

Cell Bed Yoga

Yoga can be practised by people of all ages and body types. It can be done standing, sitting and lying down. Whatever your body type, energy level or age, yoga is among the best exercises you can do because it is a physical, mental and spiritual exercise!

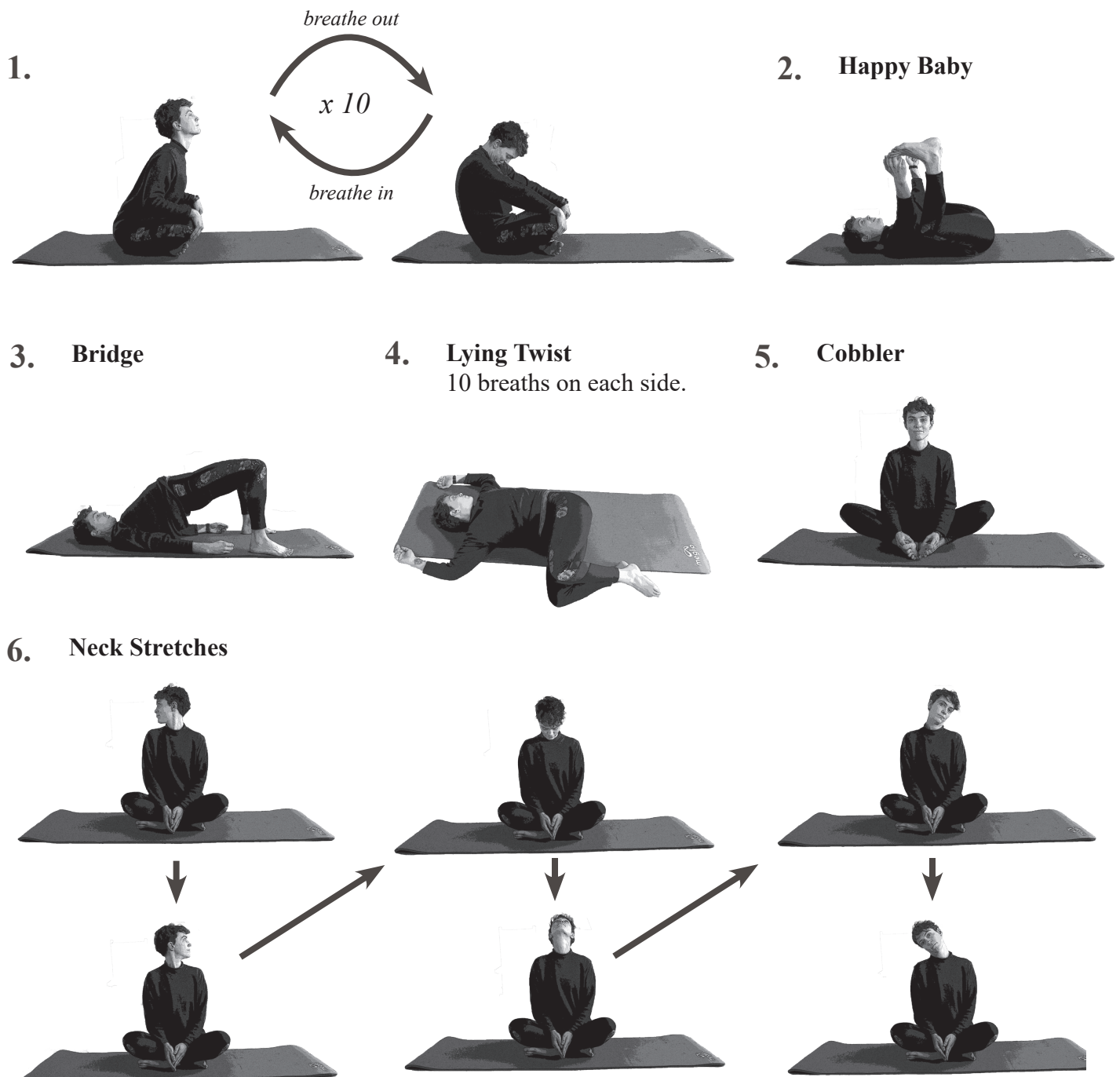
You may spend a lot of time banged up in your cell on your bed. This routine makes use of the space and time you have.

If you aren't sure what to expect, our aim here is for you to feel more relaxed in your body; for your muscles to soften and loosen; and for your breathing rhythm to become slow and deep. When your body relaxes and your breathing slows, you're likely to feel better, and enjoy a brighter mood.

Doing yoga on your bed is just as transformative as doing yoga on a mat, because you're using the same important tools: the power of your attention and the breath.

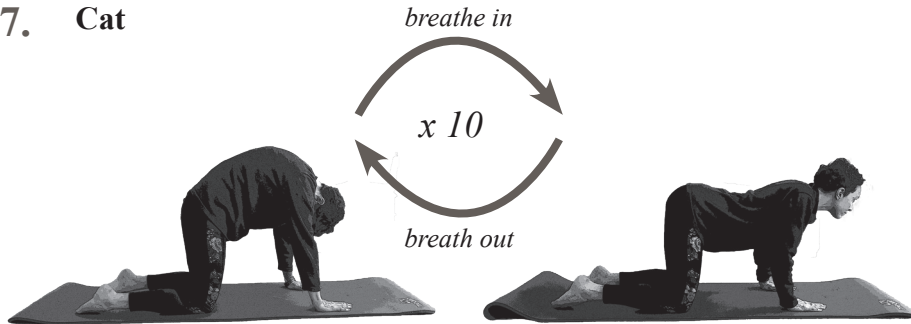
For all the hardships of being in prison, yoga can help connect you to the profound beauty of being alive. I hope you get a little flavour of that as you do this routine.

If there are no other instructions written, hold each posture for ten slow, even breaths.

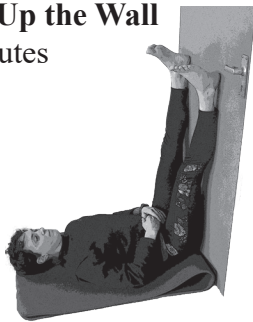


Cell Bed Yoga (cont)

7. Cat



8. Legs Up the Wall 5 minutes



9. Supported Child



11. Diaphragm Breathing

The diaphragm is a large muscle, like a sheet covering the bottom of your rib cage. When you breathe using the diaphragm you encourage yourself to be calm and quiet.

Lie on your back with your hand on your belly, so you can feel it rising and falling. Continue breathing in and out through the nose. For the next two minutes or so keep your attention on your breathing, and gently breathe lower, into the deepest part of your lungs. As you do this your belly will gently rise on the in-breath, and relax and fall on the out-breath.

Be careful not to push the breath. As much as you can, take out all the effort in your breathing. Let it be as gentle as possible.



10. Rest

This is a chance to rest deeply, while remaining awake and alert. Lie like this, feeling the breath flow in and out of your body. Stay for twenty breaths, or longer if you'd like.

12. Sitting

Without slumping, see if you can soften, and settle. Allow your face and jaw to be soft. Shoulders, arms and legs are loose. Ideally the back of your neck is long, and your chin is slightly pointing down. Lower your eyes to an area just in front of your knees. Keep your eyes open.

To start, just feel yourself breathing in normally, and breathe out normally, and silently count, "1." On your next in-breath, feel the breath coming in, and breathing out when you're ready, say "2" silently. Breathing in, feeling the breath. Next out breath, "3." Keep going now, counting your exhalations. Keep going up to 6. When you get to 6, you start again at 1. If you lose count, or if

you count past 6, it doesn't matter. Just start again at 1. Counting the breaths is about helping yourself to stay present to this breath, as it's happening.

If you start thinking about something, or get distracted, that's to be expected and is part of the practice. When you notice you're thinking about something else, gently bring your attention back to your breathing. Allow everything else to be in the background. Keep sitting like this for five minutes.

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Meditation is best done every day. If you want to, start with five minutes and see how you get on. You may find you want to do

more. You're more likely to start to notice positive changes by doing it regularly. Practising like this, we become better at focussing and not letting our thoughts push us around so much.

In time yoga and meditation can help us rediscover the essential joy of being alive, wherever we find ourselves.

