

Orientation Agenda (short form)—1.5 hours

Prior to the session, set up the room for the group, and make sure you have appropriate materials, including the attendance sheet, pens, paper, intake forms, scales (site/teacher/research dependent), waivers, and consent forms.

Welcome and introduction to mindfulness (10 minutes)

Overview of MBSR program—history/structure/research (15 minutes)

Overview of mindfulness—what mindfulness is (15 minutes)

Group introductions and participant intentions (15 minutes)

Group norms (10 minutes)

Guidelines—risks and benefits, housekeeping (10 minutes)

Questions and answers (15 minutes)

Orientation Agenda (long form)—1.5 hours

- Welcome and introduction to mindfulness (10 minutes). The teacher introduces himself and welcomes the group.
- Overview of MBSR program. The teacher reviews the history/structure/research (15 minutes):
 - Brief history of MBSR and antecedents. Teacher includes the 2,600-year-old tradition on which MBSR is based, the history and trajectory of MBSR, and adaptations.
 - Structure of the eight-week program. The teacher explains the group modality, the 2.5-hour sessions, and the importance of attending all sessions as each builds on the previous one. There is an all-day retreat in the sixth week.
 - Research. Since the inception of MBSR, research, while still early, has been exponential; the teacher should review two or three recent research articles (meta-analyses) that speak to the current evidence for MBSR.
- Brief overview of mindfulness (15 minutes). What is mindfulness? Mindfulness can be talked about in a variety of ways, one of which is: *the practice of paying attention to present moment experience with interest and friendliness, allowing us to meet life more skillfully*. Why might it be important to pay attention to present moment experience? It increases awareness of all experience: thinking, emotions, body sensations, and behaviors/impulses, and this leads to a reduction in stress reactivity. It allows for the potential for increased pleasure. It helps participants develop tools to meet life events more skillfully. Note that the emphasis is on experiential learning.
 - There is a lot of misinformation about mindfulness.
 - The real learning about mindfulness comes from practicing it, and this takes time, energy, and commitment—home practice is important.
 - Meditation is not about attaining a special state.
 - Training attention through meditative practices allows us to increase awareness.
 - Training attention and regulating negative thinking and emotions are core skills. Our minds are busy, and attention habitually moves into thinking about the past or future or becomes repetitive. Noticing this is a part of mindfulness practice, as is intentionally returning attention to an intended present moment focus.
- Group introductions and participant intentions (15 minutes):
 - Ask people to introduce themselves and briefly state why they're here (consider dyads and then large group interaction).
 - Remind participants that if they are reticent to speak, they can simply say their name.

- Group norms (10 minutes). The teacher decides whether to elicit these from the group or to state them, subsequently asking the participants for their input:
 - When thinking about what would be most helpful to your learning, how would you like us to interact?
 - Establishing trust
 - Confidentiality and its limits
 - Respectful communication
 - Speaking to one's own experience and not offering advice or reassurance
 - Listening without interrupting others
 - Free of substance misuse throughout the program, as this inhibits the ability to practice and learn
- Guidelines, risks and benefits, and housekeeping (10 minutes):
 - It's important to start and finish on time.
 - Feedback from participants is encouraged and needed.
 - Participants need to notify the teacher if they cannot attend the session.
 - If participants want to drop out, they need to inform the teacher; the teacher contacts participants if they fail to show up for a session. Risks and benefits. Mindfulness is not a panacea. Physical risks—potential for injury given that an extended part of the program is movement and body based. Physical benefits—increased body awareness, self-care, mobility, enhanced well-being. Emotional risks—dysregulation (irritability, tearfulness, anxiety, frustration, doubt, agitation); trauma reactivation or related distress (this is an important discussion; consider a participant handout that is trauma informed). Emotional benefits—regulation of emotion, enhanced well-being, greater awareness of pleasurable moments, faster recovery from difficult emotions, better understanding and management of reactive moments, enhanced positive relationship to self and others.
 - The teacher hands out the intake form. This is to be completely filled out and is a requirement for participation.
 - The teacher hands out consent form and waivers. For informed consent, be sure to highlight that there are many ways of dealing with stress. This is one. Participants sign consent form and waivers.
- Questions and answers. The teacher allows time for questions and answers about the program.

Interview—15 minutes per participant

- Introduce the participant to the purpose of the interview—How did you hear about the program?
- Review the intake form with the participant.
- Address areas of omission in the intake—further questions dependent upon professional designation.
- Ensure dates/times/home practice required are compatible with participation.
- Explore any challenges and relative contraindications to ensure suitability.
- Review risks/benefits as they apply to the individual participant.
- Check that the intake form, waiver, and consent are understood and have been signed. It is a requirement that all participants fill out these forms.

Please see the appendices for examples of an intake, consent form, and waivers.

Session 1 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. She brings additional materials that include the attendance sheet, pens, paper, raisins, bowl, spoon, napkins, and handouts.

Welcome and introduction to the session (10 minutes)

Brief breath awareness plus discussion (15 minutes)

Group introductions and participant intentions (15 minutes)

Short standing yoga practice plus inquiry (15 minutes)

Raisin practice plus inquiry (30 minutes)

Body scan plus inquiry (55 minutes)

Home practice assignment and discussion (10 minutes)

Session 1 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome and introduction (10 minutes). The teacher introduces herself, welcomes the group, reminds participants of the learning guidelines, and sets the context for this session.
- Brief breath awareness practice plus discussion (15 minutes). Participants bring their attention to their sitting posture. They bring their attention to the breath with an acknowledgment that body sensations, sounds, thoughts, and emotions will be present, but that the primary attention is on breathing. The teacher leads a discussion, eliciting several brief responses from the group about what was noticed.
- Group introductions and participant intentions (15 minutes). Participants introduce themselves and state their reasons for coming. The teacher may use this as an opportunity to build group cohesion by placing participants in dyads to discuss this and then returning to the large group to further the conversation.
- Short standing yoga practice plus inquiry (15 minutes). The teacher gives safety reminders for this movement practice, including any modifications that are needed; guidance includes several standing poses (e.g., four); each one is repeated at least twice.
 - Inquiry. The teacher elicits several brief responses from the group about what was noticed.
- Raisin practice plus inquiry (30 minutes). The teacher provides guidance about attending to sight, touch, hearing, smell, taste, and thinking.
 - Inquiry. The inquiry is focused on the senses: What did you notice? The focus is on normalizing participants' experience regardless of whether it's pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.
- Body scan plus inquiry (55 minutes). Participants are reminded that a number of reactions may occur and that therefore it is important for them to take care of themselves as needed, to adopt a position that is comfortable and supports staying awake; guidance includes systematically moving attention around the body and exploring sensations with occasional reminders to return attention to the intended focus when it habitually moves.
 - Inquiry. The inquiry is focused on body sensations and an awareness of thinking and emotions as they come up in this practice, normalizing this process. The emphasis is on curiosity and not preferencing any one experience.
- Home practice assignments and discussion (10 minutes). Over the coming week, participants will do a body scan six out of seven days; do the nine dots exercise (handout); practice mindful eating (one meal or part of a meal); pursue informal practice; and do an optional movement practice. The potential challenges are discussed and the home practice log and any other handouts are distributed.

Session 2 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. He brings additional materials that include the attendance sheet, pens, paper, and handouts.

General welcome (5 minutes)

Brief standing yoga practice (10 minutes)

Body scan (35 minutes)

Inquiry of both the yoga and the body scan (20 minutes)

Home practice review (20 minutes)

Seeing meditation plus brief inquiry (15 minutes)

Perceptual biases exercise plus inquiry (15 minutes)

Sitting meditation practice (10 minutes) plus inquiry (10 minutes)

Home practice assignment and discussion (10 minutes)

Session 2 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome (5 minutes). The teacher reminds participants of the learning guidelines and sets the context for this session.
- Standing yoga practice (10 minutes). The teacher reminds participants of safety parameters and to respect their limits. Postures are repeated at least twice. Guidance is clear and simple.
- Body scan practice (35 minutes). Participants are reminded to find a comfortable position, one that supports staying awake. They are also reminded that a number of reactions may occur, and it is therefore important to take care of themselves as needed. Guidance includes systematically moving attention around the body and exploring sensations, with occasional reminders to return their attention to the intended focus when it habitually moves.
- Inquiry of the yoga and body scan practices (20 minutes). The teacher elicits several responses from the group (horizontal inquiry) with a focus on body sensations but with the recognition that thoughts are inevitably a part of what is noticed. If participants start to talk about what happened during the week with this practice, they will need to be redirected to the practice that just occurred. The emphasis is on normalizing the experiences and being curious, patient, and kind about them.
- Home practice review (20 minutes). This is a general discussion that reviews how the participants have engaged in the assignments. Insights and challenges are treated equally, not preferencing one over the other.
- Seeing meditation and a brief inquiry (15 minutes). This meditation can begin with a broad or narrow focus and then moves between the two, allowing participants to become aware of changes in the visual field.
- Perceptual biases exercise and inquiry (15 minutes). The teacher elicits from the group the relevance of this exercise to stress reduction.
- Awareness of breathing sitting meditation (10 minutes). The teacher guides participants to bring their attention to their sitting posture and to the movement of the breath, with a focus at the nostrils.
- Inquiry (10 minutes). The teacher elicits several brief responses from the group about what was noticed.
- Home practice assignments and discussion (10 minutes). Over the coming week, participants will do a body scan six out of seven days; engage in informal practice, awareness of the breath meditation (10 to 15 minutes per day), fill out the pleasant events calendar six out of seven days; and choose a different informal daily activity from the previous week. The teacher distributes the home practice log and any other handouts.

Session 3 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. She brings additional materials, including the attendance sheet, pens, paper, and handouts.

Welcome to session (5 minutes)

Sitting awareness of breath and body meditation practice (5 minutes sitting demonstration plus 15 minutes)

Lying-down yoga practice (60 minutes)

Walking meditation practice (15 minutes)

Inquiry of sitting, yoga, and walking (20 minutes)

Home practice review (20 minutes)

Home practice assignment and discussion (10 minutes)

Session 3 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome (5 minutes). The teacher reminds participants of the learning guidelines and sets the context for this session.
- Sitting posture demonstration (5 minutes). The teacher ensures the participants are sitting in a posture that encourages comfort and wakefulness. (This requires a demonstration using the chair, cushions, and meditation benches.) The teacher leads an awareness of breath and body meditation practice (15 minutes); guidance of the meditation practice is clear and simple, containing adequate periods of silence and clear shifts in focus when moving from a focus on the sensations of breathing to the open monitoring of the body.
- Lying-down yoga practice (60 minutes). Participants are instructed to take a few minutes to move to a lying-down position on their mats. They are also reminded to work within their limits and to take care of themselves as needed. Guidance needs to be clear and paced with periods of silence. Note that repeating poses helps participants bring a focus to the body and allows them to attend to what comes and goes throughout the practice.
- Walking meditation practice (15 minutes). The teacher uses clear instructions that anchor the participants' attention in the soles of the feet and to the mechanics of walking. These include guidance that focuses on “lifting, moving, and placing” the feet as they walk slowly, eyes downcast a few feet in front of them.
- Inquiry of the breath, yoga, and walking practices (20 minutes). The teacher elicits several responses from the group with a focus on body sensations but with the recognition that thoughts and emotions are also part of the practice. If participants engage in a narrative of the practice or move into the past or future, they will need to be gently redirected to the discussion at hand. This session is one in which difficulties with practice may be prominent. The emphasis is on normalizing these experiences and bringing curiosity to whatever has occurred.
- Home practice review (20 minutes). The teacher facilitates a general discussion that reviews how the participants have engaged in the home practice assignments. Insights and challenges are treated equally, without preferencing positive experiences over difficult ones. Both will be showing up in the home practice and will need to be addressed.
- Home practice assignments and discussion (10 minutes). Over the coming week, participants will alternate a body scan with lying-down yoga for six out of seven days; fill out the unpleasant events calendar for six days; and do an awareness of breath and body practice (15 to 20 minutes) for six out of seven days. The teacher distributes any other handouts and the home practice log.

Session 4 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. She brings additional materials, including the attendance sheet, pens, paper, and handouts.

Welcome to session (5 minutes)

Yoga (standing) (35 minutes)

Awareness of breath and body, intense physical sensations (30 minutes)

Inquiry (20 minutes)

Home practice review (20 minutes)

Stress reactivity group discussion (20 minutes)

Circle of awareness group discussion (10 minutes)

Home practice assignment (10 minutes)

Session 4 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome (5 minutes). The teacher welcomes the group and allows participants to settle.
- Standing yoga practice (35 minutes). The teacher reminds participants to take care of themselves as needed.
- Sitting meditation practice (30 minutes). The teacher guides participants in awareness of the breath and body, working with intense physical sensations. Guidance needs to have extended periods of silence and clear instructions to shift attention from breath and body and to the gentle investigation of intense physical sensations, bringing an attitude of curiosity to this process while taking care of the body as needed.
- Inquiry of the yoga and breath practices (20 minutes). The teacher elicits several responses from the group with a focus on body sensations but with the recognition that thoughts and emotions are also part of the practice. This session is one in which difficulties with practice continue to be addressed. The emphasis is on normalizing the challenges inherent in practice, and how they relate to stress in general.
- Home practice review (20 minutes). This is a general discussion that reviews how the participants have engaged in the home practice assignments. Participants are still faced with the reality of finding time to practice. The teacher continues to be supportive and realistic about this but maintains an encouraging stance.
- Stress reactivity (20 minutes). This is a group discussion about potential stressors, the automaticity of stress reactions, the physiology of stress, habitual reactions, and maladaptive coping.
- Circle of awareness (10 minutes). This is a group discussion that highlights awareness of the components involved in stress reactions.
- Home practice assignments and discussion (10 minutes). Over the coming week, participants will alternate body scans with lying-down yoga for six out of seven days; practice a sitting meditation with awareness of breath and body for 20 minutes six out of seven days; and review the circle of awareness and monitor stress reactions. The teacher distributes the home practice log and any other handouts, including the midcourse check-in, telling participants to return it in session 5 (see the appendix).

Session 5 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. She brings additional materials that include the attendance sheet, pens, paper, and handouts.

Welcome to session (5 minutes)

Yoga (standing) (15 minutes)

Sitting meditation (35 minutes)

Inquiry (20 minutes)

Group discussion of stress response (30 minutes)

Group discussion of circle of awareness (15 minutes)

Home practice review (20 minutes)

Home practice assignment (10 minutes)

Session 5 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome (5 minutes). The teacher welcomes the group and allows participants to settle.
- Standing yoga practice (15 minutes). The teacher reminds participants to take care of themselves as needed.
- Sitting meditation practice (35 minutes). The teacher facilitates awareness of the breath, body, sounds, thoughts, emotions, and choiceless awareness (open monitoring; open awareness). Guidance will include extended periods of silence and clear instructions. An attitude of curiosity, kindness, and compassion is brought to this practice.
- Inquiry (20 minutes). An inquiry of the yoga and the sitting meditation practices follows. The teacher elicits several responses from the group, making sure that both practices are discussed. Open awareness and shifting foci of attention are discussed during the inquiry of the sitting practice. The emphasis is on normalizing the challenges inherent in practice, and how they relate to stress in general.
- Stress response triangle (30 minutes). The teacher facilitates a group discussion. This is a general conversation using the triangle from last week to talk about bringing the practice of mindfulness to moments of stress reactivity and how this can enhance adaptive coping.
- Circle of awareness (15 minutes). The teacher facilitates a group discussion utilizing examples from the participants.
- Home practice review (20 minutes). This is a general discussion that reviews how the participants have engaged in the home practice assignments. Participants are still faced with the reality of finding time to practice. The teacher continues to be supportive and realistic about this but maintains an encouraging stance.
- Home practice assignments and discussion (10 minutes). Over the coming week, participants will engage in sitting meditation practice alternating with either the body scan or yoga (lying down) for six out of seven days; use the circle of awareness to bring awareness and monitoring of stress reactions; bring the practice of mindfulness to those moments along with skillful actions when possible; and fill out the difficult communications calendar (Kabat-Zinn, 2013), for six days. The teacher distributes the home practice log and any other handouts.

Session 6 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. He brings additional materials that include the attendance sheet, pens, paper, and handouts.

Welcome to session (5 minutes)

Yoga (standing/lying) (20 minutes)

Sitting meditation practice (35 minutes)

Inquiry (20 minutes)

Home practice review and discussion of all-day retreat (20 minutes)

Difficult communications styles exercise (30 minutes)

Brief sitting meditation practice (10 minutes)

Home practice assignments (10 minutes)

Session 6 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome (5 minutes). Teacher welcomes the group, allowing it to settle.
- Standing/lying-down yoga practice (20 minutes). The teacher leads a yoga practice, reminding participants to take care of themselves as needed.
- Sitting meditation practice (35 minutes). The teacher facilitates a sitting meditation, focusing on the breath, body, sounds, thoughts, emotions, and choiceless awareness, and then back to the breath. Guidance needs to have extended periods of silence between the different foci and instructions to bring attention to the breath or open the eyes if the participants are overwhelmed.
- Inquiry (20 minutes). Inquiry of the yoga and sitting practices follows. The emphasis remains on normalizing the challenges inherent in practice and fostering how they are working with and relating to what is arising.
- Home practice review (20 minutes). This is a general discussion that reviews how the participants have engaged in the home practice assignments. The teacher facilitates a discussion of the all-day retreat.
- Difficult communication styles exercise (30 minutes). This experiential activity demonstrates various communication styles and roles that people engage in when faced with potentially conflictual interpersonal interactions.
- Brief sitting meditation practice (10 minutes). A short breath practice follows the difficult communication styles exercise to settle the group.
- Home practice assignments and discussion (10 minutes). Over the coming week, participants will alternate sitting meditation practice with the body scan and/or yoga (standing or lying down) for six out of seven days; practice bringing awareness to their relationships—interpersonal, organizations, and systems; and practice bringing attention to the *diet* they consume from the world—technology, news, food, books, etc. The teacher distributes the home practice log and any other handouts.

MBSR All-Day Agenda (short form)—7 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. She brings additional materials, including the attendance sheet, pens, paper, and handouts.

9:00 a.m.: Welcome and brief overview of the day—guidelines, housekeeping, and safety parameters

9:15 a.m.: Sitting meditation—awareness of breathing

9:30 a.m.: Mindful movement ending with a brief body scan

10:30 a.m.: Sitting meditation—breath, body, sounds, thoughts, emotions, choiceless awareness, and back to the breath

11:10 a.m.: Walking meditation

11:40 a.m.: Mountain or lake meditation

12:10 p.m.: Instructions for silent lunch and mindful eating practice. The teacher offers the following guidance: to maintain silence; continue to avoid eye contact; engage with the senses of sight, touch, hearing, smell, taste, and awareness of thinking but allowing the primary focus to be on the process of eating. Participants will be asked to monitor their state of hunger and when it is satiated. Lastly, they are reminded not to engage in reading or writing or to be on their cell phones. The emphasis is on the silent lunch as part of the practice. Following the completion of the meal, people are invited to check in to see what would be conducive to self-care, such as a rest or gentle movement.

1:10 p.m.: Mindful movement

2:10 p.m.: Loving-kindness meditation

2:40 p.m.: Walking meditation

3:10 p.m.: Transition out of silence—first in dyads as a mindfulness speaking and listening exercise, and then a debrief in the large group

3:40 p.m.: Instructions for going home—negotiating external stimulation, communication, and safety

4:00 p.m.: Home

Session 7 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. He brings additional materials that include the attendance sheet, pens, paper, and handouts.

Welcome to session and different chair exercise (5 minutes)

Yoga (20 minutes)

Sitting meditation practice (35 minutes)

Inquiry (20 minutes)

Review of all-day retreat (10 minutes)

Home practice review (20 minutes)

Interacting with the world, skillful choices, exercise, and self-care (30 minutes)

Home practice assignments (10 minutes)

Session 7 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome and different chair exercise (5 minutes). The teacher welcomes the group and leads them through the different chair exercise to highlight attachment to the familiar and the reactions and possibilities that a different perspective may bring.
- Participant-led yoga (20 minutes). The participants facilitate a yoga practice to enhance their autonomy and sense of competence. This also increases the portability and accessibility of everyday movement.
- Sitting meditation practice (35 minutes). The teacher facilitates a sitting meditation practice with focus on the breath, body, choiceless awareness, and back to the breath. Guidance uses extended periods of silence.
- Inquiry (20 minutes). Inquiry of the yoga and sitting practices follows. The emphasis remains on normalizing the challenges inherent in practice and fostering how participants are working with and relating to what is arising.
- Discussion of the all-day retreat (10 minutes). The teacher facilitates a discussion of the retreat.
- Home practice review (20 minutes). This is a general discussion that reviews how the participants have engaged in the home practice assignments. This includes alternating sitting meditation practice with the body scan and/or yoga (standing or lying down) for six out of seven days; bringing awareness to our relationships—interpersonal, organizations, and systems; monitoring the *diet* we consume from the world—technology, news, books, etc.; and any other handouts and home practice log.
- Interacting with the world, skillful choices, and self-care exercise (30 minutes). The teacher leads a discussion of environmental and societal stressors and their impact on the participants. He elicits a list of potential stressors and asks the participants to silently consider some that are personally relevant. They discuss, in dyads, how they might work with a stressor of their choosing for the coming week using the practice of mindfulness and behavioral strategies. The group then debriefs the exercise, discussing how each person will work with their chosen stressor.
- Home practice assignment (10 minutes). Over the coming week, participants will alternate sitting meditation practice, yoga, walking meditation, and/or the body scan *without guidance* for six out of seven days; do informal practice of noticing the breath and body throughout the day; bring awareness to the senses during activities and when interacting with the environment; and work with a personally relevant world stressor. The teacher distributes the home practice log and any other handouts.

Session 8 Agenda (short form)—2.5 hours

Prior to the session, the teacher sets up the room with chairs, cushions (if using), and yoga mats. She brings additional materials, including the attendance sheet, pens, paper, handouts, and whatever she will use for the closing ceremony.

Welcome (5 minutes)

Body scan (30 minutes)

Yoga practice (20 minutes)

Sitting meditation practice (15 minutes)

Inquiry (15 minutes)

Guided reflection and discussion of the program (20 minutes)

Home practice review (15 minutes)

Home practice assignments (5 minutes)

Closing Ceremony (25 minutes)

Session 8 Agenda (long form)—2.5 hours

- Welcome (5 minutes). The teacher welcomes the group.
- Body scan (30 minutes). The teacher leads participants through the body scan.
- Yoga practice (20 minutes). The teacher either leads the yoga practice or invites participants to facilitate their own practice to continue enhancing their autonomy and sense of competence.
- Sitting meditation practice (15 minutes). The teacher facilitates a sitting meditation practice with focus on the breath, body, choiceless awareness, and back to the breath. Guidance uses extended periods of silence.
- Inquiry (15 minutes). An inquiry of the body scan, yoga practice, and sitting meditation follows. The emphasis is on what is coming up for participants when there are long pauses, or when they are guiding themselves without external instruction.
- Guided reflection and discussion of the program (20 minutes). The teacher leads the group to reflect, record, and discuss what they have learned, what has been meaningful, and what they will take away to assist them in continuing their mindfulness practice.
- Home practice review (15 minutes). A discussion ensues of practice with or without audio recordings and how participants worked with an external world stressor using mindfulness.
- Home practice assignment (5 minutes). Participants choose a formal and an informal practice for the next few weeks. They are invited to attend to the present moment multiple times throughout the day using the breath and/or body as an anchor. Handouts and resources are provided.
- Closing ceremony (25 minutes). The teacher leads the group through a closing ceremony to formalize the end of the program.

Intake/Assessment Form

What follows is an intake form for teachers whose occupation falls outside of health care. For health care clinicians, the intake will include all relevant details of a medical, mental health, and addictions assessment. Teachers designated as clinicians will be required to collect and securely store private health information in line with requirements of their governing body and state and federal regulations. Non-clinicians, while not mandated to do this, should treat all information acquired from their participants with utmost care, endorsing confidentiality. This will necessitate transparency on the part of the teacher, explaining the rationale for any collection of information and how it will be stored.

The intake/assessment form is an important aspect of determining a participant's suitability for attending the MBSR program. The extent of both the interview and the written intake form will be dependent on the occupation of the MBSR teacher.

It can be helpful to include pre- and post-inventories or scales during the intake process to establish a baseline of the participant's mood and functional status. Such scales also allow the teacher to evaluate any changes that occur upon completion of the program. An example of these instruments that are in the public domain are PHQ-9 for depression, GAD-7 for anxiety, PSS for stress, and the WHO-5 Well-Being Index. These can be used to assess participant outcomes from the program.

Sample MBSR Intake/Assessment Form

Name: _____

DOB: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

What pronoun do you use to refer to yourself? _____

Home phone number: _____ Office or cell number: _____

Is it all right to leave a message? Yes: _____ No: _____

Name of contact person and phone number in the case of an emergency:

How did you hear about the program?

What is your occupation and work status?

What is your relationship status? (Circle one)

Single

Partnership

Married

Divorced

Widowed

Are there any events that might affect your participation in this program (for example, recent loss of a relationship or death of a loved one)?

Name of primary care physician and phone number:

Are you currently under medical treatment? Yes: _____ No: _____

If yes, please explain, including any relevant medications:

Please list any allergies: _____

Please list any mobility issues: _____

What is the quality and duration of your sleep?

What kind of exercise do you manage to do each week and what is the frequency?

Cigarettes per day: _____ Caffeinated drinks per day: _____

What is your alcohol and recreational drug use and frequency?

History of substance misuse (if relevant): _____

Are you currently undergoing therapy for mental health reasons? Yes: _____ No: _____

What are your main reasons for attending the program?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are your current stressors?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

What are your greatest anxieties?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

If you have experienced or are currently suffering from major depression, severe anxiety, hallucinations, severe emotional dysregulation, thoughts of harming yourself or someone else, trauma, or serious substance use (drugs or alcohol), you should know that this program may not be suitable for you at this time.

Is there anything else that you might want me to know about you?

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this form.

Consent to Participate and Waiver of Responsibility

The risks, benefits, and potential side effects of MBSR, which is an educational and experiential program, have been fully explained to me. MBSR is taught in a group format. I fully understand that the program consists of learning meditation practices and movements based on yoga that require gentle stretching.

I understand that I am committing to attend eight (8) weekly classes and one (1) full-day retreat and that there will be assigned home practices requiring at least 45 minutes of practice each day between the weekly sessions.

I understand that participating in the MBSR program may involve some physical risk and may increase a sense of vulnerability or at times result in challenging emotional states. MBSR is not intended to replace medical or psychological treatment.

I understand that if I have concerns about my physical or mental health, it is my responsibility when necessary to seek appropriate treatment. If my MBSR teacher is a mental health professional, I may be directed to seek assistance from a health care provider or even discontinue the course.

I take full responsibility and assume all risks for any physical, mental, or emotional consequences of participating in this MBSR program.

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I have read, understand, and accept the above conditions for participating in the MBSR program.

Participant name (print): _____

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Confidentiality Agreements

My MBSR teacher acknowledges that my privacy will be maintained to the full extent possible. All communications between the MBSR teacher (whether or not he/she is a health care provider) and the participant are confidential, excepting actions or intent, that fall outside these limits. There are circumstances in which a provider of MBSR is required by law to breach participant/provider-teacher confidentiality and these are as follows, the extent of which is dependent upon professional designation (and state/province/federal law):

- Client expresses risk of harm to self and/or others
- Client is at risk of harming a child through acts of omission or commission (e.g., neglect, abuse)
- Client is at risk when driving (e.g., dementia, substance induced)
- Client reports being sexually abused

All of the above may involve mandatory reporting or referral to the appropriate authorities or other health care providers.

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I have read and understand that under the above circumstances it is mandatory that the MBSR teacher will take the appropriate action(s) outlined.

Participant name (print): _____

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Client Acknowledgment and Agreement

I understand the limits of confidentiality and that the MBSR teacher will do the utmost to maintain confidentiality of any personal health information collected from me for assessing my suitability prior to and during my participation in the program.

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I agree to the collection and storage of personal health information.

Participant name (print): _____

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Consent to Use Electronic Communications (when there is no encryption)

I, _____, consent to using email communications with my MBSR teacher for the duration of the program (e.g., Hotmail, Gmail, or Outlook) as needed. I understand that these delivery systems may not be secure for personal health information. They may be accessed by others, accidentally forwarded, or exist indefinitely. I further understand that email should not be used for the purpose of communicating time-sensitive or emergency information. I understand that should I decline to communicate via email that this will not affect the care provided to me by my MBSR teacher in any way, and that all communications will be done either in person or by telephone.

☐ Consent ☐ Do Not Consent

Participant name (print): _____

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness signature: _____

Date: _____

Midcourse Check-In

Having a midcourse check-in handout to give to your participants is useful. This is a way for your participants to reflect on how the program is going for them, both what has been helpful and what they are finding challenging. It also gives the teacher the opportunity to hear from participants who may not be particularly vocal in class. Typically, this handout is given out in the fourth session, either to fill in during the session or as part of the home assignments for that week. Participants are then asked to bring the completed form to the next session.

Here are some suggestions about what to ask after they have entered their name and the date on the form.

1. What is your overall experience of the program so far?
2. What are you learning and discovering from practicing the body scan, the mindful movement practices, and the sitting meditations? The insights? The challenges?
3. Are you finding time to practice? If so, do you have a specific time that you practice?
4. What are you learning and discovering from the informal practices? The insights? The challenges?
5. Have you had any unusual experiences from doing the practices?
6. Do you have any other comments or concerns?

Meditation Scripts

One of the key features for teaching MBSR is that a teacher is able to guide the meditation practices without reading from a script. This is because facilitating any of the practices invites the teacher to be in practice, embodying mindfulness. As she guides, she can call upon her own experience. In addition, it is essential that she monitors the group.

Therefore, the following meditation scripts are simply a guide. It is important that you find your own voice, the foundation of which is your practice. A useful method for this is to record your guidance and review it. This will help you develop the language for instruction. Important considerations for language are volume, tone, pacing, and the use of silence. The words should be simple, invitational, concrete versus abstract (minimal use of metaphors), use present participles, and contain few personal pronouns. Tone should be conversational rather than trying to generate a special state of mind in your participants. A teacher needs to understand and convey the intention and form of the meditations while she is guiding the practices. It is essential to leave extended periods of silence (these are identified in the scripts that follow) so that participants gain access to their own experiences. As you move through the MBSR program, these periods of silence increase in length.

Body Scan Meditation

What follows is an example of how to lead the body scan meditation practice. It should be viewed as a description of fundamental components to address. The instructions should be simple and easily heard. Pacing and choice of words are key. You are supporting your participants in a practice that involves paying attention in a particular way, exploring sensations in various regions of the body, and then releasing attention before moving to another part of the body.

Typically, the body scan is practiced lying down on the floor. However, if and when adaptations are necessary, the teacher can suggest sitting in a chair or the use of props to support the body lying down. If participants choose to lie down, having a blanket or yoga mat to rest on is helpful, as is having something to cover the body as needed.

Teaching any of the meditation practices invites the teacher to be in practice. As she facilitates the practice, she can call upon the sensations in her own body, using them as a guide. At the same time, she is maintaining awareness of her participants.

Note: The body scan in session 1 will have more guidance and fewer periods of silence than the instruction given in session 8.

In this script, we start the practice at the feet and move through the body, ending at the head. Where you start is less important than making sure that you move the attention around the body systematically.

Finding a comfortable position either on the floor or sitting in a chair and taking a few moments to settle in, closing the eyes or softening the gaze. Allowing the body to be supported by the floor or the chair. Noticing sensations in the body or from the surface of the skin. This time is an opportunity to be fully present and awake to sensations in the body, however they are in any given moment. In this way, we are accessing our own sources of wisdom and healing.

Some sensations may be experienced as pleasant or unpleasant...or even strong. In some areas of the body, there may be no awareness of sensation. As best you can, staying with each sensation moment to moment, noticing the actual sensations themselves. You may be noticing a preference for some sensations, wanting them to remain, and equally, you may want others to be gone or lessen. Learning to notice this, knowing there is no right way to be with the various sensations, discovering a way to accept whatever is arising, safely holding the experience, and acknowledging what is present.

(Pause for 25 seconds)

In paying attention to the body in this way, it is likely that you may become aware of the breath moving in and out of the body.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

Bringing attention to the breath, wherever you best sense the body breathing. This may be at the nostrils, the mouth, the throat, or in the movement of the ribs and chest or at the abdomen as the belly expands and releases. Sensing what the breath does quite naturally. Allowing the attention to rest here, on the rhythm of breathing.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

And now, bringing the attention to the abdomen and noticing the sensations of breathing here.

(Pause for 25 seconds)

And gathering the attention from this focus of breathing at the belly and moving it down the left leg, traveling down the full length of the leg, down the thigh, the knee, the lower leg, the ankle, to the toes of the left foot, and becoming aware of any sensations that might be arising in the toes and foot.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

These sensations might be of heat or cold, moisture or dryness, perhaps tingling, a sense of the toes themselves, the nails, the nailbeds, and sensations arising from the surface of the skin. Be with the experience of whatever is arising from this part of the body, whether there are sensations or none.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On the out-breath, releasing the attention from the toes and moving it along to the sole of the left foot, including the heel. Sensing this area and what might be arising in this moment from this part of the body.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On an out-breath, gently releasing the attention from the sole and heel of the left foot and on an inhalation bringing attention to the whole of the foot, the top surface, the heel, the sole of the foot, and the toes. Gently exploring what might be present as you continue to breathe.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On an out-breath, shifting the attention from the foot and on an inhalation bringing attention to the ankle. Noticing what might be present. Sensing the front of the joint, the back and sides, and deep into the ankle itself.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

Now, on the out-breath, letting go of the left ankle, bringing the attention on the in-breath to the left lower leg, the area between the knee and the ankle. Becoming aware of whatever sensations are here. Sensing the length of the lower leg. The calf muscles, the shin. Perhaps the calf is in contact with the floor and noticing pressure if there is pressure. Noticing sensations that may be arising from the surface of the skin ... sensations of heaviness, lightness, heat or cold, dampness, dryness. Gently investigating whatever may be arising in this moment.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

On the out-breath, letting go of the left lower leg, and bringing the attention along with the in-breath to become aware of the left knee. Sensing the front of the knee, the kneecap, the sides, the back, and then deep into the knee joint itself. Sensing heaviness, relaxation, tenseness, ease. Whatever is present. Being attentive to this part of your body as you rest here, breathing.

You may have noticed that the attention has moved to thinking. A story, a worry, a memory. If this has happened, noticing that this is where the attention has moved, recognizing this is a moment of waking up. This is something that will happen many times. Once you've noticed that this has happened, seeing if it's possible to bring attention back to the knee and the physical sensations that may be arising. In this way, we are learning to steady attention using the physical sensations of the body as an anchor to the present moment.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Now, letting go of attending to the left knee, as you bring attention along with the in-breath to the left thigh. So, noticing what is arising in this area, softening into its length. Perhaps there is a sense of heaviness, lightness, warmth, coolness, tingling. Noticing what sensations are present from the skin...and from deep inside.

Developing this gentle, open curiosity and awareness to whatever is present or absent. And if there is not much arising in this moment, bringing attention to that. Sometimes as we maintain this attention to the body, we can become aware of a painful region, or an ache. If this is so, gently noticing this and then seeing if it's possible to return to being with the physical sensations arising from the left thigh.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On that next out-breath, releasing attention from the left thigh, and now gently moving the attention along with the in-breath across the lower belly and down the entire right leg to the toes of the right foot. Taking time to become aware of this part of the body. Sensing all five toes from the big toe to the smallest one. Just being present. Noticing the nails and the nailbeds, the space between the toes, or perhaps the toes touching each other.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

On an out-breath, releasing awareness of the toes as you bring attention with an in-breath to the sole and heel of the right foot. Again, being curious about any sensations that may be arising from this part of the body. Just paying attention as best you can in this moment.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Now on that next out-breath letting go of the sole and heel of the right foot as you bring your attention to the full length and width of the foot resting here. Noticing any sensations and exploring them.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Letting go of the right foot as you bring attention to the right ankle on an inhalation. Noticing the front of the ankle, the sides, the back, and deep into the joint. Allowing for all sensations and noticing if thoughts are present. Often as the body quiets, thoughts arise. If that happens, our practice is to recognize the thoughts and then return the attention to the part of the body that we are holding in awareness. In this way, we are slowly learning over time to let go of getting caught up in the stories of the mind.

We are allowing for the experience to be just as it is and letting the body and a sense of the breath be an anchor, a way to return to this moment.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On the out-breath, releasing the right ankle, moving the attention along with the breath to the lower leg. Noticing the length of this part of the body: the shin, the sides, and the calf. Holding this part of the body in gentle awareness and allowing for all sensations or the absence of sensations.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On the out-breath, letting go of the right lower leg as you bring attention along with the breath to the right knee, including the kneecap. Noticing any sensations from the skin or from deep inside the knee. Just observing without judgment.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

On an out-breath, releasing the knee, as you bring your attention with the in-breath to the right thigh. Sensing its length, and any sensations arising from the skin or from deep inside the thigh, sensations of relaxation, lightness, heaviness, tenseness, softness, whatever is arising we can be present for.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

Letting go of the right thigh, and now bringing awareness along with the breath to the area of the pelvis and the lower abdomen. Feeling where the buttocks are making contact with the floor or the chair. Noticing the right hip and the left hip. This is an area of the body that contains the organs of reproduction and elimination.

Being with the lower abdomen, the entirety of the pelvis as it cradles this area. Gently breathing in and out and releasing into any sensations that may be arising here.

Sometimes there can be strong sensations that arise from this area, and if that happens, knowing you can return your attention to the breath as a way of anchoring to the present. And then when ready, gently returning your attention to being present for the sensations that may be arising from the lower abdomen and pelvis.

(Pause for 25 seconds)

Now letting go of the lower abdomen and the pelvis and bringing attention to the lower back. You may sense an arch in the lower back, or perhaps it has some contact with the floor or the chair. For some people, the lower back is an area that can hold tension, so being present as best you can with whatever is arising and gently releasing with each out-breath.

(Pause for 25 seconds)

On the out-breath, letting go of the lower back and bringing attention to the whole length of the spine as you rest here, breathing in and out. Noticing any areas of tenseness, ease, pain, comfort, vibration. Releasing as best you can with each out-breath.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

And now letting go of paying attention to the sensations arising from the spine and bringing attention with an in-breath to the belly, to the region of the abdomen. Pausing here a moment or two and noticing the rise and fall of the belly, as you breath in and out. Steadying attention, being present for the physical sensations arising here, as you rest, aware and awake.

(Pause for 15 seconds)

Now, gently moving your attention and your breathing up into the chest, where you may become aware of the beating of your heart and the movement of the ribs. Not going anywhere, or doing anything, developing an openness to all that is arising here. Noticing the entire torso and the chest moving as you breathe. Taking a moment here to be present.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

Sometimes as we hold the body in stillness, we become acutely aware of a region that may be painful in some way. If that is so, bringing attention to that area, breathing into it, and breathing out from it, softening, and letting go as best you can. You might choose to pay attention to the sensations in this area. Sometimes it can be helpful to intentionally move, paying attention to the movements, and then when you feel ready return to your original position. In this way, you are working wisely with what is possible.

And now on the out-breath, letting go of the torso and chest as you move the focus along with the in-breath up into the left shoulder, and down the length of the left arm, bringing attention into the fingers of the left hand. Taking a moment here to notice any sensations that may be arising in this moment from this part of the body.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

Letting go of the fingers of the left hand, as you bring attention to the back of the hand and the palm of the left hand, including the left wrist. Taking a moment here, being curious, gently exploring sensations, regardless of whether they are pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

Letting go of the back, the palm of the hand, and the left wrist, and on an in-breath bringing attention up into the forearm and the left elbow. Taking a moment here, exploring sensations that may be appearing. Steadying attention in this way.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On an out-breath, letting go of the left forearm and left elbow, bringing attention along with an in-breath up into the upper arm and left shoulder. Steadying attention as you continue to breathe, becoming aware of any sensations that are arising. Noticing the length of the upper arm, the weight, any sensations arising from the surface of skin, and bringing attention to the left shoulder, the front, the back, and the side, including the armpit.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

On an out-breath letting go of the left upper arm and shoulder, bringing attention across the upper chest to the right shoulder and down the full length of the right arm into the fingers of the right hand. Steadying attention here, noticing, becoming aware. A gentle and kind curiosity for what may be arising as you attend in this way. Noticing if thinking has appeared, and letting that go, and returning to exploring sensation arising from the fingers of the right hand.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On an out-breath letting go of the fingers of the right hand, bringing attention with an in-breath to the back of the hand, the palm, and the wrist. Taking a moment here to notice, and to become aware of any sensations that may be arising.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

Now moving the attention from the back of the hand, the palm, and the wrist of the right hand, up into the right forearm, including the right elbow. Taking a moment here, noticing.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On an out-breath, letting go of the right forearm and elbow as you bring attention into the right upper arm and right shoulder. Taking these next few moments to notice sensation, resting quietly, awake, and aware. Holding a gentle and openhearted awareness as you pay attention and breathe.

(Pause for 15 seconds)

On an out-breath, releasing the right shoulder as you bring attention into both shoulders, and the shoulder blades. Noticing what may be arising, as you lie here, gently breathing and paying attention.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

On the out-breath, letting go of the shoulders and shoulder blades, bringing attention to the throat and neck. Softening and releasing as best you can, noticing any sensations of tension, sensations of softness, warmth, coolness. Just being present.

(Pause for 12 seconds)

And now on the out-breath, letting go of the area of the throat and neck as you move awareness with the breath into the face and head. Sensing the jaw, the chin, the lips, the mouth, the teeth, the tongue, the roof of the mouth, the floor and sides of the mouth, the cheeks, the nose and nostrils, the eyes, the eyelids, the eye sockets, the eyebrows and the space between the eyebrows, the forehead, the sides of the head, the ears.

We use the muscles of the face many times during the day to express emotions and thoughts. This is an opportunity to release any tension and to be present.

(Pause for 12 seconds)

And now on an out-breath, choosing to gently release the attention and awareness of the sensations arising from the face, as you move attention with the breath to the back of the head, the scalp, and the roots of the hair. Perhaps becoming aware of the weight of the head and contact that the back of the head is making with the floor.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

And now, bringing awareness to the full length and breadth of the body lying here. From the head, all the way down to the toes, including the arms. Noticing the weight of the body and the points of contact.

Feeling the body and the movement of the breath, aware as you lie or sit here. Feeling complete and whole just as you are and allowing this being present to deepen, existing in this place of quiet.

A state of relaxed awareness and openness to things as they are. Knowing this acceptance and stillness can itself be healing, as you lie or sit here, awake.

(Pause for 15 seconds)

Remembering that this state of clarity and open awareness is available to you at any time by simply bringing your attention to your breath and a sense of the body in any moment, no matter what is happening in your day. For you can allow the breath and the body to be a source of strength, balance, and well-being.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

As we come to the end of this body scan meditation, allow the next few breaths to be a little deeper, and then if your eyes have been closed, allowing them to open, or if you chose to soften the gaze, widening the gaze. Taking in the surroundings of the room. Moving the body in whatever way feels comfortable, stretching the arms, legs, wiggling the fingers and toes.

When you feel ready, rolling over onto your right-hand side and taking a moment here.

Then moving into a sitting position if you have been lying on the floor. Noticing this moving as part of the practice of paying attention to sensations as you transition into the next few moments of your day.

Sitting Meditation—Awareness of Breathing

This meditation introduces participants to a short sitting practice of between 10 and 15 minutes in session 2. As this is one of the early practices in the MBSR program, there will be more instruction from the teacher than in meditation practices later on. This is because participants need more verbal support as a way to understand the intention of the practice. The teacher's voice also helps participants anchor attention. It is important to emphasize the need to adopt a comfortable sitting position.

Taking a few moments to find a comfortable position on a chair, cushion, or bench.

Chair instructions: Moving toward the front of the chair, allowing the spine to be supported rather than relying on the back of the chair; pubic bone descending, legs uncrossed, knees hip-distance apart, and feet firmly planted on the floor.

Cushion instructions: If using a cushion, you need to elevate the buttocks so that the knees are lower than the hips. Crossing the legs, so that the knees are resting on the floor and the pelvis is tilted slightly forward. If the knees don't touch the floor, placing a blanket or cushion underneath them for support.

Bench instructions: Have a blanket or mat under the bench so that when you tuck your knees under it they are not resting directly on the floor.

Adopting a posture that can best support this intention to be awake and relaxed. Closing the eyes or taking a soft gaze, looking down toward the floor in front of you. The spine is straight but not stiff. Taking the next few moments to check in with the body sensations. You may become aware of areas of tightness, so making any adjustments, as necessary. Settling into this posture. The head is supported by the neck, and the shoulders are released as much as possible. Letting go of any tension as best you can. Softening the muscles of the face.

Arms resting comfortably by your sides and the hands supported on the thighs or in the lap. Adopting a dignified posture, one that best supports the possibility of being awake and present, along with an attitude of gentleness and curiosity.

Sitting in this seated posture, becoming aware of body sensations ... heat, coolness, tingling, vibration, ease, tension...aware of the length and breadth of the body sitting here, the contact points the body is making with the chair, the cushion, the bench, the floor itself.

(Pause for 20 seconds)

As we sit here paying attention in this way, becoming aware of the sensations of breathing. Noticing where you best sense the body breathing. This may be where the breath comes into the nostrils...noticing the sensations of the in-breath and the movement of the out-breath. Taking your time, attending to the breath at the nostrils. Being present with the sensations of breathing moment by moment.

(Pause for 2 minutes allowing participants to have their own experience)

Attending to the movement of breathing...allowing the breath to breathe itself, no need to change or alter anything.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

You may be noticing that the attention has moved away from the sensations of breathing. When you become aware of this, gently returning the attention back to the movement of the breath. There is no need to judge this movement of attention; recognizing this habit of mind is a part of the practice. Waking up to this is a moment of mindfulness and the choice for now is to return attention to the anchor, which is the breath.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

Continuing to adopt a sense of kindness as we continue to practice in this way. Recognizing when the attention has moved to a different object of interest, like thinking—worry, boredom, agitation, stories—becoming aware of this natural tendency, letting this recede by intentionally returning to this awareness of breathing.

(Pause for 1 minute)

In a moment or two we will be coming to the end of this sitting meditation practice. If you have closed the eyes, allowing them to open, or if you have softened the gaze, widening it and taking in the surroundings of the room, bringing this awareness to your next few moments.

Sitting Meditation—Awareness of Breath and Body

The instructions that follow are an example of how you might lead a breath and body awareness meditation. They are not to be considered as a script for teaching this meditation, but rather a description of key elements to include. As this sitting meditation is taught in the early sessions of the MBSR program, it is helpful to remind participants about the importance of finding a comfortable seated posture, and to repeat instructions about how to adopt such a posture.

Inviting you now to adopt an erect, dignified, and comfortable posture. The chest and spine are gently lifted and relaxed with the neck long and the chin in line with the navel. The head is supported by the neck, shoulders are relaxed. The hands are resting comfortably on the thighs or folded in the lap. Now, closing the eyes or softening the gaze, looking down toward the floor a few feet in front of you. Releasing the muscles of the face. Adopting a dignified posture, one that best supports the possibility of being awake and present, along with an attitude of gentleness and curiosity.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

Taking these next few moments to get comfortable, noticing any areas of tension and making any adjustments necessary.

(Pause for 15 seconds)

Now, bringing your attention to the physical sensations of the body by focusing on where the body is in contact with the floor, the contact the buttocks are making with the chair, cushion, or bench, and if the hands are in contact with each other. Spending a few moments noticing these sensations.

(Pause for 10 seconds)

As you sit here in this seated posture, now bringing attention to the breath at the nostrils and to the sensations of breathing. Taking the next few moments to notice these sensations. There is no hurry. Sensing the breath—some coolness on the in-breath and warmth on the out-breath as the breath leaves the body. Sensing the movement of breathing and being present with the sensations of breathing moment by moment.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

Continuing to notice the full length of each in-breath and out-breath. There is no need to change or alter the breath. Allowing the breath to breathe quite naturally. Resting attention on those sensations.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

Bringing an attitude of openness, of curiosity. Becoming aware of the changing nature of breathing.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

As we practice in this way, you may notice the attention has moved to some other object of interest. It might be thinking, a story, a worry. This is quite normal. Our attention becomes distracted. When we notice this has happened, we simply make a note of it and, letting go of this, escort the attention gently back to the breath, a fresh opportunity to continue practicing. There is no need to pass judgment on yourself when this happens. The movement of attention is quite natural. Instead, bringing a quality of kindness to your awareness, and returning to sensing the breath.

(Pause for 1 minute)

As we continue to pay attention in this way, we are learning to let the breath be an anchor, reconnecting us to each moment as it arises. When the attention wanders, which it will, we recognize that has happened. And this awareness is a moment of waking up, a moment of mindfulness. And then we have this choice, to reconnect to the breath, letting these sensations be an anchor, grounding us in the present.

(Pause for 1 minute)

And now on an out-breath, letting go of this attention on the breath and the exploration of the sensations of breathing at the nostrils, and on an in-breath, expanding the awareness to include the length and breadth of the body sitting here. Allowing the breath to be present but in the background. Adopting an open and receptive stance to the physical sensations presenting themselves, wherever they are in the body.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

When a physical sensation calls your attention, whether from inside the body or from the surface of the skin, bringing curiosity to it and exploring it. Really attending to these sensations as best you can, noticing if they change. And when they no longer hold your attention, returning to being with the totality of the body, sitting here. Attending to the movement of physical sensations, letting the body be an object of interest and an anchor.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

When you notice that the attention has been drawn to thoughts, stories, or sounds, this is a moment of mindfulness and an opportunity to choose to return to the original focus of attending to body sensations.

(Pause for 2 minutes)

And now, on an out-breath, letting go of attending to the body, allowing the physical sensations to be present in the background. Returning the attention to the breath at the nostrils and allowing the movement of breathing to be the anchor.

(Pause for 1 minute)

And when the attention moves, which it naturally does, simply escorting it back to the breath gently, without rigidity, with a sense of intention and starting again. Remembering that coming back to the breath is a part of mindfulness just as is focusing on the breath itself.

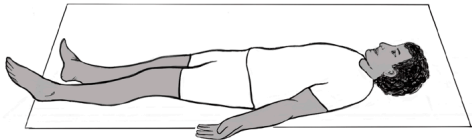
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Maintaining a steady focus on breathing as you sit here. The breath is always with you, always present, an anchor to current experience.

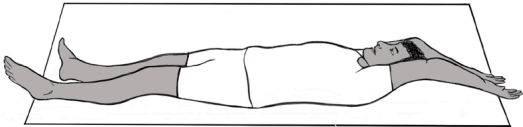
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And now as we bring this practice to a close, opening the eyes or widening the gaze and moving the body in whatever way is needed.

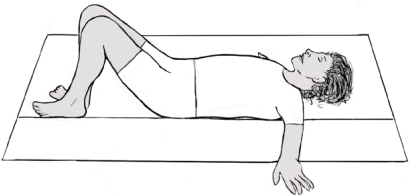
Lying-Down Yoga Sequence



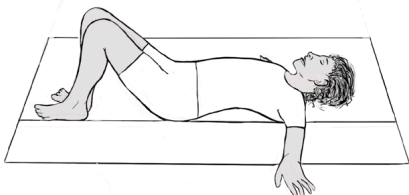
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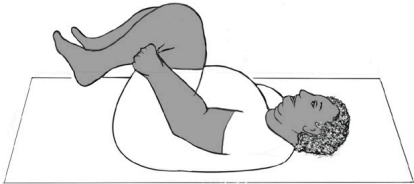
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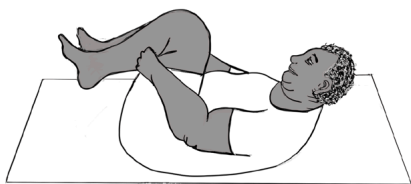
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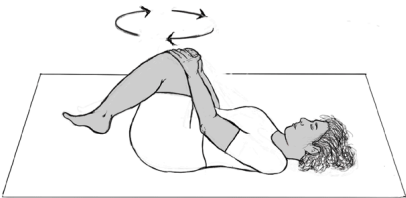
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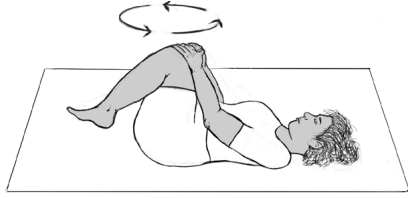
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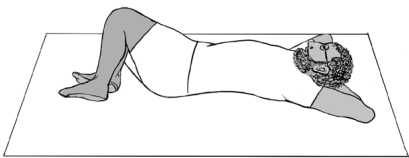
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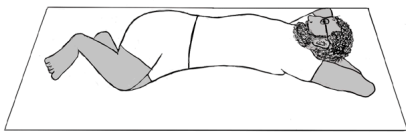
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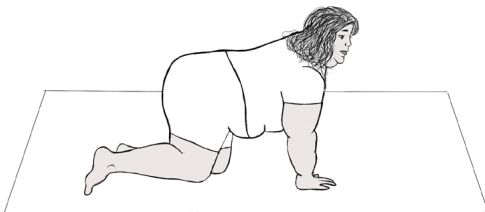
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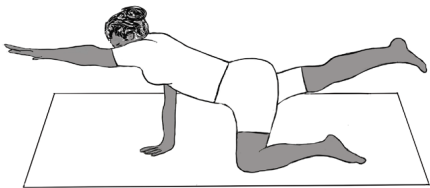
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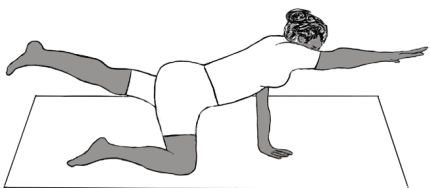
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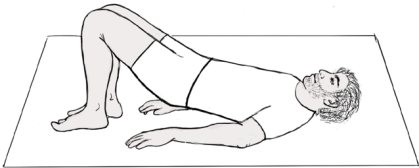
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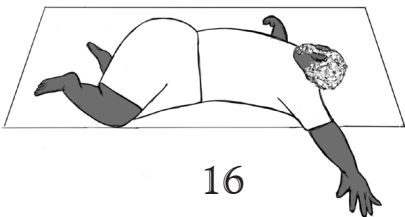
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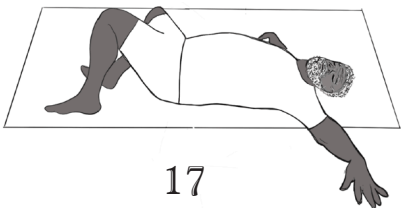
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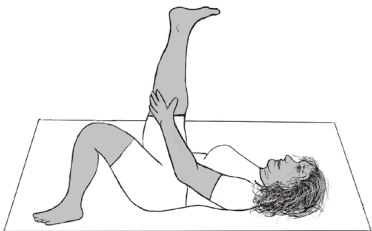
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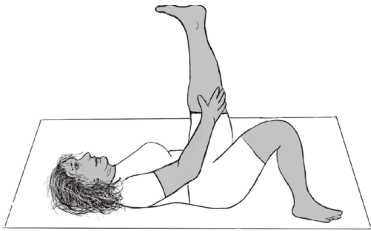
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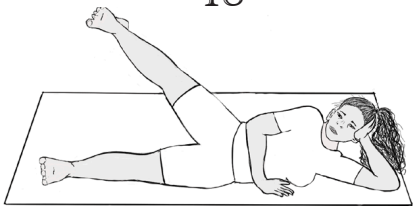
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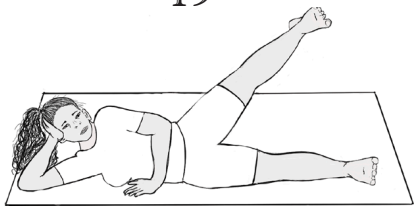
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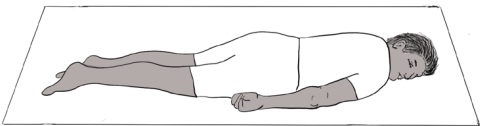
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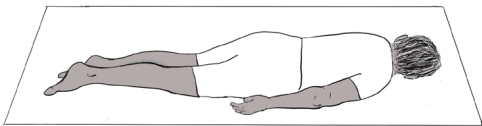
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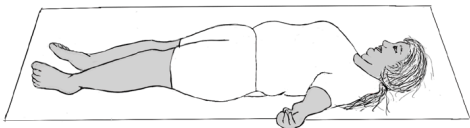
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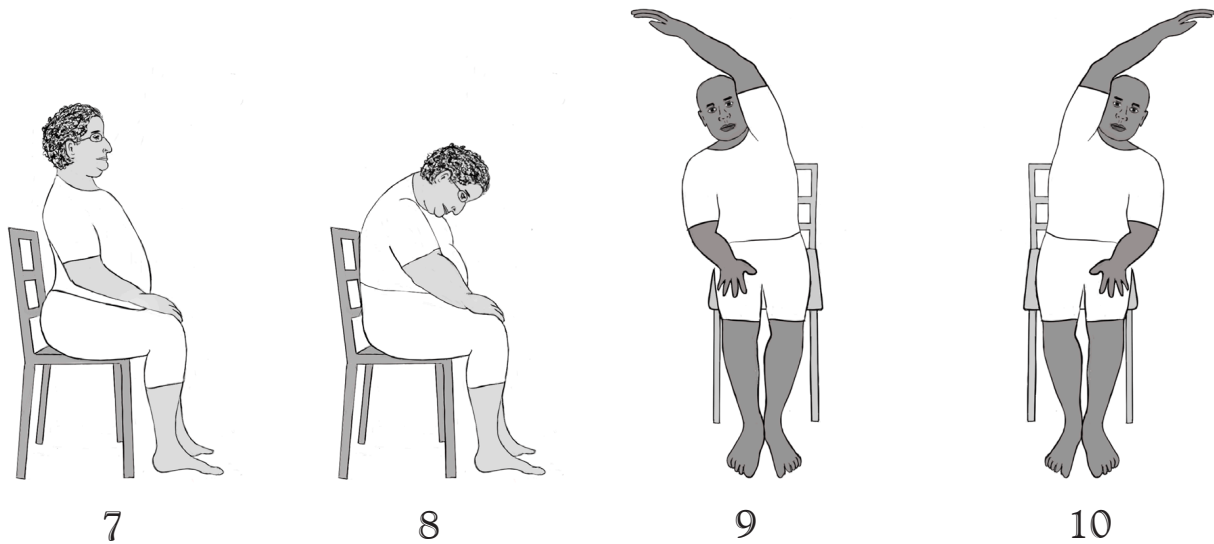
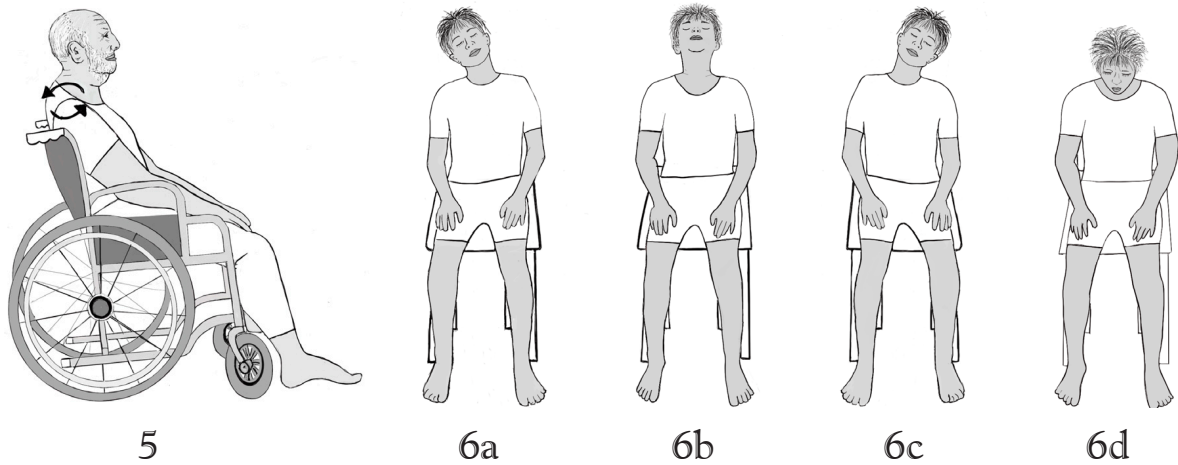
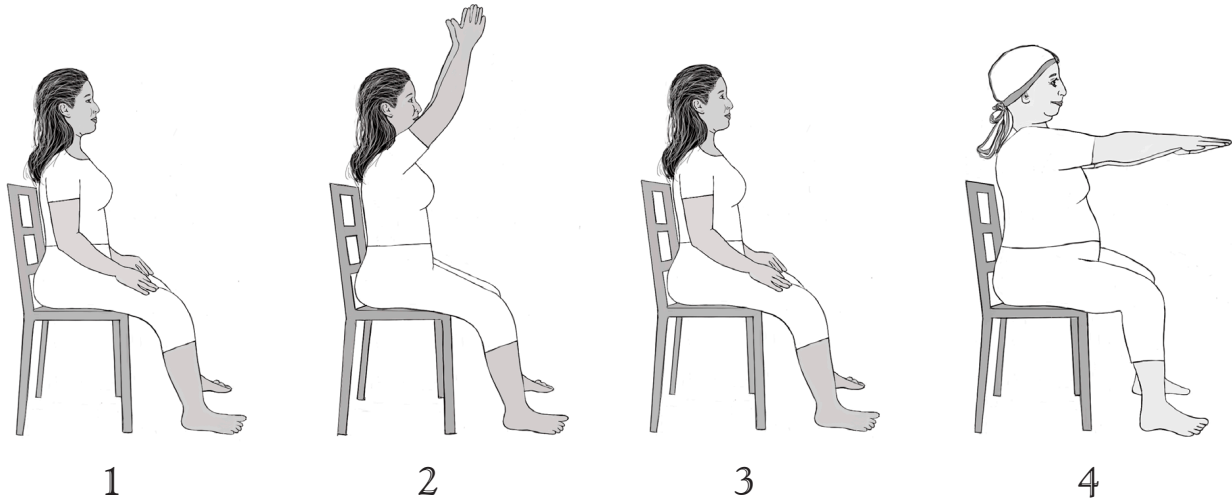


23



24

Chair Yoga Sequence





11



12



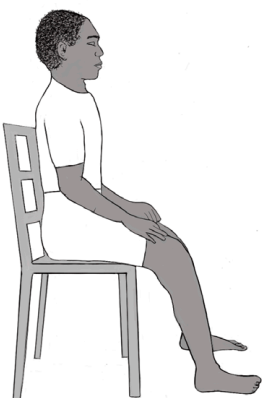
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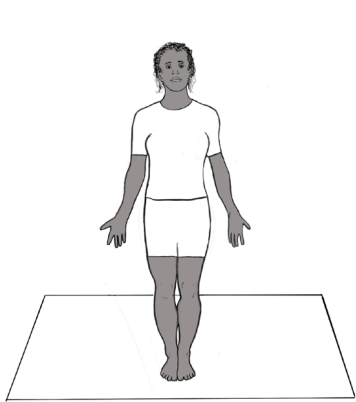


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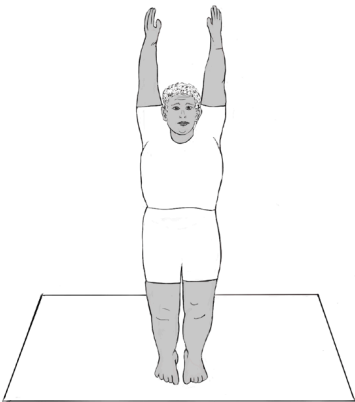


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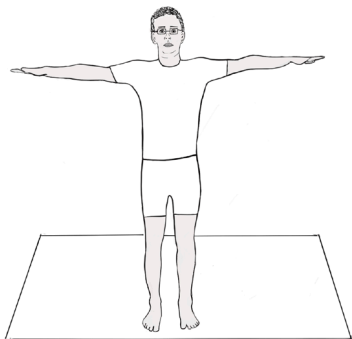
Standing Yoga Sequence



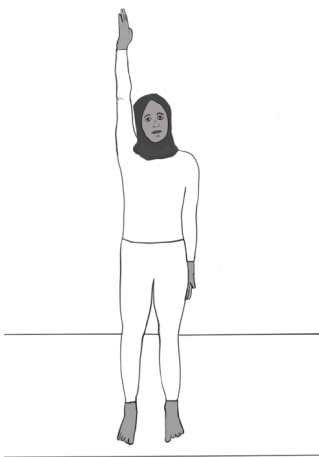
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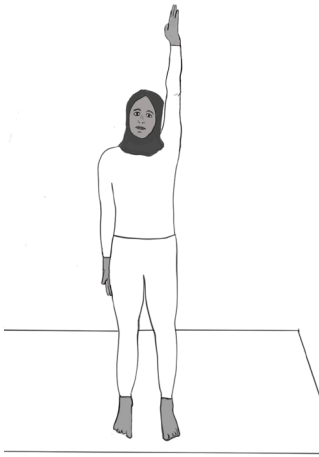
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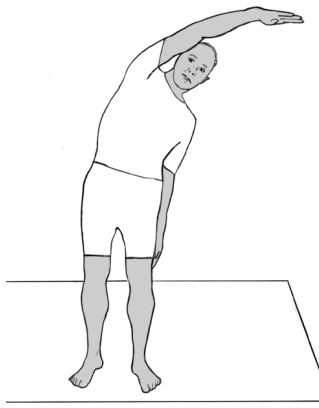
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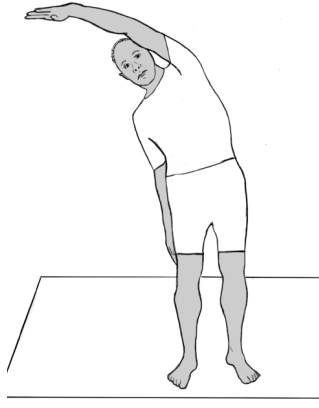
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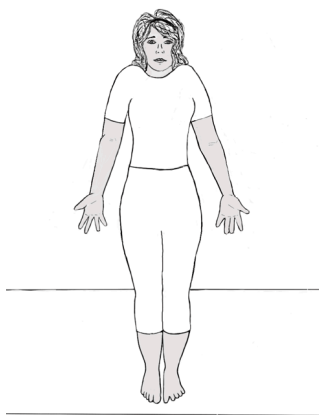
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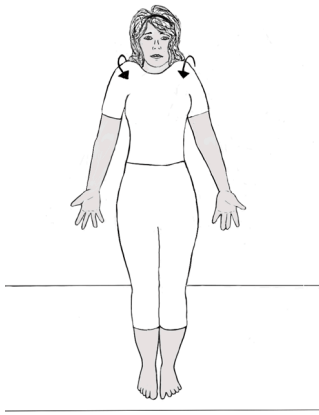
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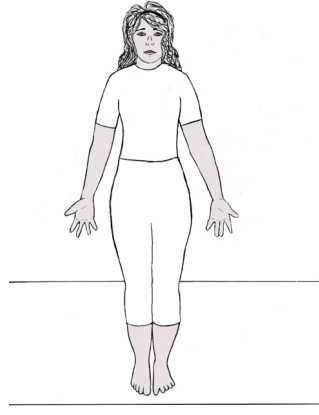
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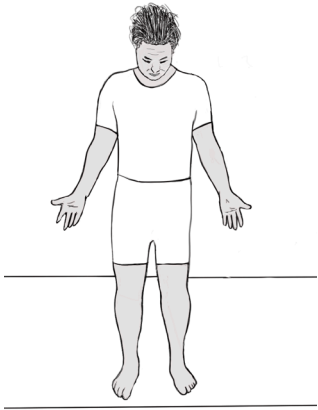
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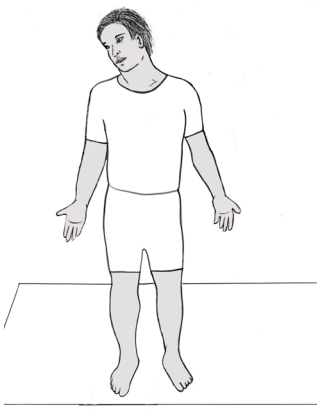
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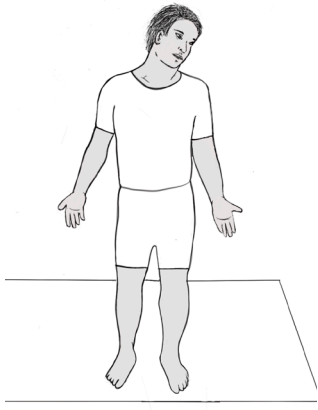
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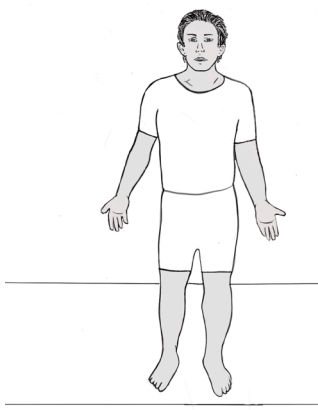
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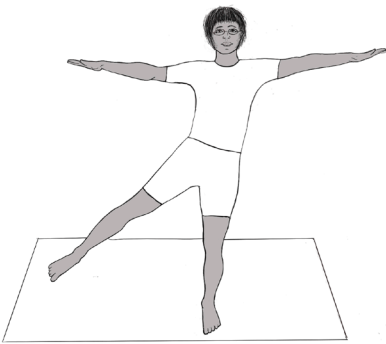
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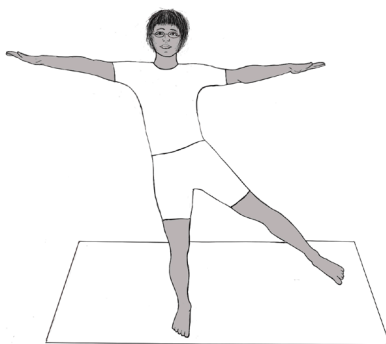
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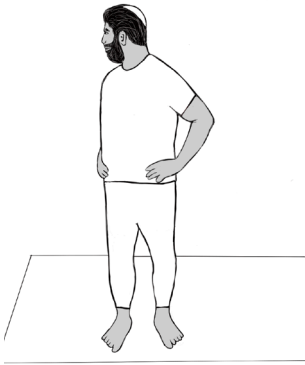
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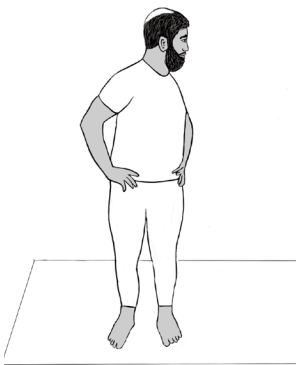
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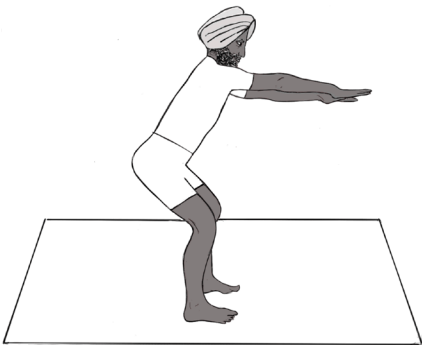
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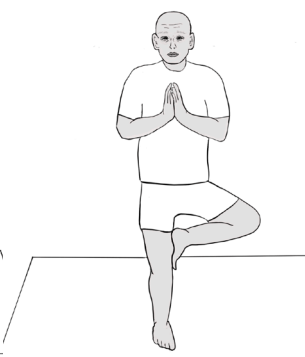
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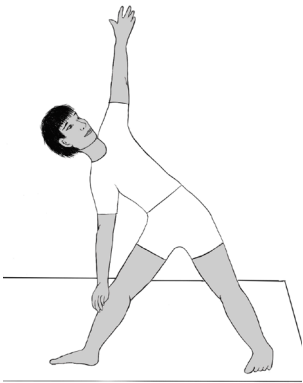
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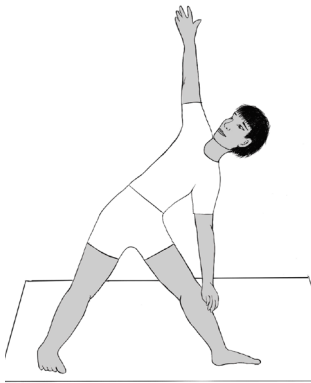
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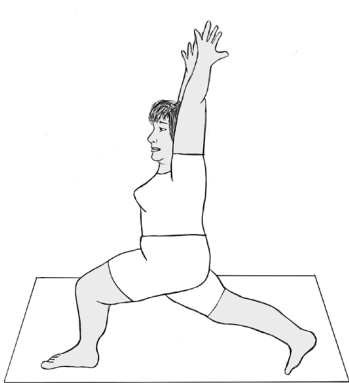
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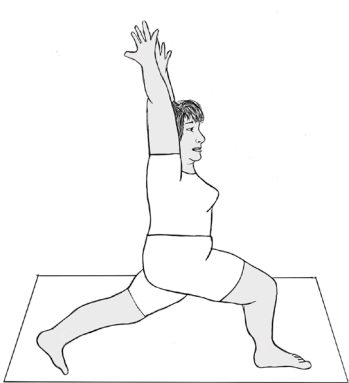
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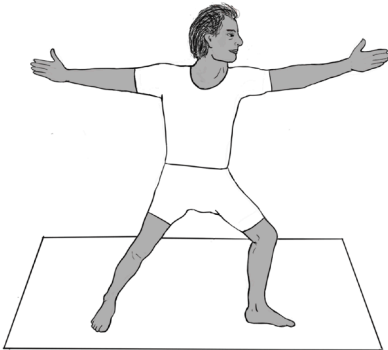
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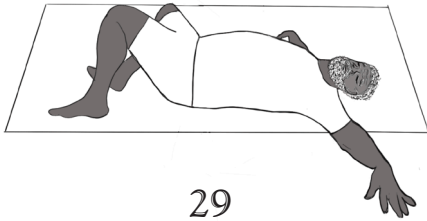
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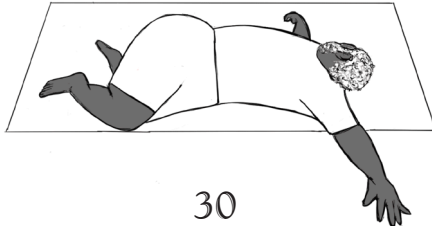
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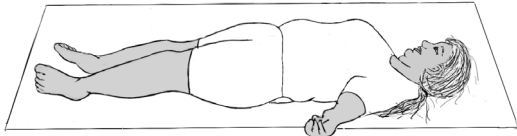
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