

MSAA

**MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**

Improving Lives Today!®

presents

Yoga and MS: Start Where You Are

Archived Webcast

Guest Presenter

Kimberly Castello, C-IAYT, YTRX, E-RYT 500

Kimberly is a clinically trained yoga therapist who creates wellness programs for chronic disease management. She received her Yoga Therapy accreditation from Loyola Marymount University and completed her clinical training at the Simms Mann Venice Family Clinic.



In 2017, she developed the MS Yoga program for the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health.

MSAA Programs and Services

MSAA is a leading resource for the entire MS community, improving lives today through vital services and support. Highlighting some of MSAA's free programs and services are:

- Toll-free Helpline
- MRI Access Fund
- Mobile Phone App
- Print/Digital Publications
- Cooling and Equipment Distribution
- Educational Programs
- Online Peer Community
- Videos, Webinars, and much more

For more information, please visit mymsaa.org or call (800) 532-7667.

For this program on Yoga and MS:

Please know this presentation is intended for general information purposes only and it does not constitute medical advice. Individuals are urged to consult their physician prior to the start of any exercise program or routine.

“Yoga therapy is the process of empowering individuals to progress toward improved health and well-being through the application of the philosophy and practice of Yoga.”

International Association of Yoga Therapy

What is Yoga?

- Yoga is a mindset
- It's the relationship we have with ourselves, mind & body
- It's an opportunity to learn breathing techniques to reduce stress and increase energy
- Yoga offers therapeutic movements that can increase flexibility, strength & balance

How can Yoga help MS?

- Reduces muscle spasms
- Decreases physical & emotional stress
- Calms the nervous system
- Empowers you to regain a sense of control over your mind & body
- Teaches patience for yourself

The Nervous System

- Sympathetic
 - Fight or Flight (Go Mode)
- Parasympathetic
 - Rest and Digest (Relaxation Response)
- MS keeps the nervous system in Go Mode!
- We have the ability to shift our nervous system into a calmer state.

Yoga and the Fight or Flight Response

- The brain and body have natural pain-suppressing abilities
- Chronic stress, anxiety and depression can interfere with this process
- Yoga is a mind body practice that can stimulate the release of the brain's pain suppressing chemicals

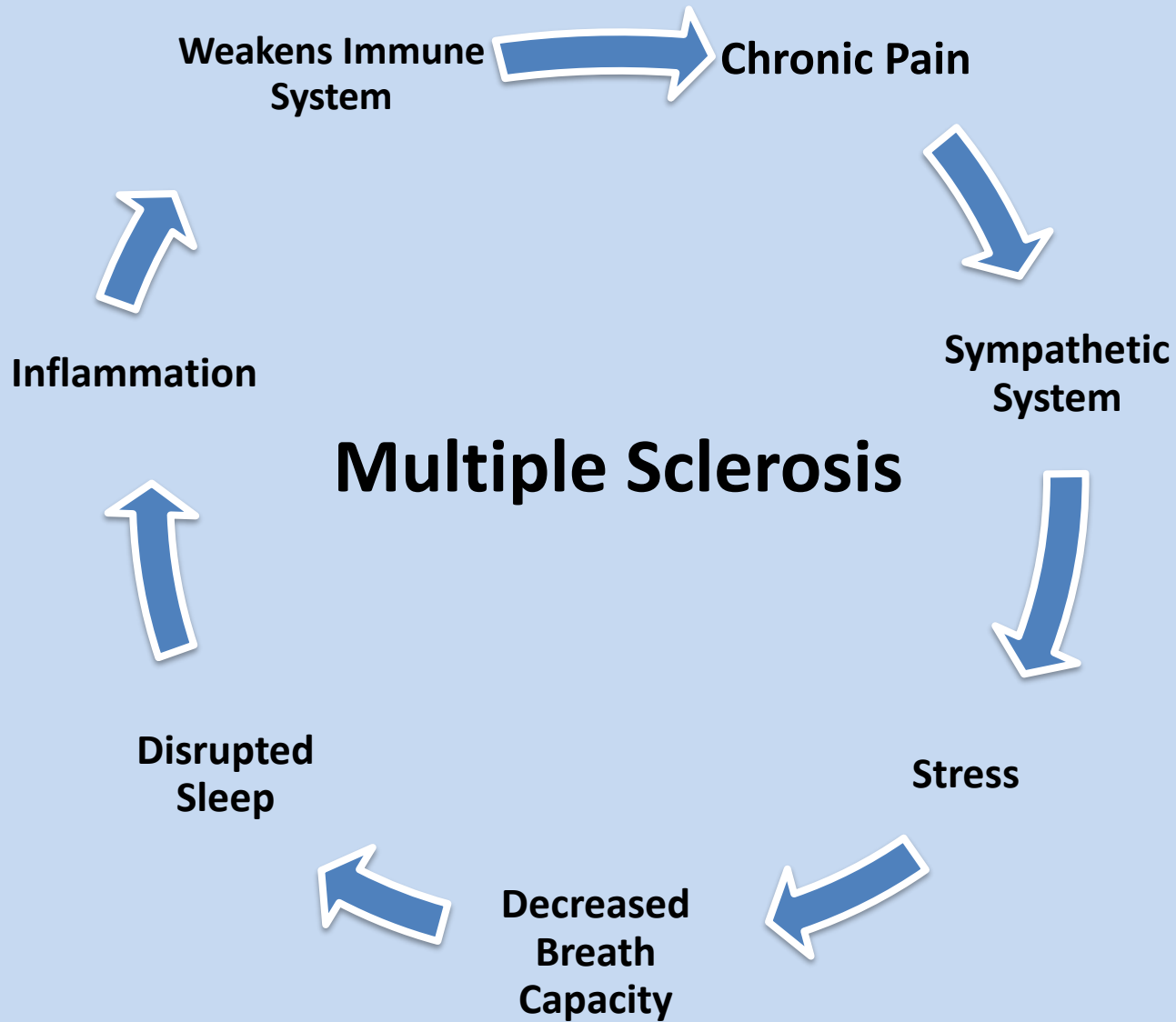
(Dietrich and McDaniel 2004)

The breath

How do we normally breathe?

- Chest breathing
- Shallow rapid breaths
- Through the mouth
- In opposition to the diaphragm (reverse breathing)

What can breathing teach us?



Breathing Exercise

Get comfortable:

- Sitting in a chair or lying down with your legs supported
- Breathe slowly in and out through your nose
- Cool air in and warm air out
- Let the belly rise and fall

- Allow the breath to expand into the belly, ribs and chest
- Inhaling and exhaling through the nose
- Close your eyes and continue to breathe in this way for a few moments
- Concentrate on your breath
- If your focus drifts bring your concentration back to your breath

Seated Mountain Pose

Benefits:

- Improves posture
- Strengthens the spine
- Provides an opportunity to check in with your breath

Instruction:

- Sit with feet hip width apart & stack knees over ankles
- Lengthen the spine and relax the shoulders
- Take 5 minutes of deep breathing

Seated Mountain Pose



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Cervical Rotation

Benefits:

- Increases flexibility in the neck

Instruction:

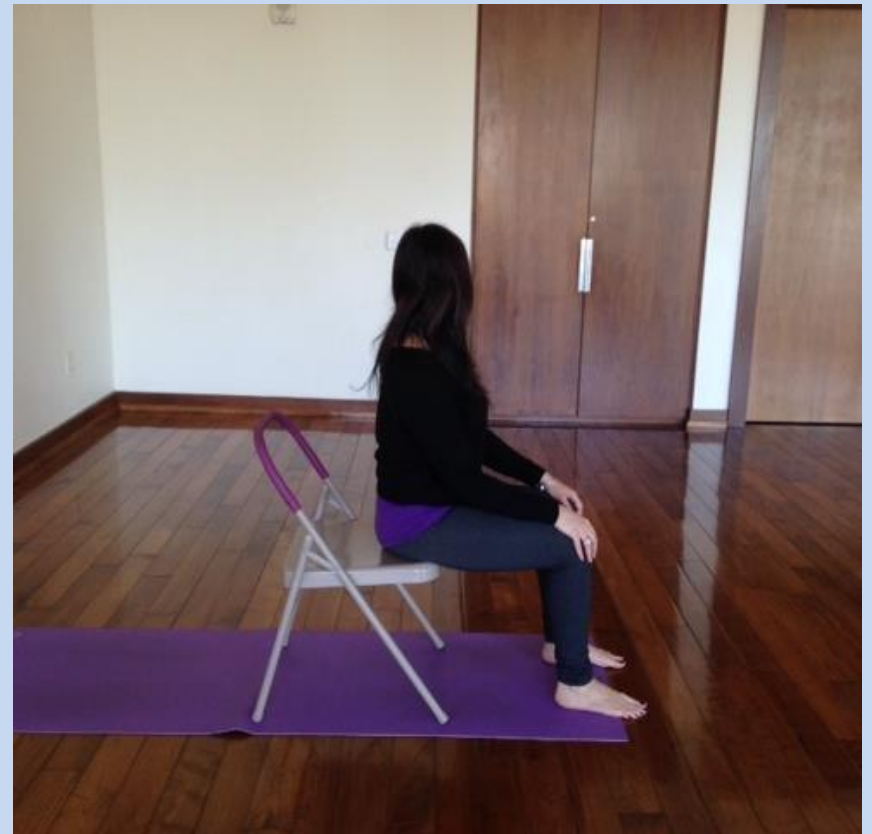
- On an exhalation slowly turn to the right
- On an inhalation bring the head back to center
- Alternate from right to left 6-8 times

Cervical Rotation

Inhale



Exhale



Cat & Cow

Benefits:

- Opens and releases the spine

Instruction:

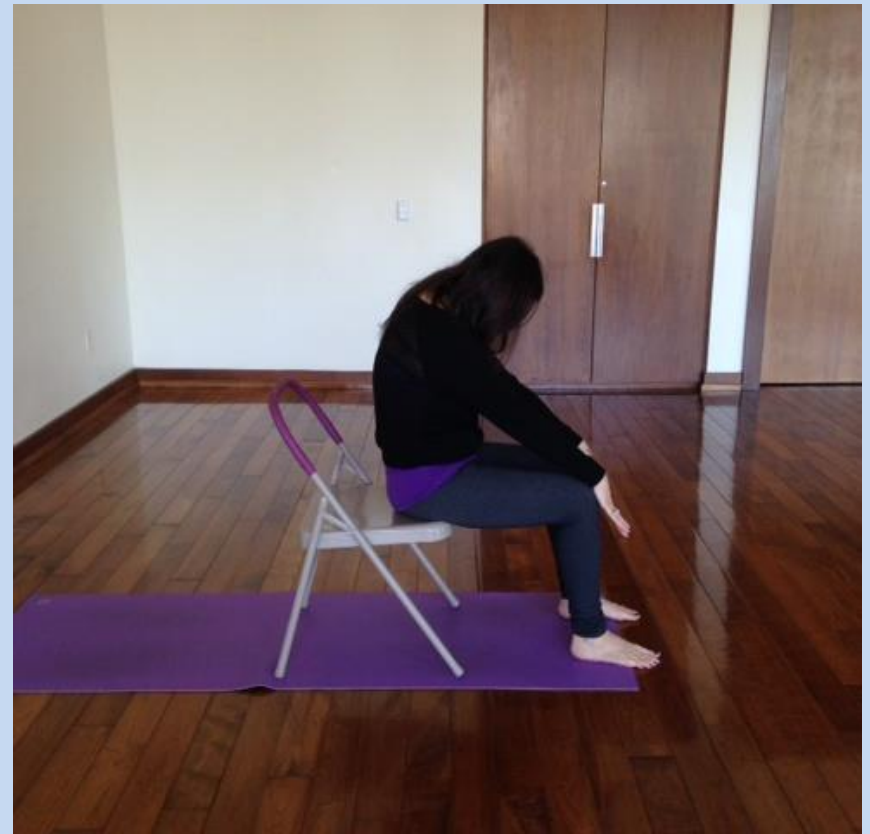
- From a seated position or hands & knees
- Inhale extend (arch) the spine
- Exhale flex (round) the spine
- Move slowly 6-8 x

Cat and Cow

**Inhale Arch the Spine
(Cow)**



**Exhale Round the
Spine (Cat)**



Lateral Bend (Side Stretch)

Benefits:

- Opens the side of the body
- Brings breath and movement into the ribs

Instruction:

- From Mountain Pose, sit or stand with feet hip-width apart. Keep one hand on the chair
- Inhale lift the side ribs (hand on hip, behind the head or extended up)
- Exhale release into the stretch
- Alternate side to side 6-8 x or to your comfort

Lateral Bend (Side Stretch)

Option w/ hand to hip



Option w/arm extended



Spinal Rotation (Twist)

Benefits:

- Releases tension in the spine
- Creates mobility in the spine

Instruction:

- From Mountain Pose, inhale lift the spine
- Exhale rotate to a comfortable range of motion
- Alternate from right to left 6-8 x or to your comfort
- Option to add arms

Spinal Rotation (Twist)



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Spinal Balance

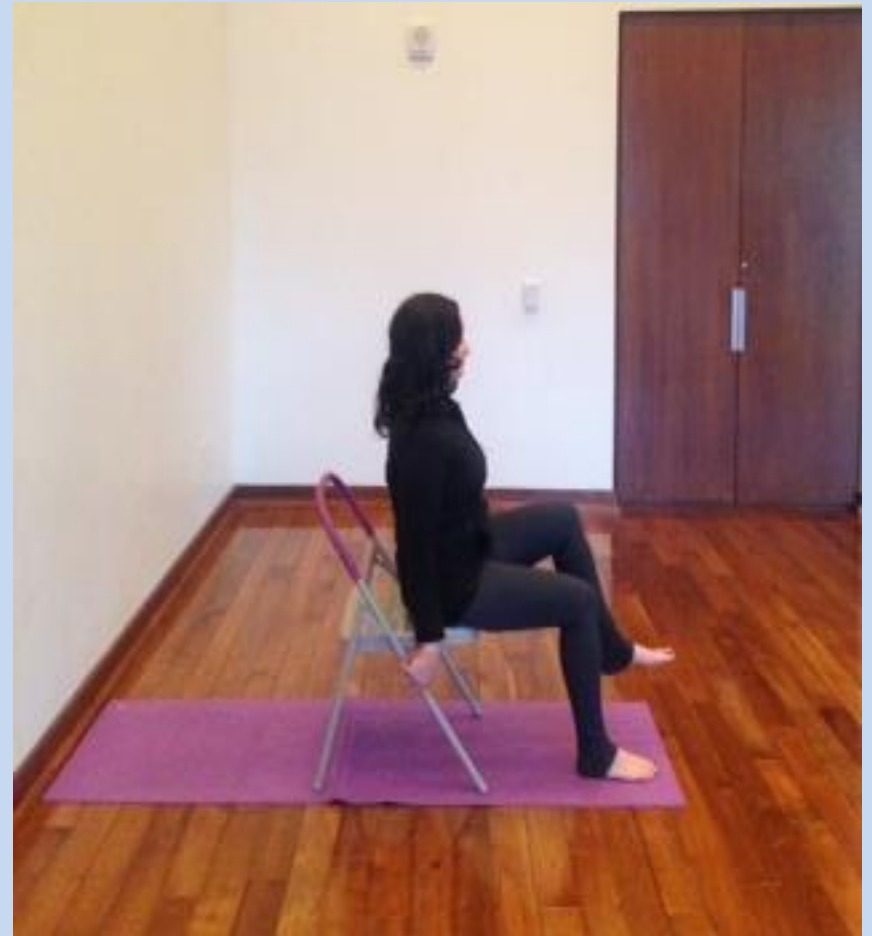
Benefits:

- Increases strength and stamina
- Strengthens the core

Instruction:

- Seated, on your back, or from hands & knees
- Inhale slowly lift one leg a few inches from the floor
- Exhale and release the leg to the floor
- Alternate 6-8 times or to your comfort
- Option to lift opposite arm & leg

Seated Spinal Balance



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Plank to Cobra

Benefits:

- Strengthens the arms and core (abdominals & spine)

Instruction:

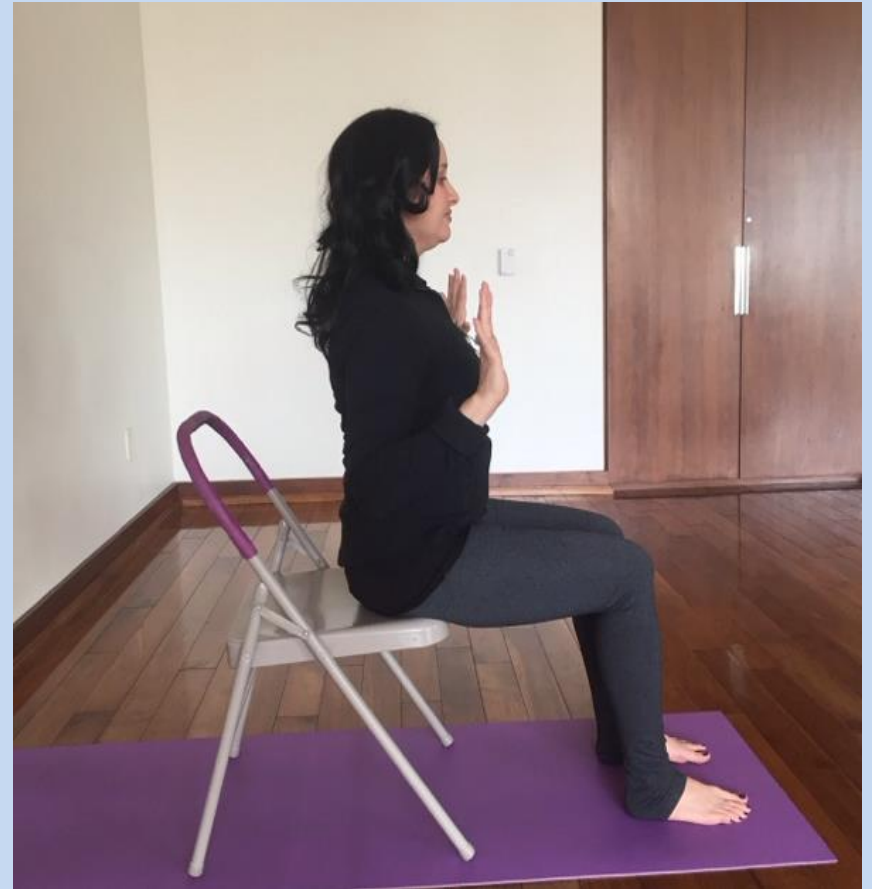
- Sit tall with your feet under your knees
- Inhale and extend your arms in front of you at shoulder height
- Exhale bend your elbows towards you
- Repeat 6-8 x or to your comfort

Plank to Cobra

Inhale Plank



Exhale Cobra



Chest Expansion

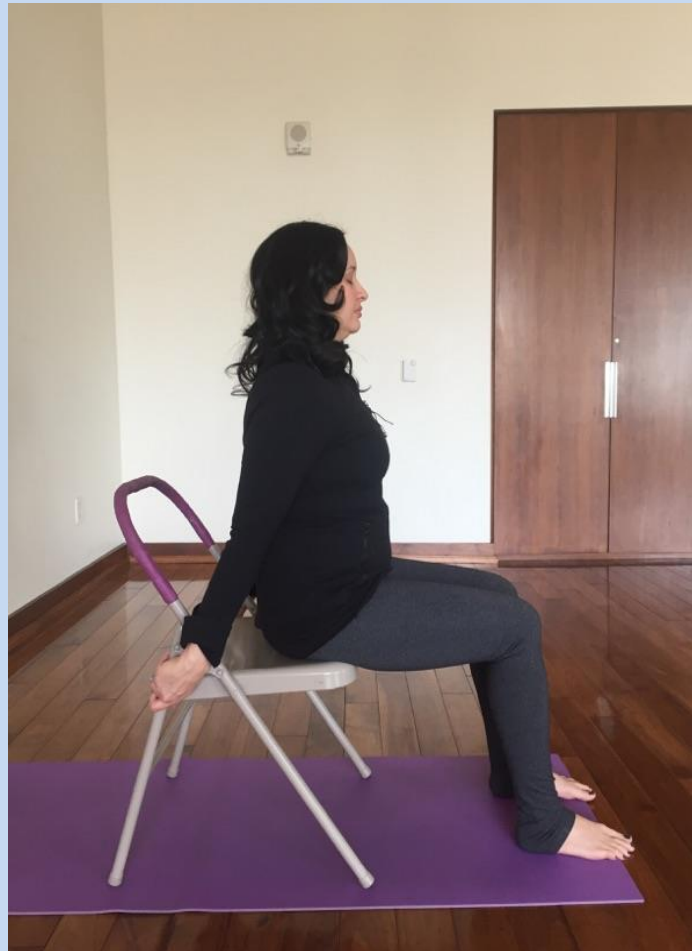
Benefits:

- Opens the chest and upper back
- Creates space for the breath to move

Instruction:

- Sit tall, lengthen the spine and relax the shoulders
- Inhale and reach the arms to the back of the chair
- Exhale as you relax into the pose
- Take 6-8 breaths or to your comfort
- Option to combine with Plank to Cobra

Chest Expansion



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Spinal Rotation (Twist)

Instruction:

- From Mountain Pose, inhale lift the spine
- Exhale rotate to the right
- Take 4-6 deep breaths
- Repeat to the left
- Take the time to release the spine and breath slowly in & out through the nose

Spinal Rotation (Twist)



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Supported Forward Bend

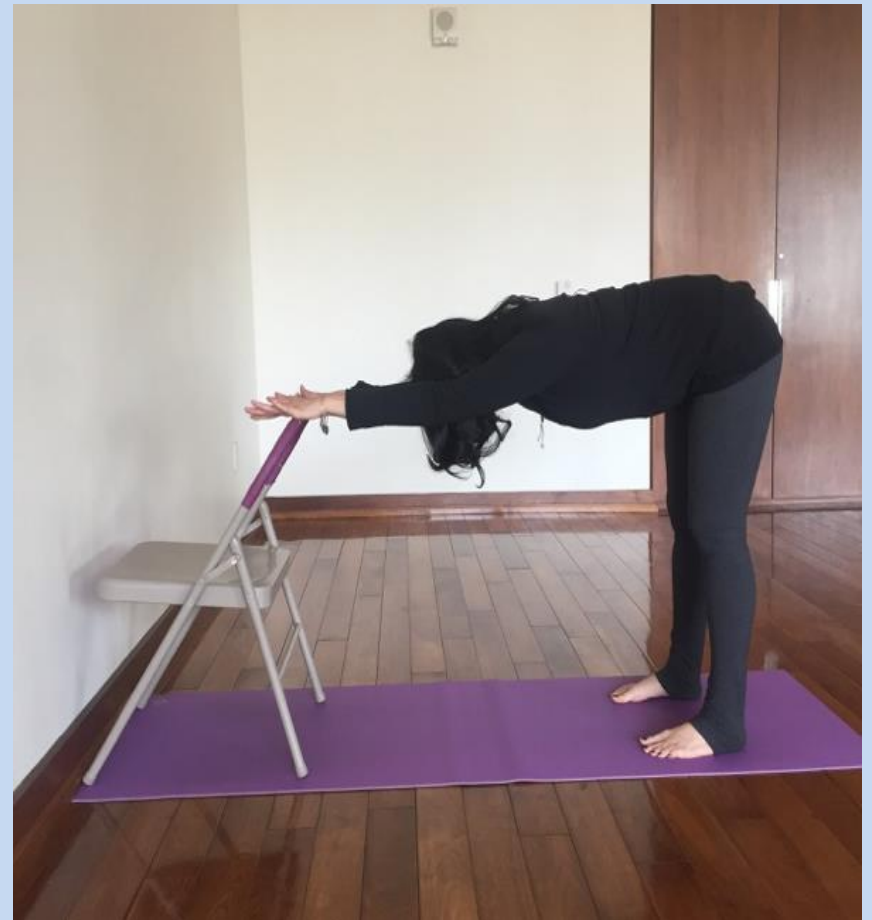
Benefits:

- Releases the tension in the lower back and legs

Instructions:

- Seated or standing, place your hands on your thighs or the chair
- Exhale as you release forward to a comfortable range of motion
- Take 3-5 breaths or to your comfort

Supported Forward Bend



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Seated Hamstring Release

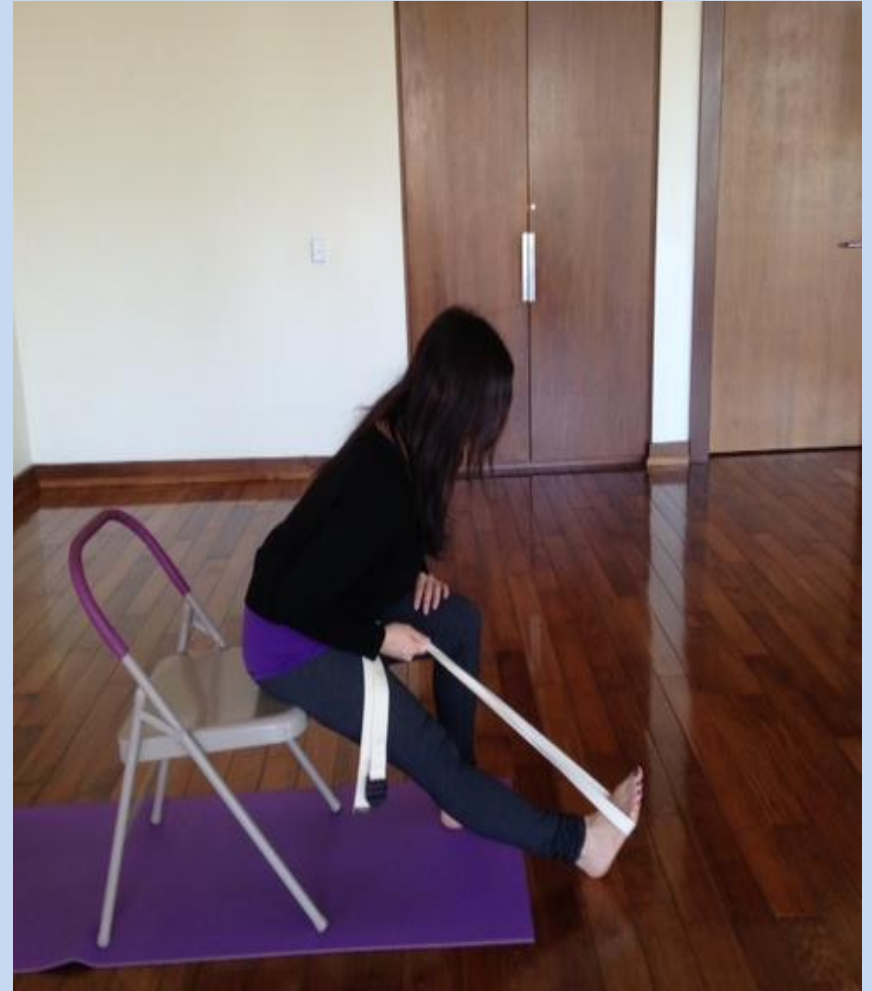
Benefits:

- Releases the hamstrings & spine
- Encourages good posture

Instruction:

- Take 6-8 breaths on each side or to your comfort
- Use the strap to extend the leg & stretch the hamstrings

Seated Hamstring Release



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Windshield Wipers

Benefits:

- Releases the lower (lumbar) back & hips

Instruction:

- Begin in your bed or on the floor
- Bring your feet as wide as your mat (wider than the hips)
- Exhale release the legs to the right
- Inhale come back to center
- Exhale release to the left
- Alternate 6-8 times or to your comfort

Windshield Wipers

Inhale



Exhale



Rest and Relax

Benefits:

- Replenishes the mind & body
- Soothes the nervous system (rest & digest)
- Brings more space & air in, and lets stress & tension out

Instruction:

- Find a comfortable position on your back, either on the floor or in your bed
- Support the back of the knees with a chair or pillows

Rest and Relax Continued

- Allow the breath to happen in and out through the nose
- Create space in the belly, ribs and chest with every inhalation
- Let the breath empty completely from the top of the chest to the bottom of the belly on the exhalation
- Allow 5-8 minutes of deep breathing, as long as you feel comfortable

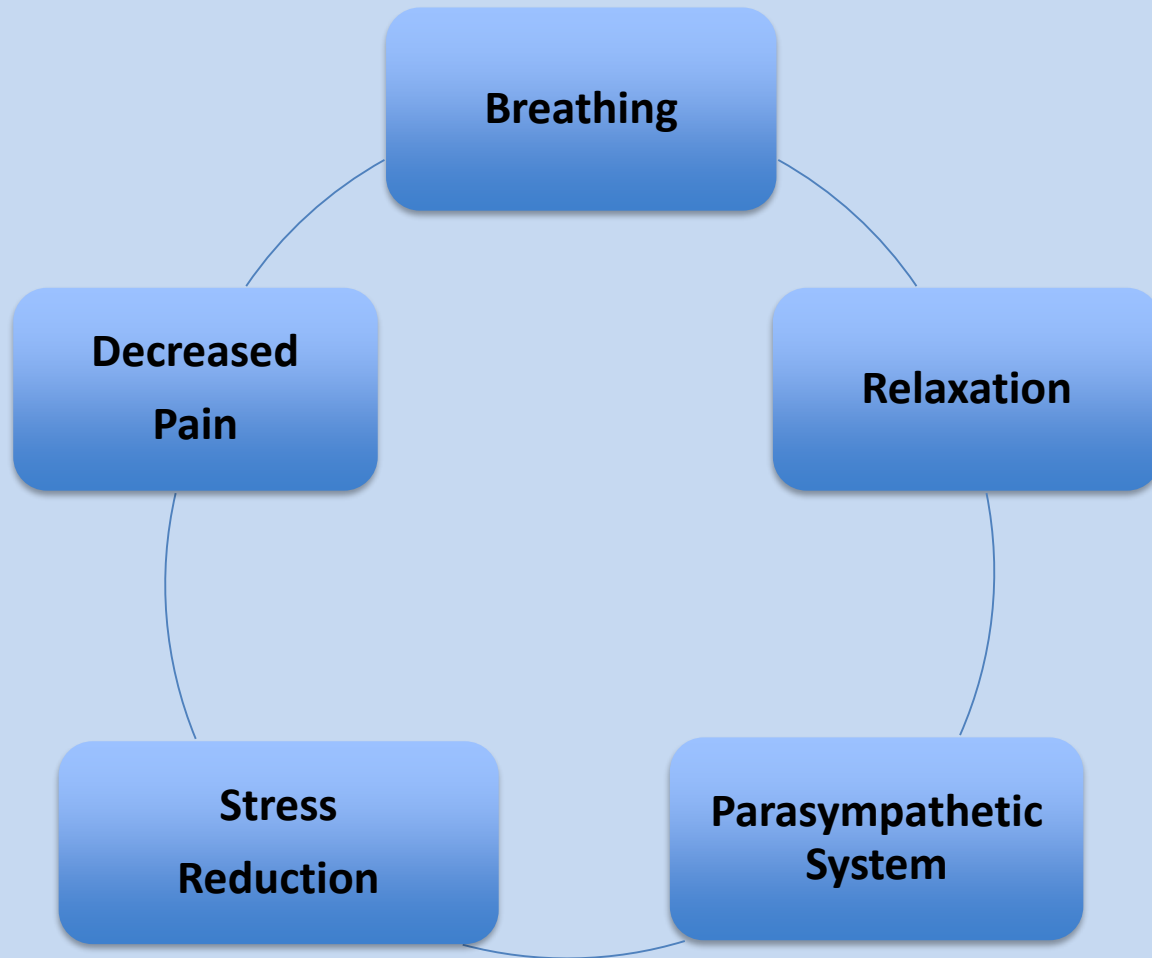
Rest and Relax



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Changing our experience with illness

- Breathing
- Relaxation
- Movement
- Meditation
- As we slowly integrate these practices, the body and mind become a more comfortable place to be



What do you need to start?

- Quiet space
- Chair
- Strap or equivalent
- 5-15 minutes per day

- Begin spending about 5 minutes per day breathing through the nose
- As it becomes more familiar, work towards spending 5-8 minutes focusing on the breath
- There is no set amount of time required
- Let your body decide what you need

Adapting yoga to our bodies

- Use props to support the body
 - Blankets, bolsters, pillows, chairs, the wall, yoga straps and blocks
- Take the time to rest when needed
- Listen to what your body is telling you
- Focus on the breath

How do you begin integrating Yoga?

- Begin exactly where you are
- Take short breathing breaks (5-15 minutes per day)
- Add small gentle movements with breath
- Listen to your body and make choices that support where you are in that moment.
- Small Victories!

“Yoga teaches us to cure what need not be endured and endure what cannot be cured.”

- B.K.S. Iyengar

Thank You

This concludes our program **Yoga and MS: Start Where You Are.**

MSAA would like to once again thank Kimberly Castello for her excellent and insightful presentation and for introducing us to the physical and emotional benefits of incorporating yoga into our daily wellness plan.

To learn more, please feel free to contact these supportive resources listed below:

- International Association of Yoga Therapists
<https://www.IAYT.org/>
- National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD)
<https://www.nchpad.org/>
- Kimberly Castello Yoga
www.kimberlycastelloyoga.com

Thank you so much for watching!