

# YOGA NOTES

February 2018

"Worrying does not take away tomorrow's troubles, it takes away today's peace."



There will always be different ways ...  
.. find your own

I did not intend to...

.. but it is hard not to mention the drought. At the same time it is a good example of the point I want to make. In a previous life I were strong in my opinions and never missed an opportunity to try to convince others of the same. If there were injustices of any sort I happily and loudly forwarded the shame and blame. Rightfully so, I thought. At that time, pre Facebook, Twitter and social media, it wasn't as easy, but I still tried to make my point. Today I am fairly active on all my social platforms but I intentionally try to refrain from forwarding or manifesting things I am not in favor of. Shame and blame may have its place, but rather seldom, if ever, is it for me to judge.

All this is rather easy to avoid but I have mixed emotions when it comes to the kind of problem, or rather crisis, that we are facing now. This cannot be avoided by just not talking about it ... doh!  
You know what I mean.

We still have a chance to help build awareness of the urgency without creating stress or fear of a potential outcome by focusing on the solutions at hand!

At the same time trying not to forward or spread gossip, fake facts or disinformation that we don't know for sure is true. I attended a "Day Zero" event in Cape Town on Friday, where various departments shared information with the tourism and travel industry. Very interesting, and

most important, was the fact that we can't trust everything we hear and read ... so what and who shall we believe?

Well, I would suggest yourself! As for any other matter, consult your own judgement before spreading anything, creating stress, fear or pain. Don't just push the play button. Let it sink in, filter, judge and then decide what to do with it. I am coming back to that split second once again, when we listen to our intrinsic intelligence.

But yes, I know, we certainly need to create awareness on serious matters, such as this our current one. I will not take it to a political level, where it unfortunately also belongs, but instead seeing it as another opportunity to change our behavior in a more permanent way. Not only acting on it as a temporary emergency, but to start using Mother Nature's resources in a considerate way.

Coming from a farm I have not been aware of our own consumption, but since we moved to town and in light of the situation, we have used 32L per day per person. And I must confess, we have not sacrificed much. So instead of creating fear about the unknown, try to approach it as a elevated level of awareness. Yes, I know it is not that easy and there are other horrible reasons to get upset about this, but those I do not want to forward ... anymore!

Namaste

# Matsyasana

## Fishpose

Practicing Fish Pose after a day of hunching in front of a computer is the perfect antidote to held tension in the chest, shoulders, and upper back. The combination of stretching and opening quite literally is like a huge sigh of relief for the entire body, making me one happy fish!

### Benefits of Fish Pose

Fish Pose offers a deep stretch for the shoulders, chest, and the front body, including the throat, abdomen, and hip flexors. The pose also strengthens the musculature of the back and neck, encourages better breathing, and can help relieve spinal tension and improve posture.

Those with neck or lower back issues should practice this pose with caution, and modify accordingly.

### Fish Pose Step-By-Step

- 1 Begin lying on your back with your knees bent and the soles of your feet flat on the floor.
- 2 Lift your hips and tuck your hands slightly beneath your buttocks, palms facing down. Draw your forearms and elbows in toward your body.
- 3 On an inhale, bend your elbows and press firmly into your forearms and elbows to lift your head and upper body away from the floor and begin to find the natural curve of your spine.
- 4 Firm your shoulderblades into your back and lift your chest higher toward the ceiling, elongating your spine.
- 5 Gently release the crown of your head (or the back of your head, if the crown doesn't feel available to you) back down on the floor, placing a minimal amount of weight on your head.
- 6 Remain here with your knees bent, or, if it feels comfortable, extend both legs straight down on the mat in front of you with your muscles strongly engaged.
- 7 Stay in the pose anywhere from 5 to 10 deep breaths. To come out of the pose, engage your core, press firmly into your forearms, and gently lift your head away from the floor. Tuck your chin into your chest and place the back of your head down.

### Tips

- To ease any neck or back strain in this pose, try taking a bolster, a tightly rolled blanket, or a towel perpendicular to your spine, placed below your shoulderblades. A folded blanket or towel can also be placed beneath the head to help bring the floor closer.
- Think of the head only as a balance point for the pose, and keep the weight firmly grounded in your legs and the muscles of your back as your support system. Remember to keep your throat soft and your face relaxed.
- For an added challenge, take the traditional variation by crossing your legs into Padmasana (Lotus) and holding on to your big toes, or by coming into the pose with your legs extended then lifting your legs 45 degrees away from the floor, pressing actively through your heels.

