

# Flexibility

When people find out that I teach yoga classes, I often hear the response “I’m not flexible” and details about that explain their inflexibility. In the Anusara yoga there are two actions that we work with each of the poses; muscular energy and organic energy. I’ve often thought of muscular energy as thoughtful muscular actions, whereas organic energy requires the opposite. Organic energy requires us to give into the grace of the pose, our breathe, and being mindful of all the actions required for the asana. Often yoga students that appear to have the most flexibility of the hip or shoulder joints have much more difficulty applying the three A’s-- muscular action, alignment, and always – an open attitude. To me, it is the flexible mind that is most important. When we are able to accept ourselves, others and the circumstances we are faced with, we apply the flexible mind to actively use those situations in our lives to actively embrace and make use of the situation.

## Asanas



Supta  
Padangusthasana  
Reclining Big Toe



Anjaneyasana  
Lunge  
(variation)



Anjaneyasana  
Lunge



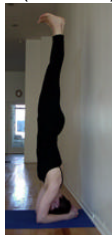
Utthita Trikonasana  
Triangle



Virabhadrasana II  
Warrior Pose



Adho Mukha  
Svanasana  
Downward Facing  
Dog



Sirsasana  
Headstand



Baddhakonasana  
Bound Angle



Urdhva  
Dhanurasana  
Backbend



Paschimottasana  
Intense West Stretch

**Application.** Come to the sticky mat and engage in your practice with a beginner’s mind as your own practice of mental flexibility. Work slowly in the poses – stay at least three deep diaphragmatic breaths in each pose. As you become more practiced, you may begin to work deeper (longer) in fewer asanas. In your practice of these hatha yoga poses consider the alignment and action in each asana as you keep a clear attitude. Lubricate your hips and get your heart rate up with surya namaskar (sun salutation) -- incorporate the lunges and standing poses shown in a flow (vinyasa) style. Just as flexibility allows us to “go with the flow”, incorporating that style into your practice often enables us to engage in our practice at a deeper level.