

## Movement Techniques for Older Elementary

### Seated Twist Pose

**Direct Aim:** To bring about a sense of wellbeing and quiet to the mind; to tone, strengthen and lengthen the muscles of the body; to establish union within mind, body, soul, Spirit and environment.

**Indirect Aim:** To achieve, maintain, and preserve health and prevent disease in both mind and body.

#### Procedure:

##### Seated Twist Pose – on a chair:

1. Sit on the edge of a chair with your knees bent at 90 degrees, your feet flat on the floor and hip distance apart.
2. Inhale, then on an exhale turn your torso to the right without moving your legs, but moving through the mid back.
3. Place your right hand towards the back of the chair in the direction you've turned your body.
4. Place your left hand on the outside of your right knee.
5. Your head will automatically follow the torso and you will find you are looking over your right shoulder.
6. Now bring awareness to your sit bones – both sit bones are evenly balanced on the chair.
7. Sit tall on both sit bones making sure the crown of you head is held tall so that your spine is not only twisting but also lengthening and your shoulders are back and down.
8. Notice the stretch across the shoulders and in the outer hip area.
9. Take about 5 inhalations and exhalations in this position.
10. On an exhalation twist back facing forwards and bring your hands to your knees.
11. Repeat this pose on the left side.

#### Notes:

In Yoga, twist poses are used to cool, relax and detoxify the body. These poses also lengthen the spine, calm the central nervous system, massage the kidneys and liver and in the seated twist pose as per above lengthen the muscles around the chest, ribs and shoulders.

### **Extensions:**

#### **Seated twist Variation 1:**

1. Sit on the floor with your feet out in front of you.
2. Bend your right knee placing your foot flat on the mat next to the right side of the extended left leg.
3. Bring your left arm around your right bent leg.
4. Place your right hand behind your right buttock and let your fingers face away from your body.
5. Inhale, then on an exhale turn your body to the right twisting through the midback.
6. Continue breathing gently using deep belly breathing.
7. Now bring awareness to your sit bones – both sit bones are evenly balanced on the mat.
8. Sit tall on both sit bones making sure the crown of you head is held tall so that your spine is not only twisting but also lengthening.
9. Notice the stretch across the shoulders and in the outer hip area.
10. Take about 5 inhalations and exhalations in this position.
11. On an exhalation twist back facing forwards and bring your right leg to the floor so that both feet are out in front of you.
12. Repeat this pose on the left side.

**Seated twist Variation 2:** When doing the seated twist pose as per above, practitioners may also bring the right bent leg over the extended left leg, placing the foot flat on the mat on the left side of the extended left leg. This adds another level of difficulty to this pose.

#### **Lying down twist:**

1. Lie flat on your back with your legs extended.
2. Bend your right knee and bring it towards your chest.
3. Take your left hand and place it on the outside of your bent right knee as your roll over to your left side, lifting your right hip up to the sky.
4. Notice your shoulder blades and make certain that they are flat on the mat.

5. Notice the placement of your right foot, if you can't get the right foot to touch on the mat, place it on the inner left thigh – the foot should not dangle in the air.
6. Place the right arm out to the right side of your body turning the palm upwards if this is comfortable for you.
7. Keep your eye gaze up towards the sky or if comfortable for you turn your head towards the outstretched right arm.
8. Breathe deeply through your nostrils.
9. Stay in the pose for about 3 to 5 deep belly breaths.
10. Repeat using your left leg.

### Older Elementary Students:

In times of stress, or if students need to relax before any challenging situation, the **Lying Down Twist Pose** is a great option to calm the central nervous system as well as stretch many of the muscles in the trunk area. It can also be used before going to bed, as it is a very calming pose.