

Changing Perspective Through Yoga

Have you ever found yourself in a 'funk' or a rut? Day in and day out, it can feel like we do the same things over and over (and over) again. We see the same coworkers and the same office walls for five days each week while we count down the days (or hours, and admittedly some weeks even minutes!) until Friday when it's quitting time. I don't mean to sound dramatic, but the point is we humans can be creatures of habit and routine. We like our routines—until we don't. What happens when we need a new perspective and fresh take on our job or a relationship, or maybe just life in general? We need a reset button!

Beginners at practicing yoga often report gaining a fresh perspective or finding renewed joy and happiness within themselves. This is partly attributed to the fact that yoga helps improve posture, which can really have a significant effect on our mood and mindset. If you've never practiced yoga, keep reading for some tips on how to create that fresh outlook and joyful feeling through poses and sequences specifically designed to improve your posture. If you are a yogi that's been practicing for a while now, you should still keep reading also. I'm going to share some yoga poses and maneuvers that will help beginners and experienced yogis alike get a fresh perspective and feel that renewed sense of joy.

Before we jump in to the poses head first, let's first talk about how yoga relates to perspectives and posture for a moment. Did you know that posture affects many aspects of your life, including confidence levels and overall physical wellbeing? The Yogatailor blog offers some insightful statistics about how [yoga relates to good posture](#), and why it even matters. Growing up, you may have been scolded for slouching or slumping at the dinner table. Did anyone ever explain to you why it mattered to sit up straight or walk tall though?

Just in case they didn't, let me assure you that there is a plethora of reasons to practice good posture. It may have been awhile since you last participated in a health class, so let's take a second to first review what good posture really looks like so you know what your end goal should feel like. Ideally, you want to be in alignment: your head aligns with your pelvis which is aligned with your feet. It may help you to think of a string at the top of your head pulling your whole body gently upward. The most obvious benefit of proper posture of course is that you will look more professional when you're sitting up straight at your desk as opposed to slouching over your computer. This one is more of a side note than a health benefit but for anyone looking to quickly gain a flatter midsection, listen up: good posture is about the quickest way to do that, since aligning your body elongates your waist which naturally pulls in your midsection and makes it appear flatter. If you're more of a visual learner, Yogatailor has a handy [infographic depicting good posture](#) as well as some advice on what not to do.

Bad posture doesn't just affect our physical appearance though. The hidden consequences of bad posture live within us, in our internal organs and their health. Everything from our skeletal structure down to our microscopic cell networks to our mental wellbeing and general outlook or perspective can be negatively impacted by poor posture. Eventually, some of these effects can lead to sickness and other health complications. The really bad news? These effects tend to worsen over time, so as you age your ambivalence about good posture takes a bigger toll on your body.

Don't fear though; it's not too late to start correcting your posture! The really great news is that you don't have to get too complicated; all it takes is starting off with a bit of yoga. As a bonus, yoga counts as exercise so you'll be incorporating some healthy activity into your day while working towards better posture. Who doesn't love accomplishing multiple objectives with one task? Let's start with the [Cat-Cow pose](#) from the Yoga Journal:

"Come to your hands and knees, aligning your shoulders over your wrists, and your hips over your knees. On an inhale, arch your spine, moving your heart forward and up; let your gaze follow. On an exhale, round your spine, pushing the floor away with both hands, gently lifting your navel toward your spine and letting your gaze follow. Repeat 4–5 times, or more if you like."

Another pose that feels fantastic is the Mountain Pose as described by the Yoga Journal:

"With your feet together or hip-width apart, inhale and reach your arms skyward, externally rotating your upper arms as you stretch tall. On an exhale, bring your hands to your heart center in Anjali (heart) Mudra, with your palms together. Take a moment to stand here with your eyes closed and shoulders relaxed, breathing deeply for 4–5 breaths or until you feel grounded and centered."

Take note of how you feel before you start and how you feel after you've spent 10, 20 or even 30 minutes practicing these yoga poses. Were your thoughts scattered and disorganized before? Did you feel short of breath or just kind of 'blah?' Afterwards, are your muscles more relaxed? Maybe you even noticed right away that you're standing up a little straighter after you took the time to try some posture-improving yoga. Perhaps your body not only felt refreshed, but your mind felt like you hit a 'reset' button as well. Sometimes, all it takes to get that fresh perspective you've been seeking is to take a few minutes and get your body moving and stretching with yoga. Keep practicing these moves and you'll achieve great posture and a refreshed perspective in no time!