Gentle, Senior and Chair Yoga Teacher Training Manual
Educational Resource for Teachers and Yoga Practitioners

By Sherry Zak Morris, E-RYT
with Contributions from a Specialist Team of Gentle and Therapeutic Yoga Teachers

Yoga is for all ages and stages of Life!

GENTLE, SENIOR AND CHAIR YOGA

WITH

SHERRY ZAK MORRIS
STANDING AND BALANCING POSES

STANDING CAT/COW  

SUNBIRD FLOW WITH CRUNCHES

HIP MOVEMENTS

THERAPEUTIC MODIFICATION

For knee and/or hip replacement or injury, let the student find the range of motion that feels most comfortable. Always encourage the flexion of the foot of the raised leg to keep the knee safe.

Hip circles lubricate the hip joint as it brings synovial fluid in with the movement. Add an option to extend the lifted length straight out to the side, and maybe even a few dips down and up to work those hip and thigh muscles.
GENTLE SENIOR CHAIR YOGA

WITH

PAULA MONTALVO
LEG STRETCHES WITH A BELT

This sequence increases the mobility and flexibility of the hips and lower back. Using the belt makes the stretches more accessible as the hands can be moved up or down the belt. Keep the back straight to encourage spinal alignment and strength.

HIP ROCKING AND HIP STRETCHES

Students with hip replacements/injuries will have limitations in this movement series.

This sequence lubricates the hip joint and encourages gentle outward opening. Keep the top foot flexed to protect the inner knee and only a gentle rocking pressure with the hand should be use. Never push.

CAUTION: Seated forward bends should be limited for students with Osteoporosis because of the fragility of the spinal discs.
GENTLE YOGA FOR PLUS SIZES

WITH

NAOMI JUDITH
### Variation of Frog Pose and/or Child’s Pose
To assist those who cannot sit back on their heels, place a pillow behind the knees on top of the calves, then have them sit back. Encourage your students to find their comfort zone in this position.

### Variation of 4-Way Spinal Twist
It is important, especially in the first couple of lessons, to emphasize that students go through the motions, instead of going for the stretch, because as you go through the motions, the stretch happens.

### Variation of Seated Twist
The more motion the body does, the more stretch it is able to accomplish. It is amazing how the body wants to go further and further into each stretch and breath. This is especially helpful for a beginner so the student avoids hurting herself/himself.

### Variation of Simple Twist
If you see students comparing themselves with what other students are doing, remind them that yoga is just for them. Suggest they keep their eyes closed. This is time they've taken out for themselves, and it is not useful to compare their bodies or poses to anyone else's, and their own body will be different today than it was yesterday, or will be tomorrow.
GENTLE YOGA THERAPY

WITH

JUSTINE SHELTON
HALF REVERSE PIGEON: KAPOTASANA VARIATION
This pose stretches the piriformis muscle, loosening the hip and easing tension in the lower back.

Notes:

UPWARD SPREAD FOOT POSE: URDHVA PRASARITA PADASANA
Axial extension pose which brings circulation to the hips after a long stay in reverse pigeon.

Notes:
GENTLE YOGA THROUGH SOMATIC EXPLORATION

WITH

JAMES KNIGHT
BOUND ANGLE: Supta Baddha Konasana
This is another traditional yoga pose that adds Somatic Exploration principles. You will be surprised how much more range of motion in your hips and inner thighs you'll get by squeezing and releasing the muscles systematically. Try this several times.

Time: 5 Minutes

SWIMMING FROG
This is a Somatic Exploration sequence designed for the hips and lower extremities.

This is an excellent sequence for anyone who does a lot of yoga, walking, hiking, or biking.

Time: 10 minutes

One foot slides to follow the inside of the opposite leg towards the pelvis.

One foot slides out to make a quarter turn to the side, towards the hip. Keep the other leg straight.
MATTER OF HEART

WITH

HEATHER SAGER
**GATE POSE – PARIGHASANA**

Gate pose encourages transformation and overcoming obstacles. Practice of this intense side stretch takes one beyond our daily lives, stretching our boundaries so that we can move past limitations.

♥ Use a block to support the bottom arm to relieve excess stretching of shoulder and chest muscles. The propping of pillows allows assistance with alignment and support for comfort and “best practice”.

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**BRIDGE POSE – SETU BANDHA SARVANGASANA**

Opens the thoracic spine (the middle and upper back) and encourages back alignment. The amount of lift can vary depending on the comfort level of opening the chest.

Use a block to align knees and/or support the low back. A rolled blanket under the head encourages a healthy cervical spine. However, only use the neck roll with a low hip lift. The higher the hips go, the more of a chin lock occurs and the blanket will need to be removed.

♥ The heart area naturally opens up. Also improves digestion and circulation.
GENTLE YOGA ADAPTIVE POSES AND MODIFICATIONS WITH SHERRY ZAK MORRIS
LOWER BODY ALIGNMENT

In standing poses, especially those that are being held for a period of time, alignment is critical. If a pose is held for 4 to 5 breaths in a misaligned stance, the student will achieve minimal benefit and could possibly sustain an injury.

WARRIOR STANCE

To ensure the proper squared-hip alignment in Warrior I, start the pose with the hands on the hips to bring awareness to the aligned pelvis.

Over-extending the knee beyond the ankle is common. To bring that awareness to the student, have them adjust their stance until they can see their toes.

In an ideal world, this is the standard knee over ankle alignment for Warrior I. However this is a deep knee bend and if held for length, can cause too much stress on the joint.

A slight bend in the knee will provide the strength and stability in the pose that is needed. Make sure the knee cap is straight over the 2nd and 3rd toes.