



*strength \* spirit \* solace*

## *Newsletter*

June 2005

Dear friend...

In our lives, and in our bodies, there are many forms of stress to contend with (physical, mental and emotional). And, our personal breaking points in each of these areas are not always clear or predictable. Because we are living organisms, we each have a dynamic response to stress – too much stress can break us down, and our built-in adaptation response to stress can sometimes help to make us stronger.

Try to step back from your own stress at least once per day. Take a deep breath, and as you exhale, count your blessings. Release your worries, or simply accept them for what they are. There is virtually no life challenge that isn't better handled from a place of hope, gratitude and positive belief.

Keep up the great work and let your light shine on!

Namasté,

*Sara*

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### **My Denver Studio Schedule**

This summer, my studio schedule is abbreviated to just the following class! I plan to get outside more and play tennis, ride my bike, hike, camp, fish, raft...Oh, and of course, in August I will be getting married. ☺

- **Thursdays, 5:30 – 7:00 pm:** Vinyasa Yoga at Golden Yoga ([www.breatheyogacolorado.com](http://www.breatheyogacolorado.com) for more info)

➤ Private lessons are available! Email [yoga@saradelaney.com](mailto:yoga@saradelaney.com) for more information!

## **Meditation**

*Loving-kindness, listed ninth in the traditional list of the 10 Perfections of the Heart (also known as the paramitas) is described as the heart fully awake in friendliness, compassion, and empathic joy. The Perfections are the 10 particular permutations of goodness and kindness that the Buddha was said to have developed in his many lifetimes before the one in which he was acknowledged as fully enlightened and venerated as the Buddha. Loving-kindness is the requisite substrate that supports all of the other Perfections: generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, truthfulness, determination, and equanimity.*

## **Poses You Can Do at Home**

### **Marichyasana I (Pose Dedicated to the Sage Marichi, I)**



(Pronounced: *mar-ee-chee-AHS-anna*)

#### **Benefits**

- Calms the brain, relieves stress
- Stretches the spine and shoulders
- Stimulates abdominal organs like the liver and kidneys
- Improves digestion

#### **Contraindications**

- Asthma
- Diarrhea

#### **Step by Step**

1. Sit in Dandasana (Staff Pose). Bend your left knee and place the foot on the floor, with the heel as close to the left sitting bone as possible. Keep the right leg strong and rotated slightly inward, grounding the head of the thighbone into the floor. Press the back of the right heel and the base of the big toe away from the pelvis. Make sure the inner left thigh presses firmly against the left side of the torso.

2. As a preparation for the full pose, twist your torso to the right and press the back of the left shoulder against the inside of the left knee. Use this leverage to lengthen the left side of the torso along the thigh. Then gently unwind and face forward.
3. Reach your left arm forward and rotate it inwardly, so the thumb points to the floor and the palm faces out to the left. As you reach the left arm forward, lengthen your torso forward and snuggle the left shin into the armpit. Then on an exhalation, sweep the forearm around the outside of the leg. The left hand will press against the outside of the left thigh or buttock.
4. With another exhalation, sweep the right arm around behind your back. Clasp the right wrist in the left hand. Exhale and extend your torso forward from the groins, keeping the lower belly long. Lower the front torso as closely as possible to the right leg. Be sure the shoulders don't scrunch up into the ears; draw the shoulder blades actively down your back.
5. Stay in position for 30 seconds to a minute, then come up as you inhale. Repeat on the other side for the same length of time.

### **Anatomical Focus**

- Hamstrings
- Abdomen
- Hips
- Groins
- Shoulders
- Kidneys
- Liver

- Bladder

### **Therapeutic Applications**

- Flatulence
- Constipation
- Obesity
- Stress

### **Modifications & Props**

To move more deeply into the forward bend in this pose, it's helpful for beginning students to sit up high on a bolster or thickly folded blanket. Beginners can also use a strap between the hands if there's some difficulty in clasping the hands behind the back.

### **Beginners Tip**

Because of tightness in the groins, beginners often have difficulty keeping the bent-knee thigh close to the side of the torso. This makes it more difficult to notch the shin into the armpit and wrap the arm around the leg. As you bring the arm forward in preparation for the pose, grip the bent-knee shin with the opposite-side hand and pull the thigh in against the side torso.

### **Deepen the Pose**

Once in the full pose, you can increase the stretch in the shoulders and chest and further lengthen the front torso by reaching your hands back away from the torso and straightening your elbows a bit.

*\* Poses You Can Do at Home are from Yoga Journal.*

## **Nutrition – Tips for Weight Loss**

As put forth by the American Dietetics Association, a good weight-reduction diet and lifestyle means:

1. Emphasizing nutritionally dense foods because adequate intake supports healthier and more successful weight loss and also helps prevent binging or starvation or deprivation.
2. Eating smaller portions or only enough to feel satisfied, but not full.
3. Focusing on complex carbohydrates which contain abundant vitamins and minerals but also fiber which helps to create a feeling of satiety.
4. Choosing fats sensibly because high fat foods lower blood leptin levels causing a person to eat more.
5. Watching out for empty calories like in sodas, juices, sweets and alcohol.
6. Drinking plenty of water to help create a feeling of fullness and also to flush metabolic wastes from the body, as well as to help the GI tract handle more fiber.
7. Exercise regularly to keep the body moving – burning more energy and increasing lean muscle tissue – in turn increasing the resting metabolic rate.
8. Reduce stress.

## **Your Questions Answered!**

Do you have a question? Email it to me at [sara@saradelaney.com](mailto:sara@saradelaney.com).

**Q:** *Just before my menstrual cycle, my abdomen swells and I am very uncomfortable. What can I do to reduce this water retention and bloating?*

**A:**

Bloating and fluid retention around the time of a woman's menstrual period is due to high progesterone levels, which causes muscle relaxation, particularly in the smooth muscle. This type of muscle is found in the uterus and bowels so the progesterone causes both of these muscles to relax. During the second half of the cycle, when the progesterone levels are highest, the relaxed muscles causes expansion and stretch the abdomen creating a feeling of fullness and bloating. The belly sticks out because the muscle tone of the bowels is not as strong and cannot keep everything in as tight. In order to help reduce the symptoms of excess progesterone in the body just before your menstrual period, you may wish to try the following:

- Cut down on carbohydrates and have a little extra protein with each meal
- Eat fish high in omega-3 fatty acids
- Eat reasonable portions at proper times
- Consume alcohol, caffeine and sugar only in moderation
- Exercise and/or meditate – YOGA! ☺

## **Contemplate...**

The net effect of stress in the body is the release of cortisol and other hormones that essentially break down your body in an effort to provide you with an emergency supply of energy and strength. In an emergency, these hormones come in handy, but over time, these same hormones can cause imbalances that utterly undermine your long-term health. Bottom line: The more consistently you are stressed out, the more consistently your body is going to be breaking itself down.



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*"When you come to the edge of all that you know, you must believe one of two things:  
There will be earth upon which to stand, or you will be given wings to fly."*