

YOGA TO ENERGISE



What is yoga?

Yoga is an integrated system which uses the body, breath and mind to encourage a sense of wellbeing. It originated in India and has been practised for 2000 years. Mindful Yoga is holistic in that it incorporates ethics, movement, breathing and meditation.

How does yoga help create energy?

When we have low energy we often struggle to exercise. By using a slow mindful approach to yoga practice, we can cultivate greater awareness of our bodies, which helps assist our ability to regulate our mood and improves our resilience to stress.

As your stress levels go down, your energy levels usually increase. There is a range of research which demonstrates the value of yoga for stress management.

Slow mindful yoga can improve our heart rate variability which is a measure of how well we respond to stress. Studies have also shown an increase in the neuro transmitter GABA (gamma aminobutyric acid) which also helps promote a calm state in the body.

Mindful yoga which encourages slow, smooth and even breathing can also increase our vagal tone, which can assist us to feel safe in our bodies to help better understand what we need and can get in touch with our own values and priorities, increasing our motivation to engage with the world.

<https://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-9431/why-yoga-heart-rate-are-so-important-a-cardiologist-explains.html>

<http://theconversation.com/how-yoga-makes-us-happy-according-to-science-77840>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/news/7956508/Yoga-protects-the-brain-from-depression.html>

<https://bebrainfit.com/yoga-depression-anxiety/>

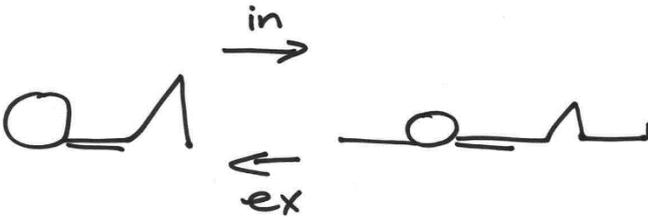
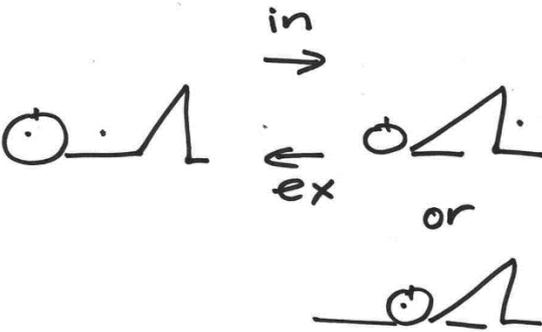
Tips for using yoga to energise

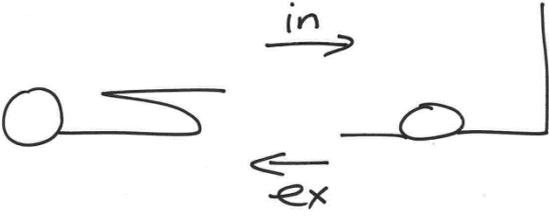
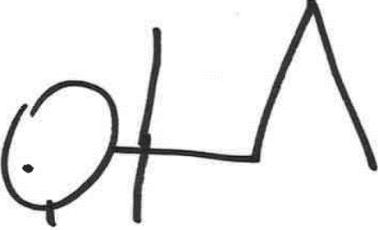
- Meet yourself where you are at, compassionately and kindly.
- Start small.
- It can be useful to start with lying down poses and gradually work towards standing.
- Being creative with how you move your limbs can be helpful (e.g. cross lateral and counter lateral movements).
- Find ways to breathe more freely.
- Do something every day, no matter how small.

To learn more

Yoga is best learned from a qualified teacher. Free Mindful Yoga classes are available for Flinders University Students on Tuesdays during term times between 12noon- 1pm at OASIS. No bookings are required, mats and other equipment provided.

Yoga to Energise – Sample Practice Sequence

	<p>1. Constructive rest position</p> <p>Lie on the floor with your knees bent and the soles of your feet on the floor. Place your hands where they are most comfortable. Allow yourself some time to notice your mood, energy and breath. Generate a baseline for your practice.</p>
	<p>2. Arm and leg reaches</p> <p>From this position, allow the arms to rise up on an inhale breath and return on an exhale breath. Repeat. Allow the spine to arch gently as you inhale and roll down as you exhale.</p> <p>After a few rounds, try one arm and the opposite leg. Repeat and swap limbs. Always use the inhale to reach the limbs and the exhale to return. Try different combinations, both arms, both legs, the left side, the right side etc.</p>
	<p>3. Bridge Pose</p> <p>From the Constructive Rest position, snuggle the feet closer to your buttocks with your arms next to your body. As you press into your feet, allow yourself to start to come up with an inhale breath. It doesn't matter how far. Roll back down with an exhale. Continue. You may like to explore using the arms, perhaps one arm at a time, or both arms together.</p>

	<p>4. Apanasana Hug your knees over your chest. Allow your legs to move with the breath. Allow the breath to move in to the belly and gently push your legs away as you inhale and squeeze your legs gently inwards on an exhale. Find a comfortable smooth rhythm. If you like, you can expand your arm and leg movements.</p>
	<p>5. Lying twist From Constructive Rest, anchor your arms at your side and feel your shoulder blades connect to the floor. Inhale, and then let an exhale breath move your legs to one side. Your head could stay in the middle or fall to the opposite side. Inhale to centre and repeat to the other side. Continue for a few rounds. If comfortable, you are welcome to stay for a few breaths on each side, breathing into the side of the body.</p>
	<p>6. Constructive rest End the sequence by returning to Constructive Rest and noticing the body, energy, mood, thoughts etc. What is the same and what is different to the start of the practice? You can stop here or go on to another sequence.</p>

Note: Counsellor Maureen runs a Mindful Yoga Class at OASIS, during term time, from 12.00pm to 1.00pm

