



Kids Yoga at Home

**A resource guide for families from
Be You Yoga and Mindfulness
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View

Through yoga and meditation, we realize the importance of offering our children the chance to experience the ground of sanity. By trusting our children, they learn to trust themselves. By providing them with a space of care and wakefulness, they are able to taste something of good human society. It is our responsibility to uphold them in this space. To look at them with the eyes of goodness. To help them experience their own wisdom and worthiness. We cannot do this if we doubt the goodness inherent in ourselves. Thus, all activity is rooted in our personal meditation and yoga practice and our relationship with our own mind and heart.

To be present is to be brave. And so we cultivate the willingness to show up. On the cushion, on the mat, in our lives, and in our world. When we do this, others are affected. If you look a child in the eyes, they respond. They know when you are genuinely there with them and when you are not. When we can relax enough to open to the phenomenal world, then we can truly listen, with our whole being. We begin to hold space for children to feel who they are. A cradle of loving kindness. No issue is seen as a failure or a mistake. Everything is workable and we relate to our experience freshly and with clarity. This is very much a practice. Whenever we lose it, we just come back.

While we can cultivate our own practice independently, and support our children in their own practice, we can also come together as a family and relate to these skills and tools together. This makes much more of an impact on children- to do it together- to see you do it, rather than just dropping them off at a class. I've compiled some ways to come together as a family which create the space to be and feel and work with our own minds and hearts.

General Ideas

5 to 10 minutes daily Practicing together for a short time each day (or as many days as you can) can make a huge difference! There are some simple things you can do together to find stillness, space, and silence.

- Ring a bell or a gong at the beginning of a meal, and have everyone sit quietly and listen
- Light a candle together and quietly watch the flame
- Use a Mind Jar or Breathing Ball together (see the props section)
- Practice one of the guided meditations listed in this manual
- Do a sun salutation
- Do a short yoga sequence
- Have everyone share how they are feeling (others should practice just listening- no responding)

Yoga Sessions together There are many resources for doing yoga at home together. You can check out the kids yoga videos on youtube and do one as a family. There are tons of books out there as well which tell stories with poses. If you go to Amazon and type in kids yoga stories, you'll find so many to choose from! You have to use what works well for your family. Also you and your children could create your own! This is a really fun way to be creative together. Use the poses that you know and tell a story together. You can also use yoga songs. Search for Haris Lender on Spotify or youtube to find some of the classics we use in class.

Just Being together Sometimes what makes the most difference in my classes isn't the poses that I teach or the meditations we practice, it's the just being with the children. It's looking them in the eyes and really seeing their humanity- their hearts and care and fears- and acknowledging them as completely whole and worthy AS THEY ARE. It's listening to them. It's meeting them where they are. This time of just being together is the single most profound offering we can make to our children.

Meditations

For all of these, sit cross legged with a straight spine. Eyes can be open or closed. If you get distracted and forget what you are doing, just come back.

Sound Meditation: Ring a bell or strike a gong. Just listen. Each person can have a turn ringing.

Color Meditation: Choose any color you like. Imagine that color filling up your entire body starting at the top of your head and going down to your feet. Each breath fills you up more. Finally, let the color out, and rest in silence.

Breathing Meditation: Bring the attention to breathing in and breathing out. Label each breath "in" and "out".

Loving Kindness Meditation: Think of any person (it could even be yourself). Imagine them being happy, well, and peaceful. As you breathe, imagine each breath is sending them some rays of goodness and peace.

Big Sky Mind: Imagine your mind as a clear blue sky. Any time a thought arises, imagine it is a cloud, floating by. Just watch the clouds float by in your calm blue sky.

Feeling Meditation: Place one hand on your heart. Just notice how you feel, in different parts of your body, or what emotions you feel. Notice without trying to change anything. To end, give yourself a hug.

Sense Meditation: Choose one of the 5 senses. Notice what you can about that sense the whole time you are sitting. Try to focus on just the sense you chose. It helps if the whole family chooses the same sense.

Being Meditation: This is the hardest one! Just sit and do nothing. Try to really do nothing. If you forget, come back.

Activities

Mindful bell- Everyone sits in a circle. The leader gives the instruction that, with open eyes, we all sit with straight spines and crossed legs. We will practice listening. The leader rings the gong and asks everyone to raise their hand when they can no longer hear it. You can repeat the activity for a second or third time, with variations. Sometimes asking them to close their eyes. Talk about the difference. May ask them to sit with a slouched posture. Talk about the difference. You can often pass the gong around the circle allowing each child to ring it in turn. If you want to talk, you can use the striker as a talking stick.

Mindful movement- Everyone stands up. The leader sits by the gong. The instructions are: I will say a word or phrase (like gentle, fierce, lovingly, like a tiger, like a snake, fearfully, etc.) and then when I ring the gong, you move like that word. You can move anywhere in the room in silence, and without touching other children. When I ring the gong again, freeze. I will say another word, but don't move until I ring. Repeat.

Feelings coloring- Either on a large piece of butcher paper or on individual papers, draw an outline of the human body. Then go through some contemplations on emotions. Ask children to think of something that makes them happy- then color on the body where they feel happiness- and what color. Do the same for other emotions.

5 senses object exploration- Gather objects that have distinctive textures, smells, tastes, or even make noises. You'll also need a dark opaque bag. Have children sit with their eyes closed and pass the bag with one object around- focusing on one sense- have them either touch it, smell it, hear it, or taste it. Do this with several different objects. Ask children to offer one or two words about their experience of each object and compile them in a poem. Reveal each object after all children have experienced it- ask them to discuss what it was like!

Props

Mind in a Jar- With a mason jar filled with water and vegetable glycerin and various colors of glitter, and some towels and a spoon, you can set this up. Talk about meditation and perception. Ask children to sit and notice things- emotions, thoughts, environment. Then ask them to choose what color represents what they noticed and add it to the jar, while stirring. This is the mind. Once everyone has added, ask them to sit and meditate. The glitter will settle, showing clear mind. Discuss.

Breathing Ball- This is technically a Hoberman Sphere. You can find it on Amazon. Use it to demonstrate full breaths. Breathing in, the ball expands, breathing out, it contracts. Take turns using it to lead deep breathing.

Yoga Deck- This card deck (also on Amazon) has poses on the front of each card and descriptions on the back. It is also color coded by type of pose (standing, twists, balancing, partner, relaxation, etc.). You can put together your own class by choosing poses out of each color. You can play many other games with this deck.

Pom Poms- You know, the colorful round fuzzy things you use for crafts. Play toe-ga (throw them on the floor and pick them up one by one using only your toes), pom pom putt putt (put them on your mat and blow them to the other side), or pom pom basketball (blow them into a bowl in the middle of the room).

Sequences

I encourage you to create your own. But here are a few short ones to get you started.

Calming/ Bedtime Sequence

Do 10 deep breaths with the breathing ball

Turtle/ Flower Pose

Sandwich Pose (seated forward fold)

Rock and Roll to standing

Backs turn toward each other, wide legged forward fold making funny faces at each other

Stand up, face forward, Tree pose

Windy Tree (move your arms back and forth)

Warrior 1

Waterfall Warrior all of the above Both Sides

Rag Doll (standing forward fold)

Rock and Roll

Knees into the chest

Reclined Twist (both sides)

Lie Down in Savasana

Do one of the meditations listed above

Use the Mind Jar

Peace Begins with Me Mantra

Lokah Lullabye song

Working with Anger/Fear/Strong Emotions

Lion's Breath (tongue out, loud exhale)

Ganesha Breath (standing up with wide legs, hold hands together over head, then exhale and bring hands/arms quickly down between legs as if chopping wood. Repeat several times)

Sun Salutation

Warrior 1

Warrior 2

Warrior 3

You can tell the story of Virabhadra (found in Myths of the Asanas and many other texts)

Mountain

Eagle

Chair

Twisting Chair
Side Crow or Side Crow prep
Seated Twist
Forward Fold
Turtle
Happy Baby
Legs up the wall
Savasana/ Resting with Color Meditaiton
Sit Up, listen to bell
Peace begins with Me mantra

Celebration sequence

Orange you Grateful (pass a ball or an orange using only your feet, saying what you are grateful for each time)

Make a cake (or pizza or pie or cookies)- sit feet touching in a circle and pretend to mix the ingredients stirring to the left and right and adding things until throwing into the oven and setting the timer for it to be finished (be sure the timer goes off later and eat what you made)

Pretzel pose (seated twist)

Sargent Salutations- take turns leading a call and response sun salutation

Warrior 2

Triangle

Half Moon

Peaceful Warrior

Mountain

Dancer

Warrior 3

Forward Fold

Tell a Story about what you are celebrating using poses!

Motorcycle game- sit in gomukasana (cow face pose) and use your legs as handlebars for your motorcycle. Stop on occasion because there's an animal in the road! (Use different poses like downdog, cobra, camel, butterfly, dolphin- then continue on your motorcycle once the animals move out of the road)

Yoga Slide or Hip Hop Yoga Bop Song

Savasana/ Relaxation

Sit up, Mind Jar

Peace Begins with Me mantra

Creating Environment for Sessions

Create rituals for opening and closing practice sessions.

- Find a space that is uplifted, clean, quiet, and special.
- Take off shoes before entering the space, even if it's just a corner of the living room.
- Begin and End with a bow as a form of gratitude.
- End with Peace Begins with Me mantra- touch thumb and forefinger together, then thumb to each consecutive finger while repeating outloud peace begins with me several times. Then do it silently in your mind.
- Create your own rituals to designated practice time

Resources

[Mindful Parenting Guide from Urban Mindfulness](#)

[Resources from Mindful Kids](#)

[Activities and Ideas from Kidding Around Yoga's blog](#)

[Cosmic Kids Yoga Resources](#)

[Making Space for Children by Virginia Hilliker](#)

[The Conscious Parent](#)

[The Importance of Being Little](#)

[Peaceful Piggy Meditates](#)