

## STYLES OF YOGA: DRU YOGA



Dru Yoga is a graceful form of yoga, which aims to create healing and unity by combining Asanas, Pranayama (breath control) and the ancient Eastern tradition of Mudras (hand gestures). With its foundations set firmly in ancient yogic tradition, Dru works on body, mind and spirit to rejuvenate your whole being.

### Who created the style?

Dru is a form of Hatha yoga style and was started in 1978 by a group of yoga enthusiasts including Mansukh Patel, Chris Barrington, Rita Goswami, Annie Jones and John Jones at Bangor University. It is inspired by the teachings of Francis of Assisi and Mahatma Gandhi.

### Where and when it originated?

Dru Yoga is rooted in ancient yogic traditions, and some say it can help improve strength, core stability, and positivity. Dru Yoga practitioners believe connecting to oneself, others, nature, and spirit can help create better communities.

The word Dru in the name refers to Dhruva (stillness), a prince in Hindu mythology whom the god Vishnu honoured with the eternal abode on the Pole Star. Dru can also be translated from Sanskrit as 'pole star' and represents our 'inner still-point'. The goal of Dru yoga is to help cultivate a state of inner calmness and clarity through:

- Traditional posture practices (asanas) in a continual flow of movement.
- Breathwork (pranayama)
- Hand gestures (mudras)
- Visualisations, for those who are not able to do some of the physical yoga practices
- Meditation (dhyana)
- Relaxation
- Positive affirmations

### What differentiates this style from others?

In Dru Yoga, all movements originate from the spine because a flexible, healthy spine supports your entire yoga practice so a deep understanding of core stability is a major focus.

Joints are kept relaxed and soft during movement (as in tai chi). This creates flexibility and a free flow of subtle energy.

Dru Yoga is often gentler than many forms of yoga practice, but its aims and focus are both deep and subtle. Although it does work on a physical level, it is also said to bring about positive transformation by rebalancing both the chakras and the koshas.

Dru Yoga sequences are called Energy Block Release sequences (EBRs), they are easy-to-practise, flowing movements that help to release tension physically, mentally and emotionally. The focus is to balance the energy centres of the body and access the powerful energy of the heart. EBRs often involve gentle, repetitive spinal waves and twists (like Utthita Parsvakonasana - Extended Side Angle Pose) and movements with a deep understanding of core stability (like Wild Thing Pose - knee to floor variation) that promotes spinal health and vitality and relaxes and opens up the body, also relaxing and softening the joints (as in Tai Chi), thus creating flexibility and a free flow of subtle energy.

The practice also incorporates affirmations, focusing on positive thoughts and attitudes, which can affect overall well-being and consciousness. It can create powerful moments of stillness called 'Dru Points', so can strengthen the body and mind.

Dru yoga can be either extremely gentle and relaxing or can focus on developing strength, flow and stamina, making it accessible to all people of all ages.

## Resources

There are some videos to try at <https://druyoga.com/dru-yoga/> including a lovely two-and-a-half-minute Dru yoga dance which is a dynamic form of Dru Yoga "Ananda-antara Dance", which combines asana, mudra and power affirmations. There are also opportunities to try Dru via YouTube, a gentle 10-minute sun salutation can be found here

## References:

<https://druyoga.com/dru-yoga/>

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