

Five Element Yoga® For Restful Sleep

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1. TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF DURING THE DAY "I let myself feel my truth."

Whatever does not get integrated in your mind and emotions during the day may wake you up at night wanting to be felt and acknowledged. Take time to feel during the daytime to feel and notice your truth: like feeling tired, sad, happy, touched, tender, etc. A great way to do this is with your hands on your belly and heart, go inward and get a sense your body, breath, and feelings. Let everything be, just as it is, and let yourself be - just as you are.

PRACTICE BEFORE BED:



2. CHINMAYA *embodied knowledge mudra* hands are held downward facing. "Supported by the Earth, I am safe and secure."

Chinmaya mudra directs the breath and energy to the pelvis and legs to help ground and calm the mind, body, and nervous system. The first chakra - wheel of energy - becomes nourished and balanced, aiding in feeling safe and secure. Fear and anxiety can be released to sense inner peace and harmony. Chinmaya can bring relief from insomnia – try it in bed! Increases Earth and Water elements. Hallmarks: security, embodiment, and trust.

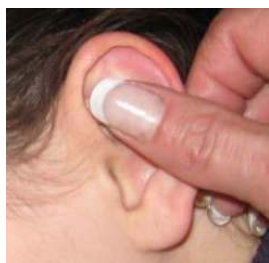
Hold for 5-10 natural breaths, then repeat phrase both aloud and silently.

These mudras are modified from the book Mudras for Healing and Transformation- Joseph & Lilian LePage.



3. FOOT MASSAGE "I am grounded and present in my body."

Massage your feet to warm and ground. Give all of your attention to your feet by looking at them as you lovingly soothe them and notice all the sensations. You may like to use lotion or warmed organic sesame oil for enhanced grounding. (For pregnancy: do not massage your feet unless you are trained as there are points that can induce labor.)



4. EAR MASSAGE "I nourish my body and myself."

Massage your ears with sesame oil, attempting to 'unfold' the cartilage to access energy points. Ears, hands, and feet connect to every part of the body, so its like you're receiving a whole body massage when you massage the ears. Very calming and grounding.



5. BREATHE "Going inward like a turtle, I rest and retreat."

Pascimottanasana: Forward bend pose variation. Bend your knees and sit tall. Wrap your arms under your knees clasp opposite elbows. Glue your belly and chest to your thighs. Flexing your feet, slowly press your heels away from you. Do not try to straighten the legs but rather focus on keeping belly and chest on the thighs. Extend exhalation longer than inhalation for many breaths.

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5. SUPPORTED FISH ~ Matsyasana pose *"Breathing deeply, I come home to my true Self."*

This restorative pose creates a wonderful transition from the activity of the day into a relaxed and spacious mind-state for sleep. Relax into Supported Fish for 5-10 minutes with full breathing. Here is how to do it:

1. Use a cushion or bed pillow as a support (pillow can be folded in half).
2. Lay over the support with your shoulders at the top of the pillow and your head off of the pillow. You may like to place a folded blanket or towel under your head. Tuck chin gently towards chest.
3. Position arms 45' from your body (or hands about 2 feet away from hips). Palms face upward in a posture of receptivity.
4. Breathe deeply with longer exhalations through the nose.
5. To come out, roll to your side and rest for a minute (important! Do not spring up from the pose). Remove pillow and lie flat on your back to feel the effects.

Possible Benefits:

- Opens chest muscles, intercostals between ribs, thereby increasing lung capacity and energy.
- Softens and shortens muscles between the shoulder blades and after 90 seconds, the nervous system relays the message to the muscles to let go (this is a Positional Release technique).
- Releases tension in jaw, neck, shoulders, and upper back.
- Opens heart to receive joy.
- Improves posture, especially shoulders rolling forward and head forward syndrome.
- Brings muscles back to their natural position.
- Stimulates the pituitary, pineal and thyroid glands.
- Activation of thymus gland stimulates the body's immune function.
- Great for upper back, neck and shoulder pain and realignment.

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Five Element Yoga® is a vibrant and colorful healing practice created by Jennifer Reis. She draws from Eastern traditions of Ayurveda and Chinese Medicine, as well as Integrative Yoga Therapy and Kripalu Yoga. The result of practice both nourishes and balances your inner earth, water, fire, air, and ether elements to cultivate harmony and increase health.

**Join Jennifer for Five Element Yoga retreats
Martha's Vineyard, Kripalu Center, Tuscany and more!**

www.JenniferReisYoga.com