

WEEK 4
Concentration and Awareness

“When you are practicing the exercises, move very slowly and smoothly. This will allow you to be sensitive and alert to variations in feelings and in body processes. Always move with awareness--never mechanically or absent-mindedly--so you develop the quality of the practice. Tarthang Tulka, Kum Nye Yoga, page 151-152

Let’s review the past few classes so that we can begin to integrate our practice. The most important aspect of Kum Nye is contact with experience, at this point, contact with our internal sensory world, and more specifically our world of feeling. The quality of that contact is interest, love, appreciation and curiosity. This takes time to develop. There are sticky aspects of ourselves that resist contact, and we often unconsciously redirect ourselves away from areas which create discomfort. This is our learned way of navigating our world; quite often leading to feelings of separation, isolation, and suffering.

The second area of skill is to develop the ability to feel without labels, judgments or stories. Our body is already doing this, we are introducing mind into the body’s way of being.

As we make contact, we learn to stay with our experience, and we can do this noticing the difference between being ‘in’ experience, and being ‘outside’ of our experience.

We also have a relationship with intensity. Can we stay with ourselves, ‘in’ in the face of intensity? Often our experiences of pain, anxiety, anger or grief can cause us to distance ourselves from our inner experience. Let’s approach intensity with a great deal of sensitivity. Approach intensity with an attitude of appreciation, respect, and inquiry. Go gently and slowly.

This week’s practice involves increasing sensitivity to feelings by exploring differences in feeling tone. The feeling ‘above’ is different from the feeling ‘below’. The right side of the body feels different from the left. The front of the body feels different than the back. Each of the energy centers has a different feeling, and feelings change in quality and intensity as we practice and attune to feelings.

As we practice, we notice that there is an orchestra of feelings, where every single cell seems to have its own song, every movement activates sensation. We begin to swim in this ocean of sensation. Just as you might pick out the flute or the violin in an orchestra, you can also relax back into the whole of the music, aware of how the flute fits in with the whole.

Warm up:

Move in ways that invoke different sensations and feelings. Move quickly, slowly, and massage the head, neck and torso with varying degrees of intensity. When there is intensity, stay curious if you can, and stay with the sense that there is communication between hands and body.

Seven Gestures:

Take on the seven gestures one by one. Then, feel them as a whole. Move from feeling individual sensations, to contacting the body as a whole.

KUM NYE # 36 Awakening the Senses



- ❖ Lift the arms away from your sides a few inches, with the palms facing behind you
- ❖ Slowly begin to rotate your right shoulder up, back, down and forward.
- ❖ As you complete the first rotation, also begin head rotations in a clockwise direction.
- ❖ Coordinate the two circles, making the circles as full as you can.
- ❖ Breathe lightly, and concentrate on the back of your neck.
- ❖ Make three coordinated movements, and then change direction and move in the opposite direction.
- ❖ Sit quietly for a few minutes before repeating on the other side.

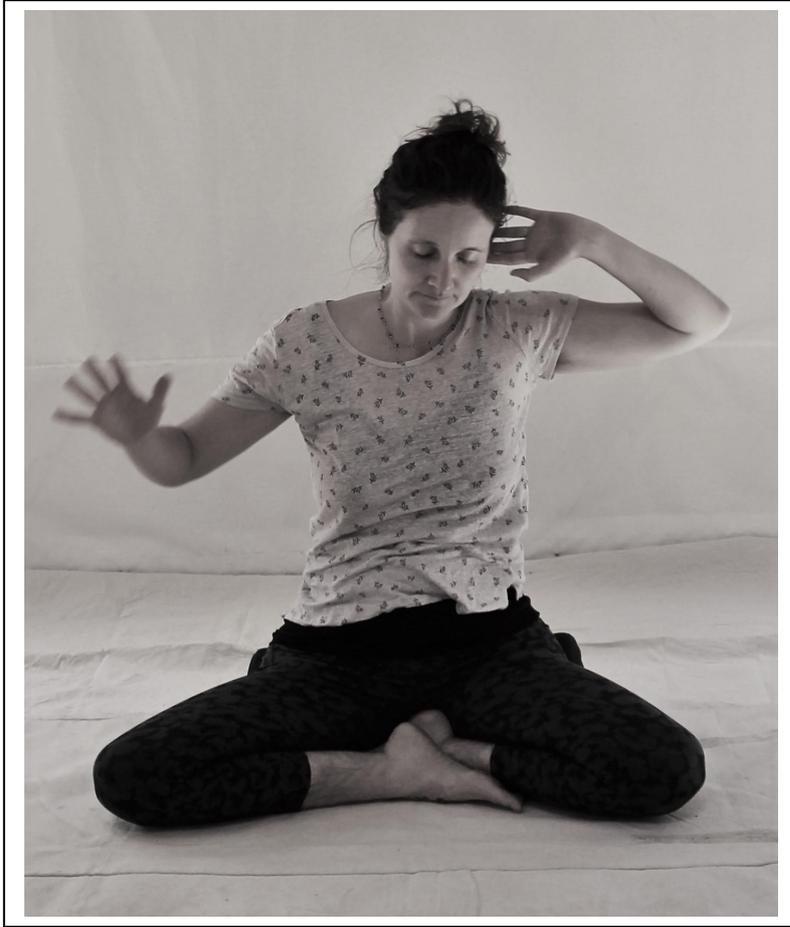
You might repeat this exercise by moving the head counterclockwise as the arm rotates back and up, forward and down.

Be sensitive to the feelings that the *shape* of the movements generates.

Go into and expand the feelings that arise.

There are various tones that awaken with this exercise: The tone from the sensation of movement, the tone from the coordination of movement, and any other feeling that is stimulated. See if you can enter each as you notice it arising.

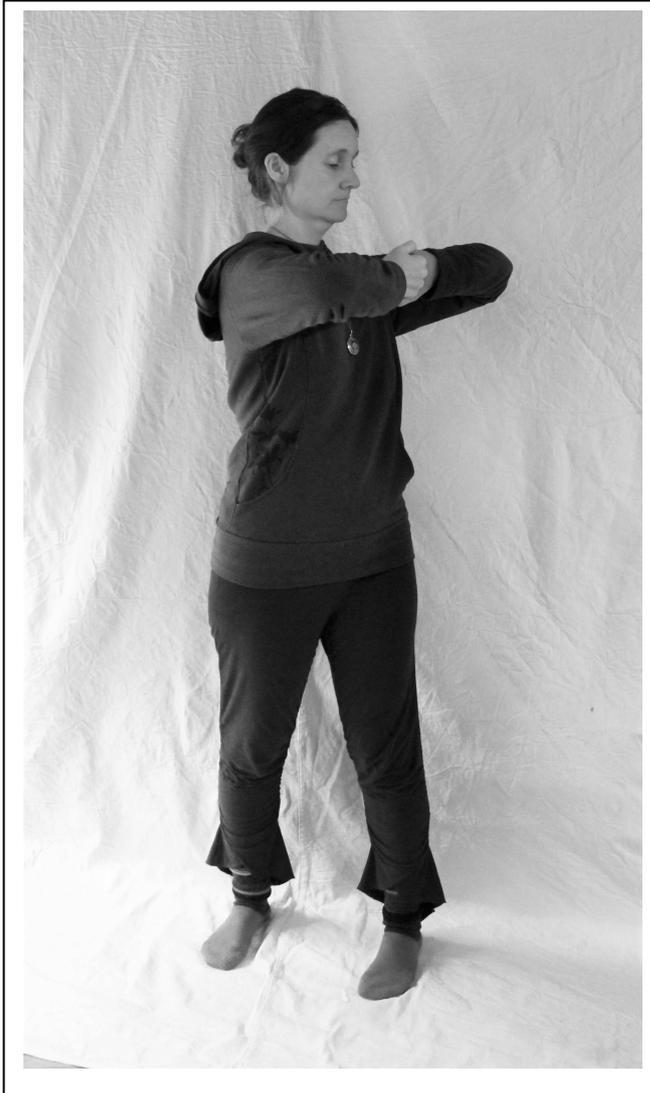
KUM NYE # 37 Balancing the Senses



- ❖ Lift your arms in front of you to chest height with your elbows loosely bent and your hands relaxed, the palms down and the fingers pointing forward.
- ❖ Picture two large clock faces side by side, facing you, and imagine that your hand is at three on the left and nine on the right clock face. Your hands will be a few inches apart.
- ❖ Draw two clockwise circles with your hands and arms, beginning with the three moving to the six, and the nine moving to the twelve. Make the circles as big as you can without overlapping them.
- ❖ When this is smooth, add the clockwise rotation of the head with eyes closed.
- ❖ Coordinate the three movements, keeping the belly relaxed and your breathing soft and smooth through both nose and mouth. Continue for two minutes, sit and let the sensations expand, and then repeat the exercise with hands and head moving in a counterclockwise direction.

KUM NYE #48 Enjoying Space

- ❖ Stand with your body well balanced, your feet about a foot apart.
- ❖ Bring the elbows and hands to the level of the heart, hook the fingers together.



- ❖ Facing forward with your your eyes soft and still, very slowly twist as far right as you can. Take about a minute for this movement. Then gradually return to the front and without stopping twist slowly to the left.
- ❖ Do the complete movement three times and then sit for five minutes in the seven gestures.

KUM NYE #54 Loosening Up the Self-Image

- ❖ Cross your arms in front of your chest, right over left, letting the elbows relax down.
- ❖ Cross the right leg over the left, and place the right foot next to the left foot.
- ❖ In this position, slowly arch back, and then bend forward from the waist as far as you can without straining, then very slowly rise, arching again as you come to standing.
- ❖ Repeat three times and then reverse the positions of the arms and legs (left over right arm, and left leg over the right leg) and repeat again

