Ready, Set, Focus

Recommended for Grades:

6-12th grade

Practice Description:

This practice is designed to energize and focus our attention. It can be useful for test taking, working with others in groups, working independently, or when energy is low.

Poses include: shark fin breathing, flying bird pose, washing out and butterfly breathing.

Transcript:

- *Chime sound*

Welcome to the ready, set, focus practice.

Let's use our gentle attention to energize and focus using shark fin breathing, flying bird pose, washing out and butterfly breathing.

When you are ready, stand strong, with your feet shoulder width apart and your arms by your sides.

Take a moment to notice how you feel.

A shark swimming fast makes a "swish" sound and that's the noise we make with this breath.

As you breathe in, extend your hands wide at your sides. Then raise your arms up and over your head until your palms come together. Stand tall, look up, and reach up while keeping your palms together.

Lower your palms down in front of your heart as you breathe out and make the sound of a shark swimming, "swish."

Again, extend your arms to the sides, circle palms up over your head, stretching tall… as you breathe in.

Bring your palms down, making the sound of a shark, "swish", breathing out.

Again…

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

"Swish", as your arms come down.

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Again…

Animations emphasize the breath

Last time. Arms up, breathe in.

“Swish.”

Relax your arms at your sides.

Take a moment to notice how you feel.

Now, we’re going to practice Flying Bird Pose.

In Flying Bird Pose, you are going to balance on one leg, alternating between the left and the right.

When you are ready, begin by standing strong, feet shoulder width apart, with your arms by your sides.

Focus your eyes on one point to find mental balance.

Shift your weight to your right leg, and lift your left foot up off the ground and out to your side… raise your arms up to shoulder height. Now balance for a moment.

Lower your left foot back to the ground and lower your arms.

Now, move your weight to your left leg, and lift your right foot up off the ground and out to the side as your arms come up. Can you find your balance?

Come back to center and switch sides.

Shift to your right leg, left leg lifts, and your arms rise. Hold… breathe… and balance. Come back to center.

Now back to your left leg. Move slowly enough to feel your balance shifting as you move.

One side…

And the other.

And again.

Pause for 5 seconds

On the next one, stop and hold this balance on one leg for two breaths in…and out.

Pause for 15 seconds

Shift to the other side, and hold this balance. Take two breaths in… and out.

- *Pause for 15 seconds*

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Come back to center, on both feet and relax your arms by your sides.

Notice how you feel now. Strong? Alert?

Now, using Washing Out, you'll twist your spine.

Have you ever looked inside a washing machine to see its center turning back and forth?

You are going to "wash out" your spine like a washing machine, gently swinging your arms, tapping yourself lightly as you twist from side to side.

When you are ready, stand tall, with your feet shoulder width apart. Allow your knees to be soft, and your arms loose.

Keep your feet planted as you twist your spine from side to side, letting your arms gently swing around you… lightly tapping the sides of your body.

Back and forth…from side to side with your arms tapping yourself gently.

Washing out your spine. Can you find a gentle rhythm as you rotate back and forth?

Don't forget to breathe. See if you can coordinate your breath with your twists, breathing in one way… and out the other.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

And let's begin to slow down…. slowing down until we are still.

Be still for a moment…. Notice how you feel. Loose? Strong? Refreshed?

Let's finish with butterfly breathing.

Begin by standing tall with your feet shoulder width apart and allow your knees to be soft.

Clasp your hands together behind your head, with your elbows pointing out to the side, as though they are wings.

Bring your elbows, or wings, together as you breathe out.

Extend your elbows wide… as you breathe in.

Breathe out, rounding your back as your wings come together.

Breathe in, and open your wings wide… and lift your head.

Breathe out, wings together…

Breathe in, wings wide.

Again.

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And finally, allow your arms to come down to your sides and rest.

Now, stand tall… and offer yourself a little smile. Take a moment to appreciate your lungs for bringing fresh air to your body day and night.

Notice your attitude. How you are feeling right now?

- *Chime sound*

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