

## Awakening Your Everyday Wisdom: Video #4 - Energy

### Handout - Chair Yoga Exercises to Stimulate Physical Energy and Calm Mental Energy

#### Six Movements of the Spine

##### 1. Easy Sitting Pose

- Place feet hip-distance apart and flat on floor
- Shift hips to evenly distribute weight on sit bones
- Relax hips and belly
- Bring shoulders down and back
- Head is in line with the spine, gently tucking the chin back toward the cervical spine
- Chin stays level with the floor
- Hands rest comfortably on legs
- Optional – Gyan Mudra (tips of thumbs touching the tips of the index fingers; other three fingers stay straight)

##### 2. Neck Rolls

- Start in Easy Pose
- Lower chin to chest
- Bring left ear to left shoulder
- Back to chin-to-chest
- Bring right ear to right shoulder
- Back to chin-to-chest
- Repeat for four or five rounds, inhaling in one direction and exhaling in the other
- Pausing or stopping wherever it feels good to do so
- Bring chin to chest, then head to neutral

### **3. Shoulder Stretches**

- Start in Easy Pose
- Move shoulders back-forward, up-down, and around in circles in both directions
- Adding breath: inhaling, bring shoulders up to ears
- Exhaling bring shoulders down as far as comfortable
- Repeat
- Keep the head in line with the spine, inhaling bring shoulders back as far as comfortable
- Keep the head in line with the spine, exhaling bring the shoulders forward as far as you like
- Repeat
- Lift both arms overhead, dropping the shoulders about  $\frac{3}{4}$  the way up
- Place both hands on the top of the head and draw the elbows back as far as comfortable
- Hold for two rounds of breath
- Move hands to back of the head and bring the elbows back as far as comfortable
- Hold for two rounds of breath
- Extend arms up
- While rotating the wrists, bring hands back to the legs

### **4. Side Bend**

- Start in Easy Pose, keep the head in line with the spine
- Inhale raise the left arm overhead
- Drop the shoulder about  $\frac{3}{4}$  the way up; place the upper arm by the left ear
- Exhaling, bend at the waist going as far to the right as comfortable

- Inhaling, bring the arm back up
- Exhaling, lower the arm to the left side
- Switch sides

## **5. Side Twist**

- Start in Easy Pose, place the left hand on the right knee
- With the right hand, hold on to the chair toward the back of the seat
- Inhale, lifting the spine
- Exhaling, gently twist the upper body to the right
- Relax the muscles
- Keeping the chin level with the floor, bring the gaze over the left shoulder
- Relax the muscles
- Bring gaze back to the right
- Release the twist
- Switch sides

## **6. Forward Fold**

- Start in Easy Pose, take a round of breath and relax the shoulders
- Gently drop both arms to the sides
- Inhale and stretch the spine as tall as comfortable
- Exhaling, hinging at the hips, lean forward as far as comfortable, dropping hands to the floor
- Hold for three rounds of breath
- Inhaling, again hinging at the hips, lift the upper body back to Easy Pose
- Exhaling, relax

## **7. Gentle Back Bend**

- Sitting toward the front edge of the seat, take a round of breath, relaxing the shoulders
- Hold the sides of the seat of the chair with both hands
- Inhale and stretch the spine as tall as comfortable, exhale
- Inhaling, lift the chest to the ceiling, keeping the head in line with the spine, exhale
- Take three rounds of breath, keeping the whole spine elongated
- Lowering the chin to chest first, inhaling bring the upper body back to sitting position
- Exhaling, relax

## **8. Robin's Breath**

- Start in Easy Pose, bring hands to heart center
- Inhale deeply
- Exhaling, extend arms outward at shoulder height, hands touching
- Inhaling spread arms at shoulder height as far behind the body as comfortable, lifting chest to ceiling, keeping head in line with the spine
- Exhaling, round the back and shoulders forward, lower the chin to chest while bringing the hands back to the front at shoulder height
- Inhaling bring hands back to heart center
- Repeat for three rounds