knees—facedown for grounding, faceup for drawing in energy and inspiration.
- ◇ Close your eyes. Relax whatever muscles you don’t need for sitting tall, like your jaw, throat, belly, and the muscles deep in your pelvis.
- ◇ Remind yourself of your intention, then begin long, slow deep breaths that allow your belly to expand as you inhale and soften as you exhale.

- ◇ If you know an alternate nostril breathing technique (Anuloma Viloma or Nadhi Shodhana), practice it for three to five rounds; otherwise, continue several rounds of belly breathing.

Seated Spinal Movements

To release tension in your neck, chest, and shoulders:

- ◇ Warm-Ups: Gently draw your chin toward your chest, pause, then lift your chin and gaze upward toward the sky. Repeat three times.
- ◇ More Warm-Ups: Roll your head from your left shoulder, down to your chest, and over to your right shoulder, forming a half-circle movement. Notice any tension or other sensations in your neck and trapezius muscles (where your neck and shoulders meet). Repeat twice more.
- ◇ Shoulder Opener: Clasp your fingers behind your back (or use a strap), bend your elbows, broaden your chest and collarbones and lift your heart center. Keeping your hands clasped or holding the strap, straighten your arms behind you without tipping your upper body forward. Press down and away through your knuckles while simultaneously lifting and expanding across your chest. Take two full breaths.
- ◇ Change the cross of your legs so that the other leg is in front or on top.

To lengthen your side body:

- ◇ Seated Side Bend: Place your right palm on the floor near your right hip and slide it 1 to 2 feet away from your body. Reach your left hand up toward the sky on an inhalation, then reach that same hand and arm over toward the right while arcing your torso into a right-side bend. Keep your sitting bones well-grounded. Take two full breaths and change sides.

To awaken your lower body:

- ◇ Warm-Ups: Extend your legs on the floor in front of you. Place your hands on the floor behind you to help keep your posture tall and your

spine long. Alternately point and flex your toes and feel the awakening in your ankles, toes, and feet. Next, slowly circle both ankles in both directions. Wiggle every toe and feel your feet awaken.

- ◇ Cross-Legs Forward Bend, or Sukhasana, variation: Recross your legs and place your hands on the floor in front of your shins. Take a deep breath in, and as you exhale, slide your hands further away from you, and move into a cross-legged seated forward bend. You should feel a stretch around your hip/buttock area. Stay for three full breaths, then switch the cross of your legs once more, and repeat.

To awaken your spine:

- ◇ Seated Twist: From your cross-legged seat, inhale and reach both arms up alongside your ears. Exhale and place your left hand on your right knee and your right hand on the floor behind you. Your spine will already be in a gentle twist, but you can increase the twist by actively turning your navel toward the right while keeping your lower body stable. Look over your right shoulder. Lengthen your spine on your inhalation, deepen your twist as you exhale. Hold for two to four breaths, then switch sides.
- ◇ Cat and Cow: Come to all-fours, aka table pose. As you inhale, bring your spine into an arched position where your tailbone and chin lift toward the sky while your belly moves closer to the floor. As you exhale, draw your navel in toward your spine, round your entire back, and tuck your chin and tailbone. Repeat five to ten times.

To stretch and strengthen your legs:

- ◇ Standing Forward Bend, or Uttanasana: Stand at the front of your mat. As you inhale, sweep your arms out to the sides and overhead. Exhale and fold your torso forward over your legs as your arms reach outward to the sides in a t-shape and then down toward the earth. Stay two to five breaths in the forward bend while touching your fingertips to the floor (bend your knees if needed) and relaxing your neck. As you hang here

and breathe, visualize the back of your legs (hamstrings) lengthening and the blood flow to your brain increasing. When you're ready, bend your knees and slowly roll yourself back up to standing.

- ◇ Goddess Pose, or Deviasana: Stand in the middle of your mat, facing the long side. Step your feet wide apart with your toes facing the corners of your mat. Bend both your knees as deeply as you can while sustaining an upright posture with your torso. Make sure that your kneecaps are pointing the same direction as your toes. Sweep both arms straight out to each side, parallel with your shoulders, then bend both elbows and spread your fingers wide. Hold for three to five deep breaths. This goddess is powerful and fierce, and she'll raise your heart rate, too!
- ◇ Downward Dog, or Adho Mukha Svanasana: Come to plank pose with your wrists directly under the heads of your shoulders and your fingers spread wide. Take a deep breath in, and on an exhalation lift your hips and buttocks toward the ceiling and stretch your heels down toward the floor behind you. Your body should form an inverted v-shape. Relax your head and neck and press your belly toward your thighs while your thighs press back toward the wall behind you. Stay for three to five breaths, or less if you're light-headed.
- ◇ Child's Pose, or Garbhasana: From Downward Dog, bend your knees and bring them to the mat. Press your buttocks toward your heels and rest your forehead on the floor or on your hands. Stay for three long, slow breaths.
- ◇ Check in with your body to see if continuing to move and explore will support your well-being, and if your body says, "Yes, please!," just follow along. Big or small, wild or precise, energetic or deeply chill—don't get hung up needing to "look like yoga" or fit the mold in any way. Savor the freedom that comes without expectation. Where exploration and self-compassion meet, you'll find the nectar of this practice.
- ◇ When you feel complete or simply need to move on with your day, rest on your back in Savasana, or Corpse pose, for at least five minutes.