Strength and Flexibility

Recommended for Grades:

K4 – 12th grade

Practice Description:

This practice is designed to bring strength and flexibility to ourselves, physically and emotionally. It can be used for times when we need to look at a situation differently, bring an open-mind to a situation or person or pay attention to the challenges of a friend or relative.

Poses include: heart and belly breathing, the 6 movements of the spine, mountain pose and candle breath.

Transcript:

- Chime sound

Welcome to the strength and flexibility practice.

Together we will find flexibility within our strengths.

Let's begin with heart and belly breathing.

When you are ready, stand with both feet firmly planted on the floor with your legs strong.

How you are feeling right now?

Start to rub your palms together slowly.

Now a little faster.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

Do you feel warmth? Tickling? Smoothness?

Gently, bring one hand to your heart, and put the other on your belly.

Take a big breath in, all the way into your belly….

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

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And then a long, slow breath out….

Again….

- *Pause for 10 seconds*

Again….

- *Pause for 10 seconds*

Again….

- *Pause for 10 seconds*

Once more….

- *Pause for 10 seconds*

And let your arms rest by your sides. Keep breathing.

Can you feel your breath without your hands on your belly and heart?

Do you know your spine can move in 6 different directions?

To practice the 6 movements of the spine, make sure both feet are firmly planted on the floor, with your hands on your hips.

Gently roll your shoulders back, so that your heart feels open. Look up and focus your eyes on the wall or the screen. Feel your back arch backwards.

Now roll your shoulders forward, and lower your chin to your chest. Feel your spine round forward.

Again, breathe in, open your chest…. looking upwards.

And breathe out, rolling your shoulders forward, looking down toward your toes.

Again, back … and forwards….

Arch…… and round….

One more time.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

Come back to center and stand tall.

- *Pause for 3 seconds*

Now we'll arch our spine from side to side, like a rainbow.

Bring both arms up over your head.

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Lean over to your right side and drop your right arm…arching your side as you make a big rainbow spine.

Come up to center with both arms up, and arch like a rainbow to your left side, swinging your arms with you.

Move from side to side, arching your spine and moving your arms.

Breathe in….and out, moving from side to side. Keep your feet firmly planted

- *Animation continues to show the movement*

Come back to center… standing tall and strong, arms at your sides.

- *Pause for 3 seconds*

Now, we'll twist our spine.

With both feet firmly planted, bring your palms together over your head.

As you turn to the right, let both arms drop- the right one behind, and the left in front. And look over your right shoulder.

Keeping your feet planted, bring both arms over your head as you come back to center.

This time twist to the left, dropping the left arm behind and the right in front. Look over your left shoulder… and breathe.

Again, back to center, twist to the right.

And to the left.

Keep going. Remember to breathe as you twist.

Back to center, stand tall, and release your arms to your sides.

Consider silently offering your spine a moment of appreciation for all its flexibility.

Let's stand strong and still like a mountain in mountain pose.

Plant both feet firmly on the floor. Bring your shoulders back and down so your chest is open, like when you feel very proud. Then focus your eyes on one spot in front of you so you feel steady. And breathe….

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

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

- *Pause for 10 seconds*

Now, release your muscles. What did it feel like to stand strong?

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How are you feeling right now?

- *Show Snap scale*
- *Pause 3 seconds*
- *Chime sound*

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