

Chair Yoga for Senior

HANDS/FINGERS- JUST JOINTS

By the time we all become Seniors, we will surely have a bit of stiffness in our joints – and many times it starts with the fingers and hands. This is a great sequence for getting into all the joints of the upper body. I call it the “multi-tasking pose”.



Start with the arms out and front, fingers spread wide. Open and close the fingers a few times. Then rotate the wrists while the fingers are still opening and closing. Even try the flicking movement of the fingers as they open up.



Add the elbows into the movement by bending the elbow in and out, while still rotating the wrists and moving the fingers. Lastly, add the shoulder joint, moving one shoulder back and then the other. Combine all 4 movements together and just keep moving.

THE HULA



While the joint movement is still flowing, adding the side to side movement of a hula. Remember, no one is sad or worried when they are doing the hula!



THE WAVE



Then end it with a big reach up and a waving motion side to side. Swaying like a big palm tree!



SHOULDERS — ONE AT A TIME

I never want to make generalizations about any person or any condition, but often times there is a disconnect from the body when people have suffered injuries or have mobility limitations in certain areas. This is a somatic movement that is small enough, and perhaps a little complicated enough, to force the student to have to pay attention and make that connection from their brain to their body. The movement touches 4 separate points in the shoulder rotation, and once the connection is made, the movement can become more fluid and circular. Take it 3-4 circles on each side.



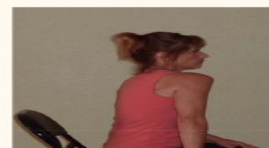
Up: Lift one shoulder up and scrunch the shoulder to the ear.



Back: Roll the shoulder back and the arm turns open.



Down: Reach the arm down toward the floor making more space between the ear and the shoulder.



Forward: Roll the shoulder forward and then draw it back up to neutral and begin again.

ARMS — LIFE FORCE

I might rename this pose “meet your neighbor” because teaching in assisted living and rehabilitation centers is usually tight quarters. I rarely see anyone reach with their elbows straight like this, but I never stop encouraging them to do so. Reaching and stretching makes the body feel good because it releases tension and allows the energy to move through the body more freely. This pose in particular moves that energy through each arm and passes right through the heart center!

