



strength * spirit * solace

Newsletter

May 2005

Dear friend...

In life, we hope for clear conditions. And there's a lot we can do to help create them, from keeping our bodies and relationships healthy, to building more integrity into our choices and priorities. But there will always be situations where things don't seem so clear. And in those circumstances it can take a great deal of focus to stay on course. It demands a strong sense of vision - of knowing where you want to go - but it also takes a strong union of heart and soul to stay committed until your mission is accomplished.

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

Namasté,

Sara

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 for more info)
- Private lessons are available! Email yoga@saradelaney.com for more information!

Meditation

Act “as if.” There’s magic in behaving the way we want to be, even though we don’t yet feel it. The behavior seems to lead the way. The attitude follows. Many days we do not get up with love in our hearts for our family, friends, co-workers. We may, in fact, want them to show their love for us first. But, if we reach out, give love unconditionally, focus on another’s needs, love will return tenfold. And the act of loving them will lift our own spirits. We will know love; we will feel love for ourselves and the many people close to us. The attitude we cultivate will determine how the events of our lives affect us. The principle is so simple. If we meet life with love, with a smile, we’ll find something to smile about.

Poses You Can Do at Home

Supta Virasana (Reclining Hero or Heroine Pose)



Reclining Hero or Heroine Pose intensifies the stretch in the thighs and ankles of its upright version. It also creates new stretches in the front groins, the psoas muscles, and the deep hip flexors.

Caution: Supta Virasana, the reclining variation of Virasana, is an intermediate pose. DO NOT perform this pose unless you can sit your buttocks relatively easily on the floor between your feet.

Benefits

- Stretches the abdomen, thighs and deep hip flexors (psoas), knees, and ankles
- Strengthens the arches
- Relieves tired legs
- Improves digestion
- Helps relieve the symptoms of menstrual pain

Contraindications/Cautions

If you have any serious back, knee, or ankle problems, avoid this pose unless you have the assistance of an experienced instructor.

Step by Step

1. Perform Virasana. Exhale and lower your back torso toward the floor. First lean onto your hands, then your forearms and elbows. Once you are on your elbows, place your hands on the back of the pelvis and release your lower back and upper buttocks by

spreading the flesh down toward the tailbone. Then finish reclining, either onto the floor or a support.

2. If your front ribs jut up sharply toward the ceiling, it's a sign of tight groins, which pulls your front pelvis toward your knees and causes your belly and lower back to tense. Use your hands to press your front ribs down slightly and lift your pubis toward your navel. This should lengthen your lower back and lower it toward the floor. If it doesn't, raise yourself onto a higher support. Then lay your arms and hands on the floor, angled about 45 degrees from the sides of your torso, palms up.
3. Sink the heads of the thighbones deep into the back of the hip sockets. It's alright to lift your knees a little away from the floor to help soften your groins; in fact, you can raise your knees a few inches on a thickly folded blanket. You can also allow a little bit of space between your knees as long as your thighs remain parallel to each other. Do not, however, allow the knees to splay apart wider than your hips – this will cause strain on the hips and lower back.
4. To begin, stay in this pose for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Gradually extend your stay to 5 minutes. To come out, press your forearms against the floor and come onto your hands. Then use your hands to lift your torso into Virasana. As you come up, lead with your sternum, not your head or chin. Come out of Virasana in the recommended manner.

Anatomical Focus

- Thighs and groins
- Knees
- Ankles
- Arches
- Abdomen
- Shoulders (with the arms stretched overhead)

Therapeutic Applications

- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Diarrhea
- Digestive problems
- Flat feet
- Head cold
- Headache
- High blood pressure
- Infertility
- Insomnia
- Intestinal gas and acidity
- Menstrual discomfort
- Respiratory ailments
- Sciatica
- Varicose veins

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

Nutrition – Fresh Chicken!

Today, a trip to your local supermarket confirms the chicken's reign as America's favorite meat. But those frigid rows of perfectly packaged poultry and all their boneless, skinless options conceal two very important facts: 1) Today's birds have virtually no flavor; and 2) they are raised in such morally and hygienically compromised settings that they aren't even good for you.

That doesn't mean, however, that you should throw out your *coq au vin* and other chicken recipes. There *are* delicious and healthy alternatives out there. All you need is a little understanding of what makes for a good chicken, and then some tips on where to find it. Follow these guidelines for a healthier and tastier bird:

- Use your local farmers' markets, food co-ops, natural foods markets and mail order services to provide you with natural chickens. Thanks to consumer demand, many supermarkets also stock organic, free-range chickens these days. If yours doesn't, ask for them!
- Do not buy frozen birds because it is too difficult to tell if the meat you are purchasing is fresh.
- When shopping, look for fresh blood, clean skin, no accumulation of moisture or liquids, and a fresh aroma.
- Read the labels! They are your best source of information. If a label mentions additives and chemicals used to increase moisture content, do not buy that product.
- White meat is perfectly cooked at 152 degrees, but dark meat needs to reach 160 degrees to adequately melt the tendons and connective tissues and make the meat tender.
- Bring chicken to room temperature before roasting to promote even cooking.
- Use chicken within 24 hours of purchase or freeze. Do not freeze chicken for longer than three months. Do not freeze in the market wrapping, but rinse it and wrap it in your own plastic food wrap.
- Handle all raw poultry in your kitchen sink. When you are finished, wash your hands, utensils and all surfaces with hot water, dish soap and a little hydrogen peroxide and vinegar to avoid cross contamination with other foods.
- To kill salmonella, remember to keep poultry below 40 degrees for storage and to cook it past 140 degrees.

Your Questions Answered!

Do you have a question? Email it to me at sara@saradelaney.com.

Q: *My ten-year old son has suddenly become the pickiest eater and has lately taken to eating only junk! I have talked to his pediatrician to rule out food allergies, but he still won't eat the food that is good for him. How can I help my son to eat better?*

A:

When kids can find genuine pleasure in the eating experience, specifically an experience grounded in pleasant, predictable, well-rounded mealtimes and clear boundaries – they'll get reacquainted with the innate self-regulation that lets them eat what they should and stop when they're full. Kids need to regain trust in their own bodies and instincts – instincts that are warped by media influences and junk-food addictions, but also by detrimental adult practices like overeating, under eating or using food for purposes of control and reward.

When it comes to evaluating a kid's eating imbalances, parents should first look closely at their own eating attitudes, because these are the most powerful messages a child receives. To what extent might one or both parents in the household overeat, under eat or eat erratically? What attitudes and behaviors are being modeled most powerfully to the kids? Kids learn from their parents early on how to use eating to relieve stress or lack of connection, or to communicate displeasure. When parents set a bad example, whether by what they eat or how and when they eat it, kids naturally follow their parents' negative patterns.

Second, it is very important to establish clear mealtime boundaries. Serve food at the table instead of letting the child wander off with it, and as often as possible, join your child at the table. Eating at one location, with no distractions other than good conversation, encourages diners to sit still and savor the food as well as the social experience. Even when a child says he isn't hungry, ask that he come to join the others. By doing so, you are sending the message that mealtimes are important family events. You may even want to thank your child for participating in these family meals. Chances are, he'll end up eating something, too. Either way, he'll be part of a family-meal ritual that experts say is a key component to increasing family closeness.

Remaining positive, loving and upbeat throughout all your child's food preferences and changes is key. When initiating your family's new healthy, structured mealtimes, it is important to present them as a chance for your family to get healthy together, not as a diet aimed at anyone in particular.

Contemplate...

You never miss a dental checkup, never arrive late for a meeting, and never have mustard on your collar. Above all, you are galled when others fail to function according to your standards. After all, *your* inner critic would never let *you* get away with that! You are a perfectionist. But, your life isn't as in control as it seems. In fact, while the

gilded standards and iron-clad order you impose on life may allow you to achieve a lot of great things, they can also backfire, alienating others, limiting your ability to take creative risks, and preventing you from seeing your life as fluid, changeable, and above all, *enjoyable*. Forget perfection, and enjoy peace of mind instead!



Sara Delaney
Certified Yoga Instructor
Nutrition Therapist In-Training
720.810.7027
sara@saradelaney.com

*"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."*