

Yoga Therapy for Creative Energy

WHEN FACED WITH A CREATIVE PROJECT, ARE YOU ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO LAMENT SOMETHING LIKE “I’M NOT CREATIVE” OR “I JUST CAN’T GET STARTED”, “I DON’T HAVE TIME!” The truth is that we all have some kind of creative talent that we are meant to explore. Some of these talents are obvious endeavors like writing, crafting, singing or dancing, and other talents are a little subtler and can include everyday tasks like gardening, parenting, business savvy and time management.

In order to tap into our personal creative power, we can use different techniques to move past the conscious mind and directly connect to the source of our creative energy. If we are willing to explore, we can access the place where the urge to be creative resides. What better way to explore the mystery of creativity than with the ancient art and science of Yoga? In the quest for wellness, yoga can be a powerful way to deepen the creative experience and open our eyes to the universal muse that exists within all of us. Yoga can be a friend to not only the artist’s creative process, but also to the everyday person trying to live a creative life.

The Chakras, Yoga and Creativity

The fifth chakra, Vishuddha, is traditionally located in the throat, but it also encompasses the neck, mouth and jaw. It is considered by many to be the center of expression and the place where we manifest our inner Truth. When our inner truth is revealed, we are usually drawn to find a personal way to convey that truth to the world. For many, this can be beginning of the creative process.

When the throat chakra is open, we are free to tap into the power of authentic creative insights. When insights reveal themselves in this manner, it is natural to want to express them by bringing what we have imagined into reality. Music, creative dance, singing, and the communication through writing and speaking are natural expressions of fifth chakra creativity. Indicators of a blocked throat chakra include an inability to express or release, blocked creativity, sore throat, stiff shoulders and/or a tight neck.

When working with the throat chakra, using the Ujjayi breath is very helpful. This breath is akin to the yogic three-part breath with the added constriction of the throat to regulate the breath intake and release. In addition to better control of the inhalation and exhalation, this technique gives the breath an audible sound. It is because of the subtle sound that some people call it the ocean breath or hissing breath. It can be used during poses in a yoga practice, or from a simple seated meditative position to help focus the mind.

In addition to Ujjayi breathing, chanting the seed sound HAM or singing and making spontaneous noises in your

home yoga practice are also good ways to open the throat chakra. Neck rolls, shoulder shrugs and conscious relaxation of the jaw and face muscles are good ways to warm up the physical area surrounding this chakra before a deeper yoga pose practice. Yoga poses that can help tap into throat chakra energy include backbends like Cobra, Camel and Fish pose. Inversions like Bridge, Shoulder stand, Plow Pose are also recommended because they directly stimulate the thyroid gland, which is associated with this part of the energy body.

The second chakra, known as the water chakra or Svadhisthana, is also associated with creativity. It is considered by many to be the seat of our primal creative force, literally associated with the sacrum, hips and reproductive organs. When this chakra is open we are fluid and open to change. In connection with this kind of aqueous movement in the body, we become able to freely and authentically get in touch with the subtle creative forces that move us into deeper connection with ourselves. When the second chakra is healthy, we are literally able to go with the flow.

When practicing Yoga poses to get in touch with the second chakra, it is important to allow yourself to move freely. Start with slow repetitive and then build up into rhythmic movements with poses like Dolphin, Cat/Cow, Hip and/or Barrel Rolls to get in touch with the water element. Any other flowing movements, such as a flowing squat or lunge synchronized with the breath is energizing for the sacral chakra. Abdominal Breathing, done with the mouth closed, emphasizing the rise of belly with the inhalation and the fall of the belly with the exhalation is also helpful.

Backward bends like Cobra and Upward Facing Dog are good to open up this chakra. To experience an opening in second chakra energy, try poses that go deep into the hips and sacrum like the Yogi Squat, Frog, Pigeon and Bound angle. To stoke the creative fire in the second chakra, try standing poses like Triangle, Warrior II, Crescent moon and Chair pose.

As you experiment with using yoga to get in touch with your creative energy, don’t be afraid to use your intuition to see where the energy leads you. Create a sequence that you think will help solicit the creative connection that you are looking for and practice it a couple of times. Once you have the sequence down, try closing your eyes and feeling your way into what comes next, rather than following the routine. Be intimate with yourself as you practice and ride the wave of creative energy that builds in the body with each breath. Rather than trying to “do” the poses, let the poses “do you” and see what happens! ▲

