

# Start Your Day Right!

## Yoga with Beth Lefebvre

Simple yoga practices can be done anywhere, whether at your desk, on your mat, or on the go. Here are some notes to guide you...

**Seated Mountain-** grounding and balancing to body and mind. Balances distribution of weight in the spine, neck and shoulders.

Practice: Sit comfortably and evenly on both sit bones with your spine upright, head level, feet flat on the floor and hands resting on your thighs. Look straight ahead, allowing your shoulders to release away from your ears as you lengthen the back of your neck.

Breathe deeply and evenly. Your breath should be comfortable and even. Work towards a 5 count inhale and 5 count exhale. Stay for 5-10 breath cycles.

**Nadi Shodhana-** alternate nostril breathing to balance nervous system / left right hemispheres of brain.

Practice: Sit comfortably with your spine upright, head level and both feet flat on the floor. Place your right middle finger upon the center of your forehead. Take several easy breaths allowing a pause between the inhale and exhale. After exhale, close your right nostril with your right thumb and inhale through your left nostril. Pause. Release your thumb and close the left nostril with your right ring finger and exhale through your right nostril. Pause.

Leave the ring finger in place and inhale through the right nostril. Pause. Release the ring finger and place your right thumb on the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril.

Pause. This completes one cycle. Repeat 4-6 cycles alternating breaths between the left and right nostrils. Release your hands, place them on your lap and breathe naturally. Notice how you feel.

**Box Breathing-** lowers blood pressure, slows heart rate, brings balance to mind and focus.

Practice: Inhale 4 counts, pause 4 counts, exhale 4 counts, pause 4 counts. Repeat for 3-6 breath cycles. Play with longer breaths by lengthening the sides of the box. For example, 5 count inhale, 5 count pause, 5 count exhale, 5 count pause. Continue until you feel clear and calm. This practice is used by the US Military to calm and focus the troops.

**Upward Salute-** standing or seated. Awakens, energizes and brings sense of joy.

Practice: sit or stand in mountain pose with arms at your sides. Relax your shoulders and arms through your finger tips, palms facing inwards. Breathe in then exhale. On your next inhale, straighten and firm the muscles of your arms through your fingertips and bring your arms straight up in front of you and skyward. Take several breaths with both arms extended upward, keeping the arms firm and head level. Slowly lower on exhale and relax. Repeat 4 times. \*note: not to be performed with hypertension.

**Forward fold-** calms / cools mind and releases back of body.

Practice: Sit or stand in mountain pose. Take a breath in and fold forward on exhale, pulling the navel in. If standing keep the knees soft to release the back. Rest your hands

wherever they land- your desk, your lap, your thighs, your feet or the floor. Allow the crown of your head to release toward the earth, relax your neck. Stay in forward fold for several breaths or as long as comfortable. Be sure not to reach or pull into this pose, rather allow your body to maintain a sense of ease and letting go.

**Cat cow-** seated or standing with hands on desk. Massages spine and balances nervous system. This practice is about riding the breath up and down the spine and massages your digestive organs.

Practice: sit or stand with your hands shoulder width on your desk, fingers reaching forward. Exhale, tuck your chin slightly and gently pull your navel gently inwards toward your spine, rounding your spine. Inhale and allow your chin to lift as you move your gaze upward, extending your spine into a gentle backbend. Repeat 6-8 breath cycles.

**Seated side stretch-** frees ribs and spine, opens lungs and balances nervous system.

Practice: Sit upright with both feet on the ground, hands together at your heart. Inhale. As you exhale, reach your right arm to the sky and your left arm toward the earth. Inhale hands back to your heart. Exhale left arm to the sky, right arm to the earth. Repeat 3 times each side. Pause with hands together at your heart. Take several breaths. Notice how you feel.

**Seated twist-** activates cleansing of digestive organs and lymph.

Practice: Sit upright with both feet on the ground, hands on knees. Sit tall, inhale. As you exhale, twist to the right and reach your right arm behind the back of your chair. Pull with your right arm as you twist to the right, keeping your spine upright. Stay for several breaths. Inhale to unwind back to facing forward. Repeat on left side.

**Seated Meditation-** to seal the practice and set intention for your day.

Practice: Sit upright with both feet on the ground, hands together at your heart. Anchor your mind on your breath. Breath over mind, breath over body. Bring your awareness to the space of your heart. Breath in and out through the space of your heart. Sit for 6 breaths breathing through the space of your heart. Set your intention. Affirm that you are grateful, energized, balanced and prepared for your day. Chant OM Shanti Shanti Shanti

Namasté

[www.bethlefebvre yoga.com](http://www.bethlefebvre yoga.com)

**Standing poses for grounding and awakening:**

**Mountain Pose + tapping**

**Sun Salutations**

**Warrior 1**

**Warrior 2 + archer variations**

**Chair pose**