Standing Balances

Recommended for Grades:

6-12th grade

Practice Description:

This practice is designed to develop focus, physical coordination and balance energy. It can be useful before testing, with the introduction of new materials or new situations, and in social settings where a high level of attunement to oneself or others is required.

Poses include: twist and breathe breath, eagle wisdom pose, chair pose and mountain pose.

Transcript:

- *Chime sound*

Welcome to the standing balances practice.

Together we will reset our energy and attention through balance and focus using the twist and breathe breath, eagle wisdom pose, chair pose and mountain pose.

Take a moment to notice how you feel.

Let's begin the twist and breathe breath by standing with both feet firmly planted on the floor.

When you are ready, make tight fists with your hands. Feel the tension. Then, open your hands. What does that feel like?

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

Are your hands warm? Can you feel a rush of circulation entering your fingers? It's important to notice when your muscles are tight or relaxed.

Clasp the fingers of both hands together in front of you. As you pull your hands apart, feel an easy stretch across your chest and back. Take a couple of breaths here.

Keeping your hands clasped, twist to the right as you gently look in that direction.

Let's do 4 more twists to each side. This time, breathe in as you twist right and out as you twist left.

Remember to keep breathing as you twist.

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And, back to center. Relax your arms.

How do you feel?

Now, we're going to balance like an eagle in eagle wisdom pose.

Begin on your right foot. To help your body feel stable, "plant" your right foot firmly on the floor. Imagine your foot growing roots into the ground as your leg gets strong like a tree trunk.

When you are ready, lift your left foot and cross it in front of your standing leg, and plant it firmly on the ground. Or you can try to wrap it around your right calf, as best you can.

Now, bring your arms in front of you, crossing your right arm over the left, with your thumbs down. Clasp your hands together. Now, draw your hands down, and around so they are in front of your heart. Can you feel your elbows tucked into your ribs, like the wings of an eagle?

Find your balance, and breathe.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

Breathe in… and out.

In… out again.

To help balance, try tightening your arms… or focusing your eyes on the spot on the floor or wall. If you lose your balance, you can start over.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

One more breath.

Release your arms, uncross your legs and come back to standing on both feet.

Let's try eagle wisdom pose on the other side.

When you are ready, begin by balancing on your left foot. Lift your right foot and cross it in front of your left leg. Plant both feet firmly on the ground. Or, you can try to wrap it around your left calf, as best you can.

Bring your arms in front of you, crossing your left arm over the right, with your thumbs down. Clasp your hands together. Now, draw your hands down, and around so they are in front of your heart. Can you feel your elbows tucked into your ribs? Do they feel like the wings of an eagle?

Find your balance and breathe.

If you lose your balance, try tightening your arms… or focusing your eyes on the spot on the floor or wall that you chose earlier.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

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One more breath.

Release your arms and uncross your legs.

Did you feel strong and steady? Were you swaying like an eagle on a branch?

Now, let's turn your body into a chair in chair pose.

To help your body feel stable, "plant" your feet firmly on the floor, shoulder width apart.

Pretend you're about to sit down in a chair. Bend your knees and sit back. Only go as far as you comfortably can.

Keep yourself in the chair pose and reach up toward the sky with your arms, and look up.

Bring your arms down to your sides, but keep your legs strong in chair pose.

Again, reach up and breathe in.

Breathe your arms down and breathe out

Reach up…and release your arms.

Remember to keep your legs strong in chair pose.

Release your legs and stand tall on both feet.

Take a moment to appreciate your strong body!

How do your legs feel? Is your heart beating fast?

For our last balance exercise, you are going stand strong and still in Mountain pose.

Balance evenly on both feet and feel them planted firmly on the floor. Lift your toes to help tighten your legs …and then release them keeping your legs strong. Bring your shoulders back and down so your chest is open, with your arms at your side. Find a place in front of you to focus your eyes so you feel steady. And breathe….

Let your body feel strong and stable like a mountain.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

Remember to keep breathing.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

You may place your hand on your heart, to show a gentle kindness and appreciation to your strong body as you breathe in and out.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

To finish, release your body, resting your shoulders and chest.

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Notice what it's like to stand tall… and strong. How do your shoulders feel? Your legs? Is your breathing fast or slow?

You have now completed to standing balances exercise. Take a moment to think about how you feel.

- *Chime Sound*

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