

JOY: The Journal of Yoga

January 2004, Volume 3, Number 1

CLOSER TO OM

a spiritual journey through a yoga practice
by Lori Lichtman-Sander

A collection of poems inspired by my work teaching yoga to children with and without special needs.

Inner Voice

I start to stretch as I begin
I turn toward my voice within

It tells me I have stretched far enough
And when I'm trying something tough

As I listen to what's good for me
I learn where I am supposed to be

I create length and stretch long
I bend forward to where I belong

Listen to your body follow your heart
Learn to trust your body from the start

When I twist and grow and balance inside
My mind, body, spirit and breath are my guide

I move forward, backward, side to side
Oh, all the poses I have tried

I no longer want to run and hide
When I focus on my voice inside

Mind Noise

Yoga Chita Vriti Niroda
I don't get it one iota

What are the whirlwinds of the mind?
Do they bring up thoughts unkind?

Is it the clutter that occupies my brain?
The little things that seem so insane

I can't experience what's here and now
These thoughts zap my focus – WOW!

Why do I need to be present you say?
I want to do it my own way

When I'm focused on tree, lion, cat or cow
I feel what my body is doing now

My asana gets stronger – my balance is sound
I notice my breath and my feet rooted to the ground

I'm learning ways to clear my head and chill out
I'm slowly learning what yoga is all about

I let the feelings of judgment pass
When I breathe deep, think clear, and relax

Body mind and breath start to become one
I'm working hard and having fun

Yoga Chita Vriti Niroda
No distractions I'm doing yoga

Mind-Body As One

In my mind as I visualize
Peace and tranquility begin to rise
Focus, breath, stretch to grow
My mind expands and seems to know

I use my breath while reaching high
I lift myself towards the sky
My exhale helps me bend real low
My breath helps me take it slow

I arch my back like a scared cat
My spine lifts high and stretches back
I use my breath as I move my spine
When I'm focused I can't whine

Stretching into downward dog
Keep my spine nice and long
My head hangs down looks behind
A different way to breath - relax the mind

When I twist from side to side
I inhale and lengthen my spine
My exhale helps my twist get deep
I hang out, be still, and try not to leap

In my headstand or candle pose
I breathe full and fill my nose
It's even harder in camel or wheel
What?! Breathe with my head upside down?.. GET REAL!

Inner Strength

When I get upset, yell or cry
Part of me is alone inside
I think of who I want to be
Then focus on what's bothering me

I inhale happiness, peace and calm
I exhale all that feels really wrong
When I know how to breath and relax
I can make these feelings pass

I gain love, tranquility, and insight
I inhale peace, calm, happiness and light

I exhale frustration, anger, and tension without a fight
Sometimes I shake my head with all my might

I know it sounds easy or silly you say
But my moods are sometime blue and gray
I have the power to change the thoughts in me
It feels good to see how strong I can be

Feeling Energy

I breathe deep inside you see
I open up the power in me

I use this energy from head to toe
There must be more I know

I breathe deep inside you see
I open up the power in me

My breath fills deep into my lungs
It helps me chant my oms and ums

I breathe deep inside you see
I open up the power in me

My voice gets bigger...my focus soars
My lion pose is filled with roars

Hello Sun!

As soon as I jump out of bed
I stretch my arms above my head

I know my morning has begun
When I wake to touch the sun

My arms make a fan without haste
As I bend forward from my waist

Head and hands hang toward my toes
One leg back in warrior pose

Arms and heart reach up as one
Big breath in...HELLO SUN

Plank down to cobra - look up strong
Downward dog my spine is long

Warrior pose one more time
My body is heating up inside

Arms and heart reach up as one
Big breath in...HELLO SUN

Legs together in forward bend
Reach for the sun...arms extend

Keep in balance – do both sides
My body feels a spirit arise

I use my breath to energize within
I feel strong enough to do two hundred and ten

I am taller as I stand
I sure feel different from where I began

My arms flow free like the rays of the sun
I guess this means I must be done!

Feeling Nature Inside of Me

In mountain pose I can see
The earth becomes a part of me
I place my feet into the ground
Oh my balance I have found!

In mountain pose I can see
This position can be hard for me
I work on standing straight and tall
While learning, I use the wall

In mountain pose I can see
My attention needs to be with me
I move my arms and my hands
Inside of me is where I stand

When I imagine roots at the bottom of my feet
Then I know I have found my seat

From mountain pose I lift one leg above my knee
My arms stretch out like branches...look I am a tree!

Savasana

My yoga practice is nearing the end
I let go of twisting, stretching and lengthening in forward bend
Thank you body for the hard work you've done
It's time to relax from all the fun

My breath is steady, deep, and full
I'm on my back, eyes closed—it's cool
The soothing music plays around my head
My yoga mat is a magic carpet, rocket, or feathery bed

I float among the trees
In the clouds and through the breeze
Journeys take me everywhere
My body floats without a care

I feel the sun shining down on me
It's cool what my mind can see
The sun fills me up, inside and out
It's so warm and all about

My body is light and flying around
My attention comes back when I hear a bell sound
I slowly wiggle my fingers and toes
I stretch long and move to lotus pose

I feel relaxed what more to say
I honor where I am at today
I am love, peace, happiness, and light
Namaste morning, noon, or night!