

Week 4. Standing Upright

YOGA OFF THE MAT

1. There are many moments when we stand. Perhaps whilst making breakfast, hanging out the washing, doing the ironing, waiting at the supermarket or at the school gate, might you notice whether there's a sense of rushing or holding or maybe a collapse with tiredness or overwhelm? Choose to make one of these moments a tiny yoga practice of yielding by giving your weight to the ground, and receiving the rebound of nourishment that sequences back up through you and inviting a sense of ease and belonging to this moment.
2. In relationship to another person, perhaps during conversation or an interaction, ask yourself how you might yield with your body and your communication.

YOGA ON THE MAT

You might like to explore the principle of yielding from the ground up particularly in standing postures.

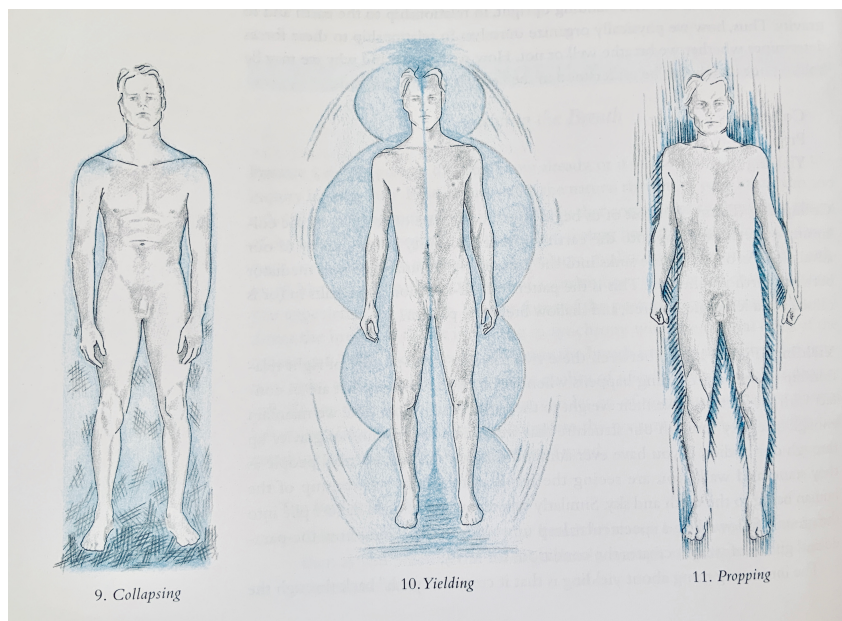
- You can use the wall as a way of getting feedback from the surfaces around you.
- Bending your knees when standing makes it easier to feel the action of yielding to the earth.
- You can fold and unfold any joint as a way to simulate yielding. As you gradually straighten the limb, maintain your connection to the

NOURISHING YOGA Moves with Sam Loe

ground. Yield on your exhalation, feel the levity of the rebounding action on inhalation.

- Tension in the toes, feet, ankles, knees, hips, and buttock area prevent yielding. Check these areas often.

Tadasana

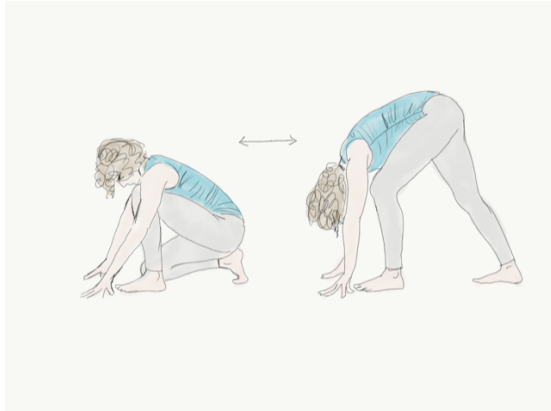


This image comes from Donna Farhi's 'The Breathing Book', she suggests exploring the mountain pose through 3 different lenses.

Start by embodying the feeling of being collapsed into the ground. Notice where you feel your breath. Then do the opposite and imagine that you are holding yourself off the ground, inhabiting the feeling of propping yourself up. What's your breath doing now? Yielding is the third option and is neither propping or collapsing but a place where you feel connected by giving your weight to the earth as well as stacking your bones in a way that there is a rebounding upward force that allows you to sense into neutral standing. Yielding isn't a one of event, just like breathing, it's a moment to moment response.

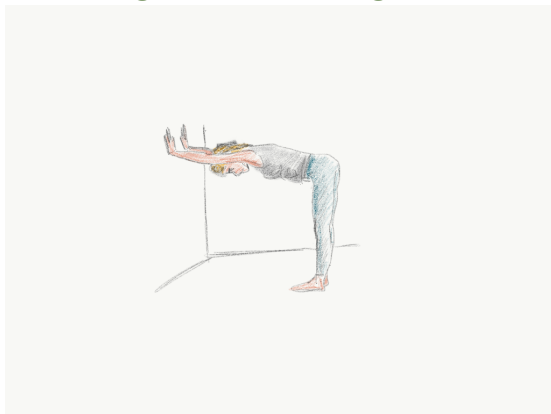
NOURISHING YOGA Moves with Sam Loe

The Sprinter



Begin in an all fours position with the toes tucked under and then bring one foot forwards in line with the opposite knee. This shape is like being on the starting blocks of a race. But don't race off! Stay quiet through your front foot and press down through it to receive the sequence up through your leg as you push off the ground. The back leg will open up through the back of the knee. Keep the head relaxed and the chest connected to the front thigh throughout. Find your easiest pathway between these two shapes. This practice will bring strength your legs as well as being a way to find the bony alignment of your feet, ankles, knees and hips as you raise yourself up from the ground.

Half Dog or Down Dog



As you come into flexion at the hips for your "Dog" pose, gently push against the floor or wall with your hands, explore yielding through the upper body. Notice any areas of collapse through the spine as well as where there is unnecessary tension or propping. Keep bending through the arms and legs as a way of finding the yield. You will know when you are yielding as the breath arrives at the diaphragm and gently expands and condenses three dimensionally.

NOURISHING YOGA Moves with Sam Loe

Spinal Rolls

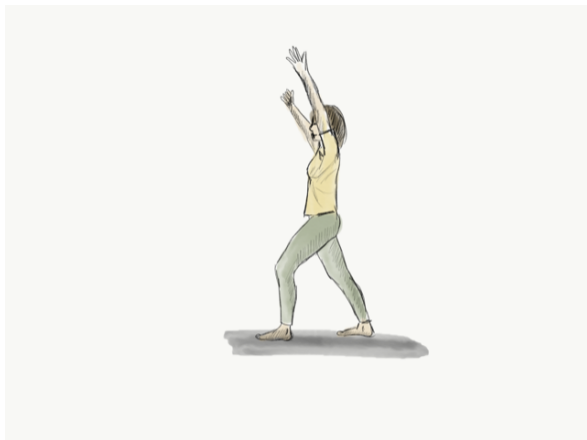


Start by standing and nodding the weight of your head forwards. Bend the knees and release down into a forward bend, vertebrae by vertebrae. Make sure the pelvis is rotated over your legs.

To come up bend the knees even more, press into both feet evenly and sequence up through the front body to unfurl the spine. Do this several times focusing on releasing the weight of the upper body and finding strength from the lower body.

For a more detailed explanation go here: <https://samloe.yoga/unfurling-spine/>

Warrior 1



With any standing posture, sense into the feeling of collapse and then propping as a way to find a place in between; yielding.

Focus by setting up your feet in a way that feels stabilising and grounding, pay attention to the skeletal alignment so that the rebounding force can easily travel up through the legs and into a neutral pelvis and spine. Then let the breath breathe you in an ongoing rhythm so that the posture is never rigid. Can you allow the breath to be the support for how you might express your arm position?