

Notes to Instructor:

1. Ask group to sit in circle
2. Begin by reading Y12SR meeting format
3. Introduce the Class #1 topic: Awareness, Acceptance, Action
4. Read the reflection below:

Except from Courage to Change page 256 : Awareness, Acceptance and Action

In dealing with a change, a problem or a discovery, awareness is often followed by a period of acceptance before we can take action. This process is sometimes referred to as the 3 A's - Awareness, Acceptance and Action.

Coping with a new awareness can be extremely awkward, and most of us are eager to spare ourselves pain or discomfort. Yet, until we accept the reality with which we have been faced, we probably won't be capable of taking effective action with confidence.

Still, we may hesitate to accept an unpleasant reality because we feel that by accepting, we condone something that is intolerable. But this is false, as stated in One Day at a Time in Al-Anon, "Acceptance does not mean submission to a degrading situation. It means accepting the fact of a situation, then deciding what we will do about it" Acceptance is empowering because it makes choice possible.

Reminder:

Unforeseen options can become available when I accept what is.

1. Announce: 'The Space is Open for Sharing.
2. Permit sharing. as outlined in the format, for 45 minutes.
3. 5 - 7 minute break (clear chairs, get yoga mats and props)
4. If participants have nothing to share after 10 minutes, re-read the selection and dismiss for break and then begin yoga practice

Yoga Practice #1: Awareness, Acceptance, Action

Note to Instructor:

Please remind students at the beginning of each class that they can modify their practices in class when needed.

Please read the following statement: All postures can be modified for the comfort of your body. If you have back, knee or shoulder issues, please follow the suggested adaptations. If I give you a specific modification in class, please follow my instruction to ensure that each posture is safe and comfortable for you during class.

1. Seated Centering and Breathing



Sit cross-legged on the floor with a bolster or blanket under the hips, or sit in a chair it that is more comfortable for you. Begin to become aware of your breath without changing anything, simply become aware of the qualities of your breath . (Pause). Please now begin to deepen your breathing, as you inhale expand the chest and belly, keeping the neck and jaw relaxed. As you exhale, hug the belly in toward the spine as the breath moves up and out of the body.

Keep breathing deeply and begin to notice what's present for you. Begin by noticing your body. You may notice places of tension or restriction as well as places of freedom and openness. See if it's possible to simply observe and accept whatever is there without any need to change it.

And now, begin to make the exhalation breath just slightly longer than the inhalation breath.

Please shift your awareness to your energy. And again without judgement or need to change anything notice the quality of your energy in this moment.

Keeping your breath long, slow and deep begin to notice your mind. The mind is our field of attention, please begin to observe the quality of your attention.

And now notice that you can notice your body, your energy and your mind. Be aware of being aware. (Pause) Come back now to normal, easy breathing.

Please bring your hands to your heart center in prayer hands and take a moment to connect in with some bigger energy. This could be Mother Nature, the collective energy of the group, the God of your understanding or whatever you relate to as a Higher Power. And now, bring to mind something that fills you with a sense of gratitude. Gratitude is a power force for positive change.

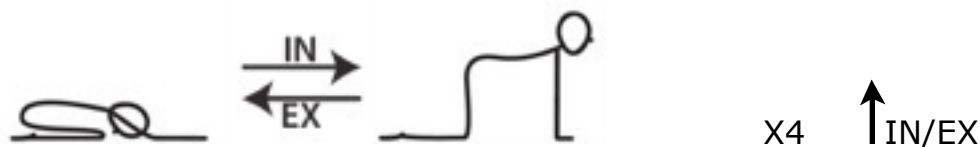
Now, bring someone in to your mind to whom you'd like to send good thoughts and healing energy. See them in your minds eye and with me take a deep breath in and as you exhale send them love and light.

Now silently repeat to yourself the theme and intention of todays practice - awareness, acceptance and action. (Pause)

Throughout our class whenever we pause and bring our hands together at our heart center, we will use this gesture to anchor and remind us that we are connected to something bigger - we are never alone. It reminds us of our gratitude and appreciation - its said that a grateful addict won't use. It reminds us of our intention. And, it reminds us of our little act of service - that we can't keep what we have without giving it away.

Take another deep breath in, let your chin come toward your chest and your head toward your heart. Another deep inhale and please lift your head and open your eyes.

1. Chakravakasana/ Wheel Pose



Come to hands and knees: hands shoulder width apart, knees and feet hip with apart. Return to the long slow, deep breathing with the exhale breath just slightly longer than the inhale. On inhale, create a slight backbend (smile shape with spine); tailbone lifted, shoulders back and down the back. On exhale hug the belly in and relax the arms, neck and head as you fold the hips back to the heels. This pose stretches the spine as it calms and heals the nervous system. Repeat this posture 4 times allowing your inhale and exhale to lengthen and deepen with each repetition.

3. Child's Pose - The Pause Button

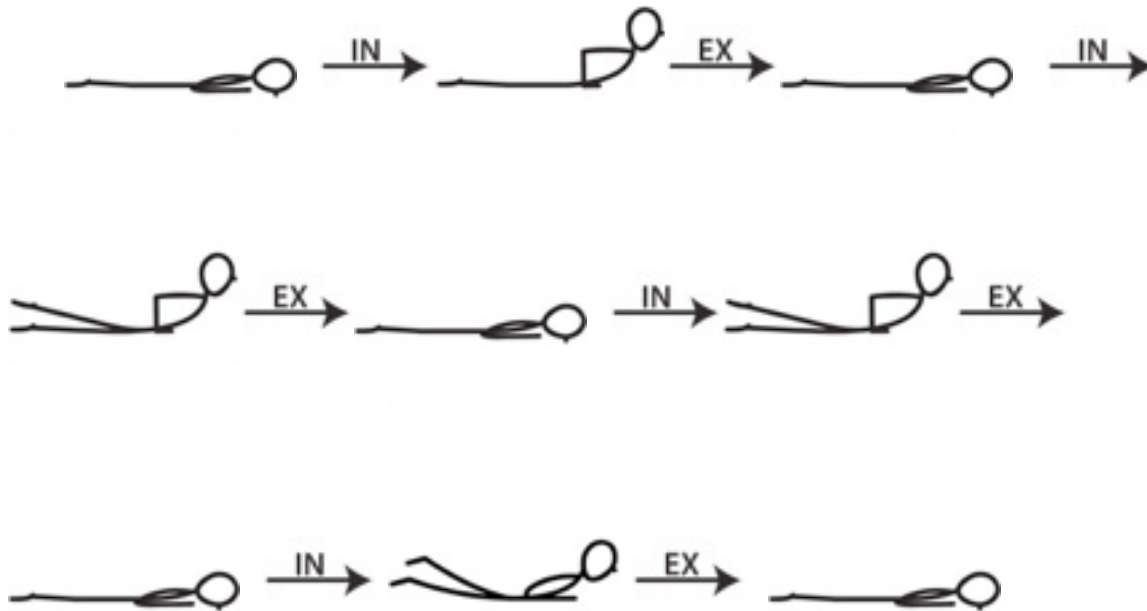


8 Breaths

From hands and knees: On exhale hug the belly in and relax the arms, neck and head as you fold the hips back to the heels. Return to the long slow, deep breathing with the exhale breath just slightly longer than the inhale.

In Y12SR we call this pose 'the pause button'. It reminds us that there are times in our day where the next right thing to do is pause. In our yoga poses/asana practice and in our daily life our breath will tell us when its time to pause. If the breath ever becomes jerky, jumpy, erratic, irregular, shallow no matter what we are doing, it's time to pause, reset the system. Remind students that they are always welcome to pause throughout the practice. When we do too much, we risk injury, when we do too little we risk atrophy. It is a sign of maturity to know when to pause.

4. Bhujangasana/Cobra Lifts

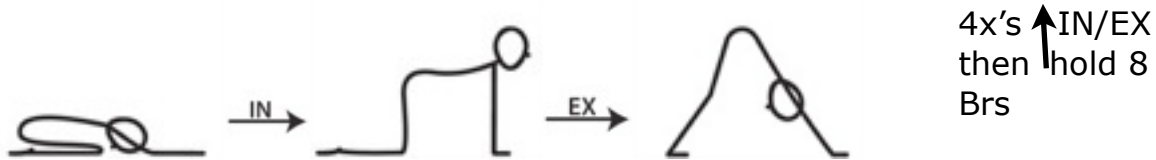


Begin by lying in a prone position, with hands a level of chest and head turned to side. On inhalation, lift chest without pressing the arms into the floor, turning the head to center. On exhale, lower the chest and head. Repeat 2 times.

- a. Then following the same breathing pattern, add alternate leg lifting (lift chest and head on inhale. One time each leg.
- b. On inhale lift head chest and both legs, spreading the legs apart when lifting. On exhale, stay lifted and close the legs Repeat 2X's lifting a bit higher on second repetition.

This posture reminds us of a very important principle in both yoga and 12-step recovery. Yoga postures use a principle called dual action. One part of the body strengthens as it's opposite part stretches. In cobra posture, one area focus is the front and back of the heart. As the front opens and stretches, the back strengthens. The heart opens, but the back is protected. The principle is one of self-care and protection: It is unsustainable to walk with an open heart unless we have our own back.

5. Chakravakasana (Wheel Pose) to Adho Mukhasvanasana (Downward Dog)

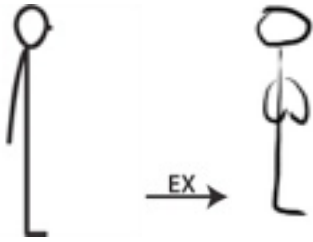


Beginning in Child's pose, INhale to all fours and then EXhale lifting knees and hips from mat into Downward Facing Dog. Press into the hands, which has now become the base/foundation of the posture. Gently soften the elbows to avoid locking the joint. Bring the shoulders away from the ears and then stabilize the shoulders by bringing the shoulder blades onto the back. The sitz bones which were on the floor now lift toward the ceiling. As the tail is high, sink the heels toward the floor.

Repeat this posture 4 times slowing the INhale and EXhale breath with each repetition. On 4th rep, hold Adho Mukhasavanana for 8 Breaths.

Remind students that they can come to Child's pose any time. Remembering to take care of self is part of the 'wisdom to know the difference'.

6. Tadasana/Mountain pose, Balancing



From downward facing dog, walk the feet to the hands or the hands back to the feet. Reaching arms out to side as if spreading wings, on INhale press the feet into the floor and slowly come up to standing .

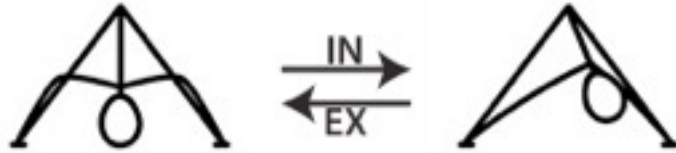
Breathing with long, slow deep INhale/Exhale, begin mountain pose with feet hip bone distance apart. Finding foundation by connecting with the earth beneath, press the feet firmly into the floor. As feet press, Find core by hugging muscle to bone in the lower body and pressing the tailbone toward the earth, feeling the lower belly engage.

From your feet, ignite your core and from the core rise to lift the chest and open the heart. With hips, spine and shoulders aligned let your heart open, knowing your back is protected.

On EXhale, bring hands to heart center in prayer hands. Continuing long, slow deep breaths, pause here to bring awareness to: the current state of the body, energy, and the mind. With this awareness, fully accept what's present, then take a moment and come back to connection, gratitude, intention and service. To this, we can always Keep Coming Back.

With awareness and acceptance, we invite the next action.

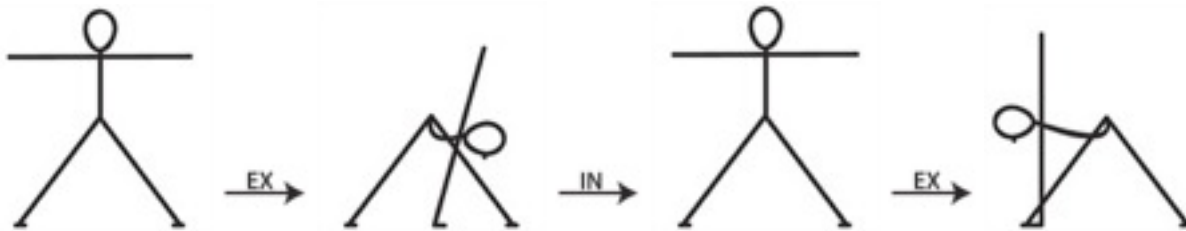
7. Prasarita Padottanasana/Wide Leg Forward Bend



Stand in wide leg mountain pose, feet parallel with short edges of mat about 4 - 4 1/2 feet apart. Bring hands to hips. Inhale and lift chest as tail bone roots toward floor. Exhale, contract lower abdominal muscles and slide the hands down back of legs, keeping knees soft while gently folding forward. Maintain even weight though both legs and across the pelvis.

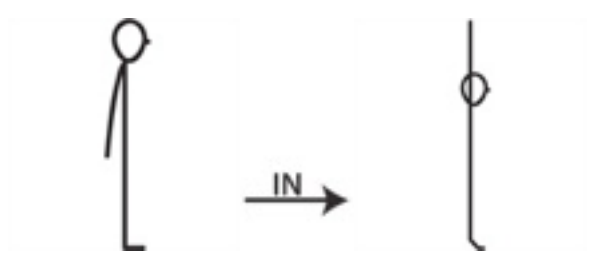
Keeping hands on ankles or lower calves, inhale and extend the spine keeping neck long and inline with spine. Exhale and fold. After 4 repetitions, hold the pose for 6 - 8 slow, deep breaths. Keep the head and neck relaxed.

8. Revolved Triangle



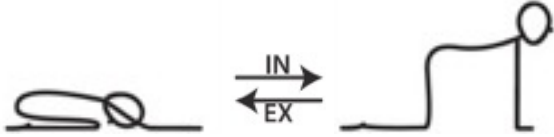
Stand in wide legged mountain pose, with legs approximately 4 1/2" apart. Inhale and open the arms out to the side bringing them parallel to the floor. On exhale, twist to the right, bringing the left hand to the floor (or a block or bolster) centered between the shoulders. Keep the knees softly bent. On INhale, lift up to center, arms parallel. On next EXhale progressively lengthen and slow the movement coming into the twist taking the hand a little further to the right. After 4 repetitions, stay in the twist for 6 breaths. After stay, come all the way up to wide legged mountain and repeat the progression, twisting to the left.

9. Mountain Pose



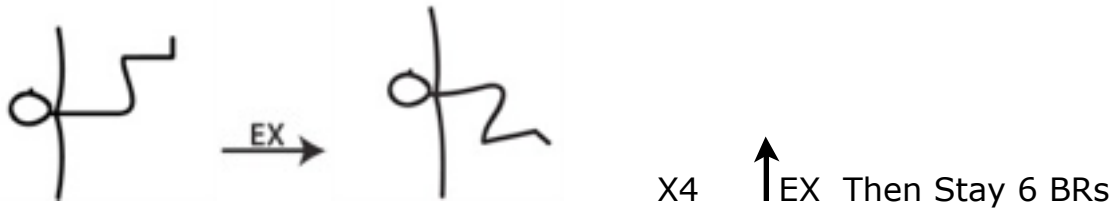
Begin standing in mountain pose with feet hip bone distance apart, hips, spine and shoulders aligned. Heart open, back protected. Inhale, raise arms and lift heels, pausing to balance. Exhale and slowly lower arms and heels. Repeat 4 times, extending the breath and movement by count with each breath (i.e 5 count inhale/exhale, 6 count, 7 count, 8 count) This posture is known to calm and steady the mind and increase focus.

10. Chakravakasana/Wheel Pose



Come to hands and knees: hands shoulder width apart, knees and feet hip with apart. Return to the long slow, deep breathing with the exhale breath just slightly longer than the inhale. On inhale, create a slight backbend (smile shape with spine); tailbone lifted, shoulders back and down the back. On exhale hug the belly in and relax the arms, neck and head as you fold the hips back to the heels. This pose stretches the spine as it calms and heals the nervous system. Repeat this posture 4 times allowing your inhale and exhale to lengthen and deepen with each repetition. This posture promotes quieting and calming the mind.

11. Lying Twist



Lying on the back, cross thigh over thigh with the left knee over the right. Stretch the arms out to a "T" at side. On EXhale begin twisting to the right. On INhale, return to center. Repeat the twisting action 4 times progressively lengthening the EXhale. Then stay in twist for 6 breaths. If comfortable, extend the top leg fully, holding the calf or ankle with hand to deepen the stretch.

12. Savasana



Lie on back with arms at side, turning the palms up and aligning the body so that you feel balanced. Allow the top of the shoulders to relax down toward the mat. Place a bolster or blanket under the knees or something under the neck as needed. Gently begin to turn the head side to side and then allow the head to find its natural center. Allow the muscles of the face to relax. The muscles of the face express our personality in the world. Even let your personality relax. Consciously invite the body to relax, letting go of muscle tension and mental thought, bring the whole being into a state of stillness. Allow your heart to open. As it opens allow any energy that no longer serves you to release to the earth below; fear, doubt, worry, resentment, judgement, anger, just let it go. Allow the shoulders, neck and arms and the jaw, teeth and tongue to relax. Let the organ of the brain soften as the brain is bathed in deep relaxation. Let the last bit of tension leave the body through the top of the head. Enjoy the feeling of letting go, notice the embodiment of surrender. Let go and just relax.

(stay here for 5 minutes)

Begin to deepen the breathing and wiggle the fingers and toes. Hug knees into chest and turn to the right side. Stay here for a couple of breaths before lifting up to seated position.

13. Breath Practice



Breath Ratio

<i>I</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	
6'	3'	6'	3'	3x's
8'	4'	8'	4'	3x's

Sit cross-legged on the floor with a bolster or blanket under the hips, or sit in a chair it that is more comfortable. Once again, become aware of your breath (Pause). Please now begin to deepen your breathing, as you inhale expand the chest and belly, keeping the neck and jaw relaxed. As you exhale, hug the belly in toward the spine as the breath moves up and out of the body.

Keep the INhale and EXhale at an equal 6 second length and then pause between them for half the length (3 seconds). Do this for 3 complete breaths and then deepen and lengthen the breath to create a 8 second IN/ EX and 4 second retention and suspension of the breath.

Then pause and with awareness and acceptance, notice the body, the energy and the mind.

14. Meditation - 5 Minutes



Chin Mudra



Meditation adapted from work of Jon Kabat-Zinn

Acceptance is seeing things as they actually are. Sooner or later we have to come to terms with things as they are and accept them. . .Acceptance does not mean that you have to like everything or that you have to take a passive attitude toward everything and abandon your principles and values. It does not mean that you are satisfied with things as they are or that you are resigned to tolerating things as they "have to be." It does not mean that you give up on your desire to change and grow, or that you should tolerate injustice. Acceptance is simply coming around to a WILLINGNESS to see things as they are. This attitude sets the stage for acting appropriately, no matter what is happening. You are much more likely to know what to do and have the inner conviction to act when you have a clear picture of what is actually happening than when your vision is clouded by your mind's self-serving JUDGMENTS and desires or its fears and prejudices.

In this meditation practice, we cultivate acceptance by taking each moment and each breath as it comes and being with it fully, as it is. We try not to impose our ideas about what we should be feeling or thinking or seeing on our experience but just remind ourselves to be receptive and open to whatever is there. If we keep our attention focused on the present, we can be sure of one thing, namely that whatever we are attending to in this moment will change, giving us the opportunity to practice accepting whatever it is that emerges in the next moment.

15. Closing



Please bring hands back to heart center in prayer hands. Take a moment and notice now: the current state of body, energy and mind. Then take a moment and consciously return to connection, gratitude, intention and service.