

Yoga During Winter

During the coldest season of the year, it is essential to keep the body warm and turn the attention inward. Think of your practice during this time as an investment of your 'energy paycheck' -winter is a time for storing and conserving energy. Focus on:

WARMTH - STILLNESS - GROUNDING - CALMNESS

Include more supportive and restorative yoga poses into your practice.

Viparita Karani is a wonderful pose that can be practiced using a wall and a bolster, or a few thick blankets, for support

- Place a large bolster, or three-four firm blankets folded, about 2-3 inches off the wall.
- Lie on your left hip at the outer left side of the bolster. Get your buttocks as close to the wall as possible.
- Roll on to your back and straighten the legs up the wall.

If this position is not feeling comfortable, your buttocks are probably too far from the wall. In this case roll back down, adjust the bolster and bring yourself back into the posture.

If your neck is not comfortable, place a soft blanket underneath your shoulders to support the curve in your neck, and let your head rest on the floor.

- Allow your legs to rest on the wall without losing their shape.
- Relax your arms on the floor.
- Close your eyes and if you have an eye pillow place it over your eyes.
- Cover yourself with a blanket and remain in the pose up to 30 minutes. Start by practicing for 3-5 minutes and gradually build up to longer sessions.
- Rest and rejuvenate allowing your entire being bathe in a flow of energy through your body.

Bring your attention to the downward flow of energy from the soles of your feet through your legs, into the abdomen and chest, and toward your head. Become aware of the grounding effect of the pose and a radiant expansion of energy.

Allow yourself to surrender to the shape of the pose and witness your breath as it deepens and expands.

- Before getting out of the pose, greet the world from your renewed perspective of peace and calm and feel an inner sense of gratitude.

Benefits: calms the nervous system, increase circulation, removes physical and mental fatigue, and integrates body, mind and soul.

