

HOME PLAY DAY 1: SOME IDEAS

Personal Practice:

- Identify what you want to experience from your personal yoga practice.
- Create a regular personal practice that suits your needs and feels achievable and realistic
OR
If you already have a personal practice, keep going or introduce something new. Approach this with a beginner's mind.
- Have you ever fallen "off the wagon" with your yoga practice? How does it feel when you stop practising? And how does it feel when you return to yoga? Reflect on this or write in your journal all the ways in which yoga supports you.
- Top Tips are available in the [Foundation Course Resource Portal](#) (see Day 1 Handouts)
- Start your practice journal

**Please Remember: the following are suggestions for optional home study.
You choose!**

Dive in deep, dip your toes in or leave until your intuition leads you back to them at another time.

Handouts:

- Download and read the handouts from Day 1 (access via the [Foundation Course Resource Portal](#))

Firm Foundations:

- Take a Mini Mountain Break at intervals throughout the day: a few mindful breaths in tadasana (mountain pose) to re-ground and re-centre.
- Spend a minute or two barefoot on the earth. Feel the sensations of the soles of the feet in contact with the earth. Imagine roots descending deeper and deeper, and direct energy down into the earth with each exhale and draw energy up from the earth with each inhale. Pause and notice: what do I feel? Journal any observations or insights.
- In Donna Farhi's book (Yoga Mind, Body Spirit) read the following and practice the Inquiry. Record any observations in your practice journal.

You might want to pick one of the topics below, or explore them all over the coming weeks – the choice is yours:

- Read Moving Principle – "Yield" (P35 – 36) and practice the Inquiry on Page 37.
- Read Moving Principle – "Centre" (P42 – 45) and practice the Inquiries on P46 'Finding your Neutral Spine' and 'Spinal Elongation and Riding the Breath'.
- Read Essential Skills Standing Well – Mountain Pose (P88) and practice the Inquiry 'Centering the Weight on the Feet'.
- The base of the pose: read Moving Principle 5 – "Support" (Yoga Mind, Body & Spirit) and practice the Inquiry "The Cascade Effect of the Foundation". Apply this principle to your postures in your home practice: notice – where is the base of the pose, is it balanced, what are the cascade effects throughout the rest of the body?

What is Yoga?

- Read Chapter 1 and Chapter 13 in the Heart of Yoga
- Concentration exercise: Noticing the Vrittis (activities of the mind): Spend 5 minutes in stillness each day.

- What thoughts arise
 - Are they helpful or unhelpful?
 - Can you 'label' or identify them according to the vrittis (see your handout 'What is Yoga: Introducing Patanjali's Yoga Sutras' for a reminder)?
 - Make any notes and observations in your journal
 - If you prefer a guided meditation, log in to the [Meditation Portal](#) and select 'Befriending the Thoughts'
- Memorise the first Sutra 1.1: Atha Yoganusasanam (click [here](#) for a reminder on pronunciation, at 0:08s on the video). Read or repeat this sutra at the beginning of your asana or meditation practice or simply acknowledge your commitment to practice each time you step on your mat or come to your meditation seat.
 - Read Sutras 1.1 – 1.11, either the version in the Heart of Yoga (P149 – 152) or Sri Swami Satchidananda's version (P3 – 11).

Mechanics of the Breath:

- Observe your natural breath throughout the day. Notice any habits or patterns. What might this be telling you?
- Return to the 3-breath practice throughout the day:
 - Exhale – release all that has led you to this point
 - Exhale – let go of all that's yet to come
 - Exhale – arrive fully in the present moment
- Practice Subtle Breath Awareness – a guided version is available in the [Foundation Course Resource Portal](#). What do you notice? Record any observations in your journal.

Or

- Incorporate the 3 part breath / full yoga breath into your personal practice. Record any observations in your journal.
- Read Donna Farhi's Moving Principle – "Breathe" (Yoga Mind, Body & Spirit P29 – 31). Play with the Inquiry on P31 'Letting the Breath Move You'