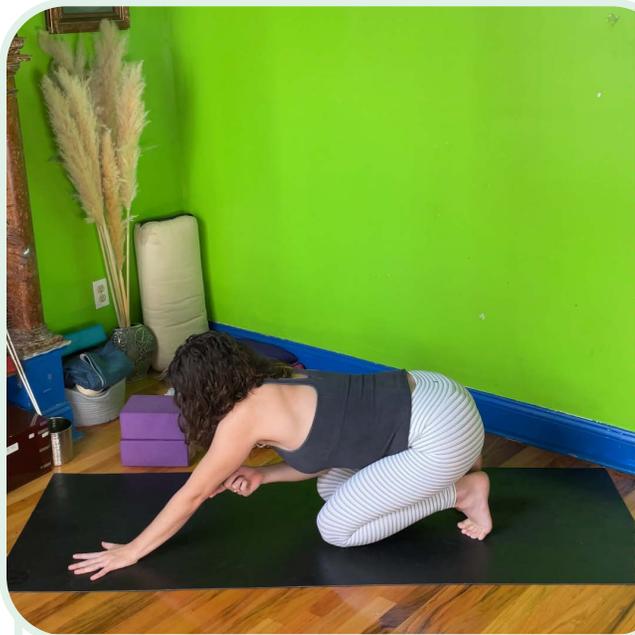


Hands, Wrists, & Elbows

Week 7: Harness the Bend of Your Elbow

Practice Tools: Move

1. PUPPY POSE INTO DOWNWARD FACING DOG



KEY FOCUS:

In puppy pose, practice the alignment one arm at a time, root and reach through your inner wrist and wrap your ulna out-and-under to pick up under your humerus.

Maintain the lift from underneath as you extend through your arm

Contrast learning: Overdo the lift of the ulna until you feel it slightly pop up into your elbow crease. Then back out until you can aim your ulna into the lift of your armpit

We focus on these poses in the unlocking movement as well. This is purposeful as downward facing dog is such a common pose in our practice. To refresh through a consistent lift of the ulna is game changing. How clear are you on how to bring this about? What feedback do you get from your arm when this lift is clear versus when it slightly collapses?

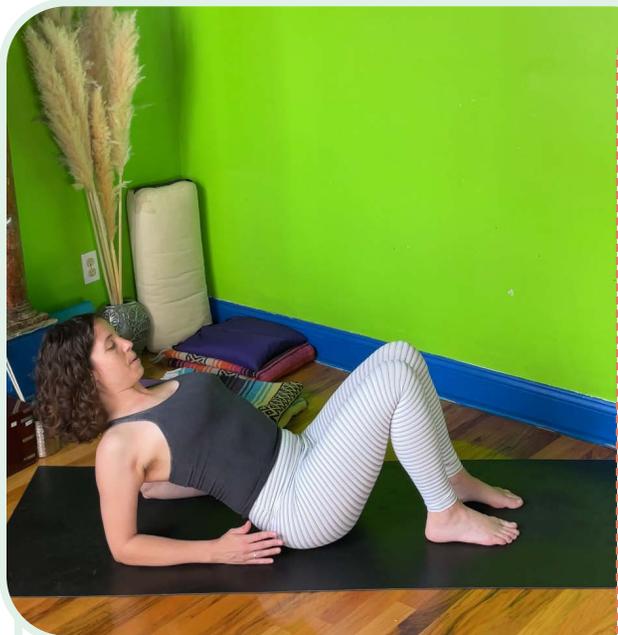
Useful modifications:

Stand with hands at the wall, arms up overhead and extended to your side (side plank like)

Add a ball in your hand or lift under your wrist to steady through your hand as well



2. UPWARD TABLE POSE- TWO VARIATIONS



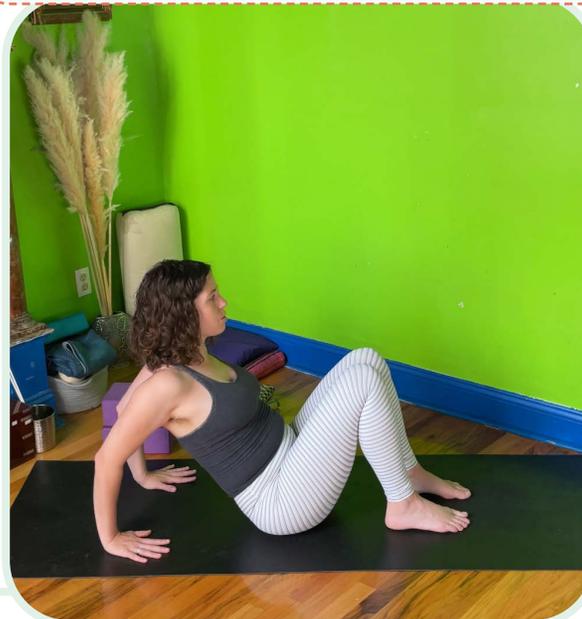
KEY FOCUS:

From full weight in your ulna, pull back into your elbow to get around the bend of your elbow point (humerus draws back into your triceps.) Lead this into space in your shoulder and the pick up of your chest- up and over your upper arm. Maintain this balance of tension and space. From hands, bend elbows back for same engaged support and flow.

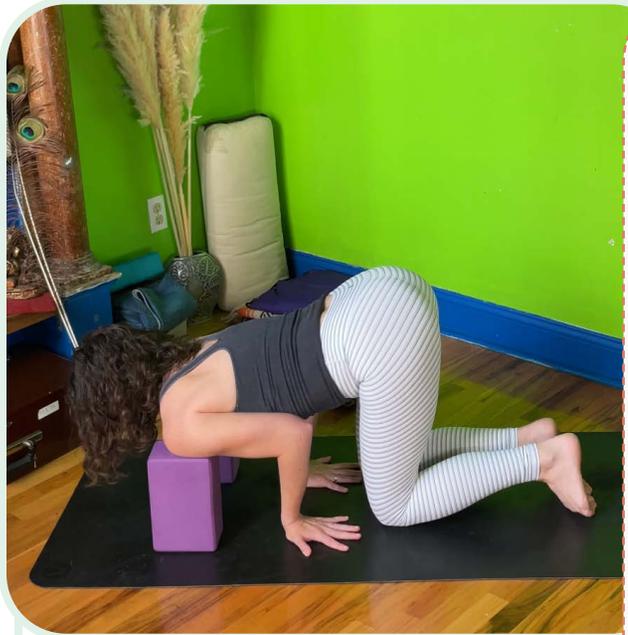
Notice the slight over extension in my full expression in the last slide. This is testament to an ever deepening harness of the bend of your elbows! As I work on it, I use the outer shape to assess my inner experience, to tune into what's happening at that juncture. Neither the inner or outer truth can make the other wrong, just lead us to better listening.

Useful modifications:

Place a strap across the front of your hips so it is taut when you lift, fists grab the ends
Prep this pose with first anchoring into the bend of your elbows in Sphinx pose



3. PEACOCK POSE PREP



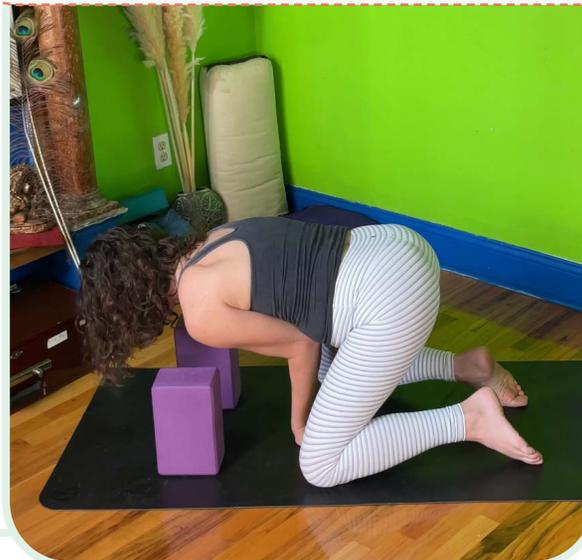
KEY FOCUS:
Hands and elbows start wide and then come to touch as you lift elbows up into your abdomen
Upper arms on the blocks and then work to lift by pressing down onto your elbows
Knees close to get your arms underneath and then widen to shift them off of the mat

This version is a seesaw practice, starting with the weight in your upper arms and shoulders to set up the pose, and then tipping the weight onto the bend of your elbows (out of the front of your shoulders.) Create the shift by standing down onto your elbows, triceps to the bone

Your abdomen balances over the bend of your elbows, can you get there in your “final” pose?

Useful modifications:

Lay a blanket across the blocks or add a layer of blocks underneath to lessen the bend
Create the block supported arm shape on a coffee table so your torso stays elevated above your hips as you bring the weight onto the bend in your elbows



4. SAGE BHARADVAJASANA'S POSE



KEY FOCUS:

Side sit with your top ankle in the instep of your bottom leg. Prop under your sit bones so you aren't falling to the side. Grab the front of your opposite arm behind you, pinkie in elbow crease. Lead your bound arm around in front to twist keeping your forearm pressing into your back.

The front of your shoulders can collapse forward with a lot of weight, draw back into the bend of your elbows to lighten the front of your shoulder joint. How does the backward draw balance out the forward push of the twist and of the arm position?

Root down into your sit bones, breath into your back, press biceps to the bone. Harness the pose.

Useful modifications:

Place the loop of a strap around the bound arm to mimic the depth in the elbow crease, binding hand grabs the inside the loop (create space in your shoulders, lessen the bind). Sit on a supportive height of props in virasana (Take out the side seat, ease your knees).

