



**Positive
health
Positive
wellbeing
Positively Dru**



BOOK 7

DRU YOGA TEACHER TRAINING

**BODY
& MIND**

**HEALTH
& NUTRITION**

PRODUCTS

**NOT FOR PROFIT
PROJECTS**



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‘Ironically, activity is not always the best achievement. Sometimes we have to spend time just ‘being’. So next time you are presented with a challenge, don’t just do something ... sit there!’ *Dru Yoga Stillness in Motion, p105*



Activation movements:

- > systematically activate and oxygenate the whole body
- > warm and loosen the whole body
- > improve the circulation in each part of the body
- > reduce tension and tiredness
- > give a quick energy boost

**Do them often!
Do them anywhere!**

MUSCLES TO FOCUS ON IN BOOK 7

> **flexor and extensor muscles of the forearm**

The muscles of our forearms are mainly slender muscles with long, narrow tendons. The majority of these muscles cause movement of our hands as well as our wrists, so a large number of tendons have to be packed together in a small space around our wrists to allow for movement.

Our flexor and extensor muscle groups co-contract when we do **asanas** that involve weight being taken through our hands. In addition, some postures (such as the dog and the charity posture) require our wrists and fingers to be fully extended. You can use the following stretch to warm up your flexor muscles prior to these postures.

Flexor muscle stretch of the forearm

STAGE 1

Interlock your fingers and push your palms away from you, straightening your elbows. Feel the stretch in the wrist flexor muscle group at the front of your wrist.

STAGE 2

Start kneeling up on all fours as if for the cat posture, with your wrists directly under your shoulders and the knees under your hips. Turn your hands outwards and around so that your fingers are pointing towards your body, with your thumbs on the outside. Keep your palms flat and your elbows straight. If you want to increase the stretch further, move your hips back, keeping your palms down.





'One of the greatest gifts that Dru Yoga gives us is to step into our power and realise our dreams.'

Louise Rowan

EBR 3 AWAKENING THE HEART

Each of the Energy Block Release sequences has a powerful effect upon our physical and subtle bodies. As we move on to EBR 3 we begin to explore the subtle activation of the heart centre. EBR 3 is known as the 'heart awakener' because of the way that it opens the energy pathways or nadis around our heart centre.

We recommend you practise EBR 3 to create space in your life whenever you feel stuck or trapped by your surroundings, job or relationships.

KEYWORDS

pranamasana

windmill scoop

mirror twist

anahata breath

ocean waves

heaven and earth stretch

archer left and right

forward bend

runner into thunderbolt left and right

sunlight visualisation



'When you share a little of yourself with kindness, the world becomes a brighter place.'

Annie Jones



EBR 3 AWAKENING THE HEART

PRANAMASANA

Stand in **tadasana**. As you breathe in, raise your hands to the prayer position, called **pranaam** or **namaste**. This is a posture of reverence.

AFFIRM

**'With the sky above me and the earth below
I appreciate the sacredness of this moment.'**

Breathe out and engage your core stability muscles.

WINDMILL SCOOP

On an inhalation, slowly extend your arms straight up and turn your palms to face upwards. Keep your elbows to the front so that the arms are relaxed. Allow your knees to flex slightly. As you breathe out, turn your body to the right and lower your right arm backwards and downwards as if scooping up some water from beside your knee. As you breathe in, continue the arm movement, lifting high up in front of the body to meet the left hand above your head.

**Visualise the sun above you sending down
wonderful rays of healing energy through your body
as you flow with this movement.**

Repeat this movement on the left.

As your arm comes down by your knee each time, bend your knees a little more and as your arm raises up, straighten slightly while still maintaining flexion at your knees. Your arms should be relaxed and with soft elbows. Repeat several times, finishing with both arms overhead.



MIRROR TWIST

Lower your arms in front to shoulder height, palms facing away and fingers pointing upwards. Keep your knees soft. Turn your right palm so that it is facing towards you. Keeping your left hand where it is, move your right hand around to the right, twisting your spine and slightly straightening your legs. Focus on your right hand as if looking into a mirror reflection of yourself.

**Pause, bringing your awareness to the mild stretch
at the area of the sternum.**

Slowly return to face the front again, softening the knees. Your elbows should be slightly bent so that your arms are curved. Repeat on the other side.

Now incorporate the breath:

- > breathe out as you twist
- > breathe in when you return to the front

ANAHATA BREATH

Stretch your arms out in front of you, elbows slightly bent. Imagine energy flowing from the earth up to your heart. Keep your elbows high without locking your shoulder joints, palms facing you and fingers not quite touching.

**As you stand in this position, sense the warmth
and power flowing around your arms, to and from
your heart.**

Bring both hands in towards the chest as you breathe in, palms facing you. Push them away from you as you breathe out, palms turned outwards. Let your knees flex more as you sink during the exhalation, and rise slightly on each inhalation.

**Feel waves of calmness beginning to flood through
you as this part of the sequence soothes your
nervous system and calms your mind.**

Conclude by bringing your hands in towards your heart centre.



EBR 3 AWAKENING THE HEART *continued*

OCEAN WAVES

Turn your palms to face each other. Bring them close together without touching.

Focus on the space between your palms. Once again take a few moments to become aware of the energy flow between them.

You may experience a sense of warmth or tingling between your hands or perhaps, like a magnetic force, they are attracting or repelling each other.

As you breathe in, slowly move your hands a little further apart and then, breathing out, towards each other again. Continue to gradually increase the distance between your palms, opening and closing the gap between them in a rhythmical way as you breathe in and out.

At the same time, visualise that your arms are moving like the ebbing and flowing of waves.

As those waves grow bigger feel as if your self confidence and your heart power are also expanding.

Gradually decrease the gap between your palms until once more your palms are close to each other in front of your heart centre.

HEAVEN AND EARTH STRETCH

Breathe in and raise your right arm up while at the same time lowering your left hand. At the end of the inhalation your right palm should face up to the heavens and your left palm face down to the earth.

Breathe out and allow both hands to meet once more in front of the heart centre, keeping space between your palms. As you breathe in, your left palm rises up towards the heavens while your right palm lowers towards the earth. Continue in this way, alternating between right and left arms.

Feel your heart area opening even more with each inhalation.

Reaffirm your connection with the earth below and the expansive sky above.

THE ARCHER

This next part of the sequence allows you to tune into your dreams and goals and helps you to give them wings, setting them free.

In preparation for the archer adopt a stance with your feet two shoulder-widths apart. Turn your right foot out to the right; your left heel pushes back slightly. Refresh your core stability muscles. You are now ready to draw the bow as follows:

Extend your right hand out to the right with your palm pushing away and fingers pointing up. Bring your left hand in front of your chest, forming the archer *mudra* with the thumb up, forefinger and middle fingers extended and the ring and little fingers tucked into the palm of your hand.

Your weight should be equally distributed between your feet, with awareness in your solar plexus. Breathe in and draw your left hand across your chest towards your left shoulder, keeping your elbow in a horizontal position. Enjoy the stretch between your arms as you create the necessary tension to release the arrow. As you draw the bowstring towards your ear, transfer your weight onto your left foot, bending at the knee. Extend your spine and lift the sternum.

At this point pause for a moment, visualising a goal you would like to achieve. Gather your energy, giving it your strength and commitment. When ready, release the arrow on an out-breath, secure in the knowledge that it will head straight and true towards your chosen target.

As you release your arrow, allow your weight to transfer from your left leg until it is equally balanced between both feet once more. Repeat on the other side.

FORWARD BEND

Release your arms and lower yourself down into a relaxed forward bend, with soft knees and feet still two shoulder-widths apart. Allow your arms, shoulders and neck to relax in this inverted position.



EBR 3 AWAKENING THE HEART *continued*

RUNNER INTO THUNDERBOLT

Turn your right foot out to 90 degrees and turn your body to follow. Come into the extended runner posture by placing your left knee on the floor. You may wish to increase the degree of stretch by extending your left knee backwards before placing it down. Position your hands on either side of your right foot. As you breathe in, sweep your left arm back by your hip and then raise it up in an arc until it is slightly behind your head. Pause, looking up.

In one dynamic movement turn your hips forward as you breathe out. At the same time, move your arm briskly forwards so it comes to rest in a position slightly forward of your head. Look forward. Take your awareness to the diagonal alignment from the tips of your fingers down your arm, through your hip and knee to your foot. Lower your arm. Repeat twice more. Bring your weight onto your back leg tucking your toes under and swivel your feet forward. Relax in the wide stance forward bend for a few breaths.

Repeat the runner and thunderbolt on the other side.

Tuck the toes of your right foot under and straighten your legs. Return to the central forward bend position and draw your feet together. Bend your knees and slowly begin to uncurl your spine, working from the base upwards, coming back into **tadasana**.

SUNLIGHT VISUALISATION

Rise up, unfolding your spine vertebra by vertebra. Once upright, raise your hands above your head, palms uppermost.

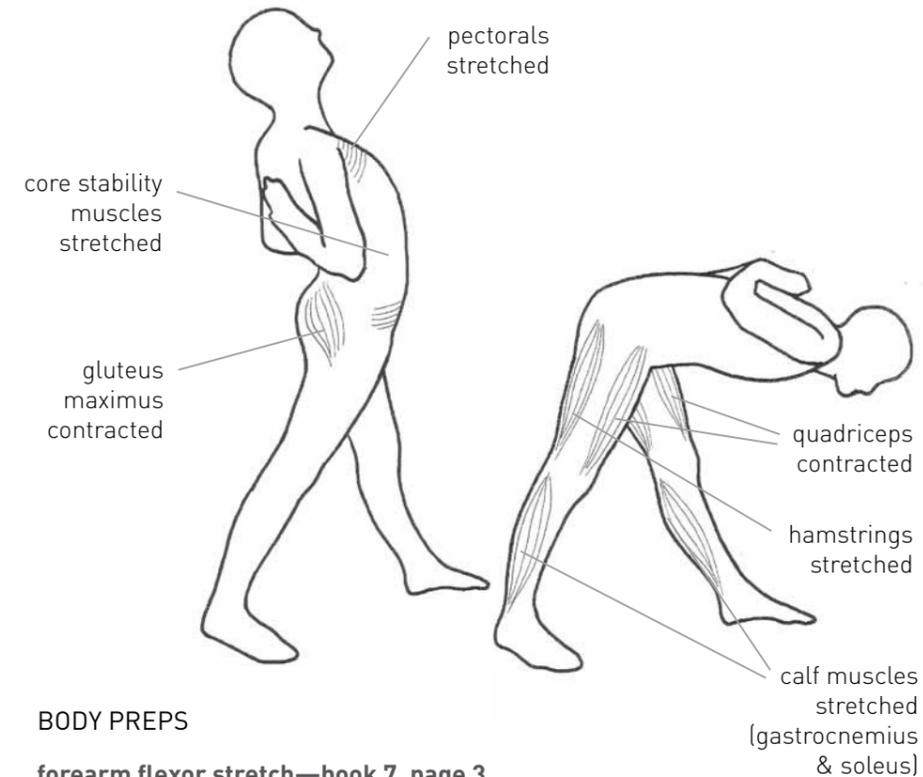
Visualise a warm shower of light within the palms of your hands.

Draw this light towards the crown of your head and let it enter your being as your hands flow down by your face to your heart centre. At your heart centre pause, bringing your hands into **namaste**.

Take a few moments to savour the warm feeling in your heart centre, like a soothing balm.

Now is the perfect time to dedicate that peaceful feeling to someone you know.

PARSVOTTANASANA CHARITY POSTURE



BODY PREPS

- forearm flexor stretch—book 7, page 3
- pectoralis stretch—book 5, page 4
- hamstring stretch—book 2, page 5
- quadriceps stretch—book 6, page 7

CHARITY POSTURE

Stand in **tadasana** for a few moments and breathe easily. With every inhalation elongate your spine.

On an exhalation, engage your core muscles. Position your feet 2 to 3 feet apart, turning your right foot 90 degrees to your right and your left foot 60 degrees to your right. Now bring your hands behind you so that your palms meet, fingers facing downwards. Draw your shoulders and elbows back and rotate at the wrists until your fingers are pointing upwards along your spine. Ideally your hands should reach as high up your back as the space between your shoulder blades. Press your palms firmly together.

If this hand and arm position is uncomfortable, allow your right hand to hold your left elbow and your left hand to hold your right elbow. Keep the area of your throat relaxed.



CONTRA-INDICATIONS

As with all of the triangle family postures, women should not perform these during the first 3 days of menstruation, nor during pregnancy. If flexion of the spine is likely to add stress to a painful back, please avoid. Caution is required if ankles, knees or hips are weak or stiff.



PARSVOTTANASANA CHARITY POSTURE continued



Breathe in and as you breathe out, turn your hips towards the right. Breathe in and arch back slightly. As you breathe out, bend forwards from your hips keeping your back straight and right knee bent.

To come up, on an in-breath push through the right heel, and gradually straighten your right knee whilst transferring your weight towards your back leg. At the same time, tense the pelvic floor, engage your lower abdominal muscles and begin to uncurl from the base of your spine, vertebra by vertebra, raising your body to the upright position. Arch back.

Repeat this wavelike sequence several times. On the final movement, unroll your spine by bending your knee as before. Once you are standing upright, turn your feet to face forward. When ready repeat on the left side.

Conclude by relaxing into a wide stance forward bend. Release any tension in the spine, arms, shoulders and neck.

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

The spine, hips, legs, shoulders and wrists become more supple. The internal abdominal organs are massaged and the increased blood flow to the head refreshes and clears the mind.

MENTAL/EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

Emotional balance becomes easier to maintain and positive self esteem is cultivated.

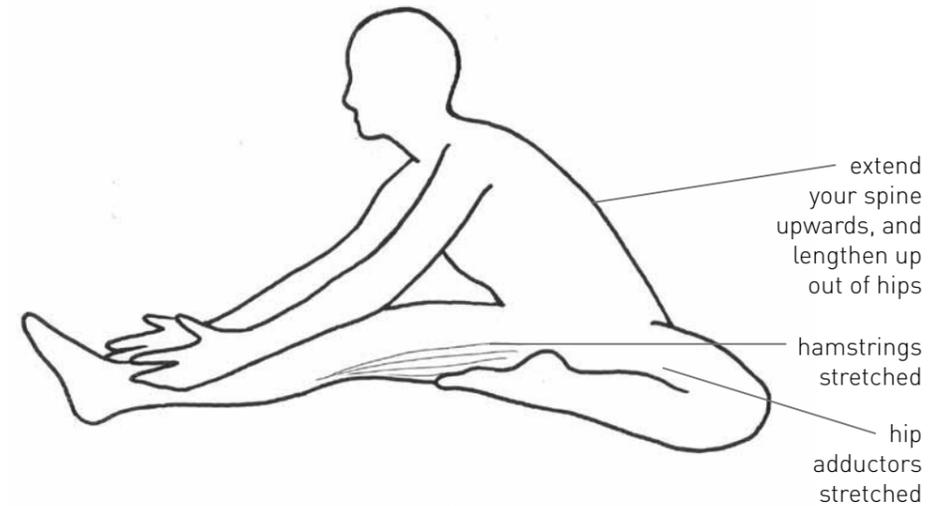
ENERGETIC BENEFITS

This sequence activates the anahata chakra and fosters the qualities of generosity, compassion and selflessness.

AWARENESS POINTS

- > When you bend backwards, focus particularly on the mid thoracic area of your spine.
- > When you bend forwards move from your hips.

JANU SIRSASANA HEAD TO KNEE POSTURE



BODY PREPS

general spinal activation as in tri-spinal release—
book 4 , pages 3–6

hamstring stretch—book 2, page 5

hip adductor stretch—book 3, page 7

JANU SIRSASANA

Sit upright with both legs stretched out in front of you.

Focus on extending your spine upward. With each inhalation feel the extension of your spine and with each exhalation feel the spine relax.

Engage your core stability muscles on an out-breath. As you breathe in, raise your arms sideways up to shoulder height, leaning back slightly so that you can bend your hip and knee, placing your right foot against your inner left thigh. As you breathe out, turn the palms to face upwards. On the next in-breath raise your arms upwards, extending your spine.

Keep your arms soft so that there is no tension in the arms or shoulders.

As you breathe out, lower your hands down in front of you towards your abdomen with your palms facing in.

Bring your awareness to your lower abdomen. You have completed a 'turning of the wheel of energy' from the base of your spine, over the crown of your head and back down the front to the base again.



CONTRA-INDICATIONS

Spinal, knee or hip problems—work gently in this posture.

Very short hamstring muscles—take extra care to keep the spine extended and not reach forward further than is comfortable.

Acute lumbar disc problems, acute sciatica and hip replacements—do not attempt this posture.

During pregnancy, work gently.

