

Yoga Week 20: Yoga for Panic Attacks

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What are symptoms of panic attacks?

- Inability to breathe.
- Feeling overheated.
- Feeling cold.
- Stomach pains.
- Urges to hurt yourself.
- Inability to answer when being talked to.
- Pacing, picking, biting nails, pulling hair.
- Increased tearfulness.
- Shutting down & becoming isolative.
- Feeling like your heart is pounding outside of your chest .
- Anxious for no identifiable reason.
- Dissociating (feeling out of touch from reality).

Who suffers from Panic Attacks?

- Anyone & Everyone...
- Recognizing your body and staying in tune can help you stay calm during times of stress and anxiety.

Sometimes when we experience panic attacks or general anxiety, we may find it hard to breathe.

Therefore, breath work can be a powerful and effective tool to help ease the physical manifestations of anxiety.

Moving around to get the body activated may be more beneficial than doing a slow and grounding practice.

Movement & Poses to Relieve Anxiety:

CROCODILE BREATHING:

- Lie down on your belly with either a cheek on the ground or chin rested comfortably, allowing your neck to rest.
- Bring arms down along your side, let heels naturally fall apart.
- Start to take slow, deep inhales through your nose (4-5 seconds) and exhales through your mouth (4-5 seconds).
- Lying down in "crocodile breathing" brings awareness to our bellies rising and falling.
- Bring the awareness to the breath and inhale and exhale, feeling the abdomen rise and fall.
- This again brings awareness to the breath and helps you to learn to breathe into the diaphragm rather than breathing in the chest, as anxious people are prone to do.

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CHILD'S POSE TO PUPPY POSE

- Start by sitting back and putting your butt to your heels, you will feel this in your hips.
- Sitting on your heels, let your arms come forward, walking fingers forward along the ground until your arms are over your head.
- Let your forehead rest on the ground.
- To get to puppy pose, arms remain out long over your head and pick your thighs/butt off from your heels and allow your butt to be the highest point in the air, while your back lengthens and arms are still out over your head.
- This pose allows for a creative Mind.
- This heart-opening pose stretches and lengthens the spine to relieve tension.

SHOULDER STAND/CANDLE POSE (LEGS UP THE WALL)

- Lying down on your back, align your spine, start to pick legs up so they come overhead, press back up.
- Draw your shoulder blades together, put hands on your back at the base of your hips, legs come over head and back picks up.
- Remember, if you are unable to bring hands behind your back, you can leave them along the sides of your body, or leave back on the ground and simply bring legs up .
- Like downward-facing dog pose, shoulder stand increases blood flow to your brain, thus increasing your mental clarity and balancing your emotions .
- Bonus: Shoulder stand helps with balancing a healthy metabolism!

ROCKING CHAIR

- Coming to a seated position, bring the hands under the thighs and bend the knees. Rock back and forwards, exhaling back and inhaling forwards. This releases tension from the spine and from the core.

WARRIOR 3 WITH ARMS BACK BY SIDE:

- This posture derives from balancing and focusing equaling in steady concentration.
- Start by focusing on a point about 6 feet in front of you... This is your focal point- use this point when you are in your balancing pose.
- Start by entering a high lunge, forward fold your torso engaging core, back straightened, arms up over head, fingertips to the sky.
- Shift all your weight into the forward foot, hinge at hips, pick back foot up off the ground.
- Lift foot that's behind you in the lunge off the ground, standing foot is facing forward.
- Bring arms back along your side, hinging more forward as you take your back foot up higher.
- This pose stretches shoulders and hamstrings.
- This pose helps with memory, concentration, balance, coordination, proprioception awareness.
- This pose calms the mind, improving stress and anxiety.
- *Repeat on the other side.*

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RIGHT SIDED TREE POSE WITH ARMS OVER HEAD

- This pose allows you to focus inward, quieting racing thoughts
- Avoid putting pressure on the knee.
- Lift arms overhead for a bonus.
- This pose opens the hip and psoas muscle.
- This pose will allow you to gain control over your anxiety quickly by your steady concentration
- Find your focal point 6 feet in front of you.
- Ground yourself with your right foot rooted into the ground, lifting your left foot off the ground either resting the foot on the right calf or above the knee.

LEFT SIDED TREE POSE WITH ARMS OVER HEAD

- This pose allows you to focus inward, quieting racing thoughts
- Avoid putting pressure on the knee.
- Lift arms overhead for a bonus.
- This pose opens the hip and psoas muscle.
- This pose will allow you to gain control over your anxiety quickly by your steady concentration
- Find your focal point 6 feet in front of you.
- Ground yourself with your right foot rooted into the ground, lifting your right foot off the ground either resting the foot on the left calf or above the knee.

HAND ON HEART AND ABDOMEN

- Hold a hand on your belly and a hand on your heart.
- Take a moment to feel your abdomen rise and your heart breathing.
- Slow your breaths down.
- In addition to the body and breath, yoga works with emotions, mental images, thoughts, and relationships, seeing them all as part of an integrated whole.
- During slow breathing, for example, a normally worrying thought arising in the mind is met by a different reaction than might otherwise be the case.
- The body remains rested and still; the breath sends messages of steadiness and balance to the emotions and nervous system.
- The image or thought that might seem upsetting at another time, now you can witness it with calmness. This neutral reaction allows time and space for the image either to be processed or to pass through the mind without disturbance.

We cannot prevent life from changing. Life is inherently unstable. But during periods of change we can have the courage to identify and express our needs.

