

Yoga for Trauma: Sequences



IYENGAR YOGA THERAPEUTICS

Guruji's Trauma Sequence

Sequence given for survivors of Gujarat earthquake, 9/11, and terrorist attacks in Mumbai



- **Savasana**
- **Supta Baddhakonasana** (w/ spine support)
- **Supta Virasana** (w/ spine support)
- **Prasarita Padottanasana** (head supported)
- **Uttanasana** (head supported and feet spread apart)
- **Adho Mukha Svanasana** (head supported)
- **Viparita Dandasana** (on chair w/ head supported)
- **Sirsasana – Viparita Karani**
- **Setubandha Sarvangasana**
- **Sarvangasana – Viparita Karani**
- **Pranayama** – Antara Kumbhaka, with very short kumbhaka after inhalation

Guruji's Advice for Working with Trauma

- Emotional strength needs to be built.
- Don't make students do standing poses and unsupported backbends
- Keep eyes open, even in Savasana. Can focus on any point in front or on the ceiling.
- Imagine eyes are located at the temples and open those eyes.
- Don't insist on perfect asana and form. It is more important that students do asana and stay as long as they can.
- When breathing in asana, especially supine poses, breathe in such a manner that breath is felt in lateral sides of the chest on inhalation.



Marla Apt Notes

Other than Guruji's general precautions about not asking traumatized students to do too many standing poses and backbends, there is no one sequence or category of asanas for trauma. All asana can be done in a trauma informed way.



Suggested Sequence

- **Adho Mukha Virasana** (chest and forehead supported on bolster/blankets)
- **Supta Padangusthasana** - lateral stage with leg to the side (sideways foot on a support, leg on floor spread to the side)
- **Supta Virasana** (2 bolsters stacked: sitting on 1 bolster and back reclining on second bolster)
- **Supta Baddhakonasana** (horizontal bolster behind back)
- **Upavistha Konasana** (sitting upright)
- **Baddhakonasana** (sitting upright. 1st with feet together, then with block between feet)
- **Parighasana**
- **Adho Mukha Svanasana** (head supported)
- **Sirsasana**→**Upavistha Konasana in Sirsasana**
- **Adho Mukha Vrksasana**
- **Viparita Dandasana** (with as much support behind back body as possible: Viparita Dandasana bench, Setubandha bench, over a bed, bolsters, stool or chair)
- **Bharadvajasana** (on a chair)
- **Setubandha Sarvangasana** (rolled eye bandage under occiput, with as much support behind back body as possible: Setubandha bench, bolsters, over a bed, stool or chairs)
- **Adho Mukha Swastikasana** (bolster on lap supporting chest, blanket for head)
- **Karnapidasana** (knees on blocks or feet or knees on chair seat)
- **Niralamba Sarvangasa** (feet on wall)
- **Prone Savasana** (soft support such as rolled blanket under chest)
- **Savasana**