

POSE LIBRARY

All Curves

Crocodile Breathing

I put this pose in as a nice thing to do in class, or offer for your students to do as a home practice, to stretch the musculature of the spine with the breath from the inside of the person's structure. This is valuable for low back pain caused by excessive lordosis, and a great way to stretch the thoracic spine in a gentle way.

It is also very calming to the nervous system, and massages the Vagus nerve which controls the parasympathetic nervous system (rest and digest) - an antidote to stress. The stress hormone, cortisol, in high doses over long periods, contributes to weakening of the bones. As excessive kyphosis also puts the thoracic spine at a higher risk for osteoporotic vertebral compression fractures (VCF's) this pose is a double bang for your buck asana!

Lying face down using the arms or a blanket for the forehead to rest on, begin to slowly and progressively start deepening the inhale. As the breath gets deeper, the diaphragm will move down compressing the visceral organs. This will cause the low back to rise through no effort other than the breath, providing a gentle stretch to the musculature surrounding the lumbar spine. NOTE: For excessive lordosis in the lumbar spine, place a folded blanket under the pelvis to lengthen the lower back, aiding in the stretch that can be attained.



Cakravakasana - Ruddy Good Pose (Variation)

This is one of the hallmark poses of Viniyoga. I tell my students if there is only one pose they can practice, this is the one - because it keeps the spine healthy, imbuing the intervertebral discs with fluid and increasing circulation to the musculature around the spine. It is also a pose you can work at 'perfecting' and modifying for a long time to come - helping yourself and your students adapt it in the way that best serves each individual's unique spinal curvatures.