

INTENTIONAL SEQUENCING FOR YOGA TEACHERS

A manual and visual guide to sequencing

Kathy Páez



Credits

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A Quote

/kwōt/

“Water is the softest thing, yet it can penetrate mountains and earth. This shows clearly the principle of softness overcoming hardness.”- Lao Tzu



A letter

Yin yoga invites us to step away from the external chaos and journey inward. It's a practice of regrouping, of tending to the subtle landscapes of our inner world with care and attention while holding different shapes with our bodies.

May this ebook serve as moonlight on your journey. May it inspire you to craft enriching Yin yoga practices and lessons that nourish both body and soul.

Yin & love,

Kathy



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ONLINE COURSE CONTENT

Online pre-recorded dates

Welcome Unit (*Available Monday April 8*)

Unit 1: Reviewing the Basics (*Available Friday April 26*)

Unit 2: Repurposing Your Yin Yoga Classes

(*Available 1st of May*)

Unit 3: Additional Yin Yoga Classes and 3 Yang

Sequences (*Available Monday April 8*)

Unit 4: livestream workshop series dates:

1. Fri. April 26 | The Functional Approach to Yoga with Paul and Suzee Grilley. 60min.

2. Wed. May 1 | Exploring Yin Yoga Sequencing, Rebound, and Counterposes with Kathy Páez. 2 hours.

3. Wed. May 8 | Expressing Yin: Evocative Wording for Your Classes with Leta Lavigne. 2 hours.

4. Wed. May 15 | Discover the art of time cycle mapping: 7 Phases of a Posture, 7 Windows of communication within poses with Joe Barnett.

5. Wed. May 22 | The Art of Theming: Creating Transformative Classes with Gabrielle Harris. 2 hours.

The livestream calls are uploaded up to 24 hours after each live but will be sent in temporary recorded format up to 3 hours after the seminar.

I. INTRODUCTION

Yin yoga is a slow and static practice of yoga poses, that stimulates the tissues through traction being held in the poses.

The target muscles are relaxed in yin yoga.

Yin yoga poses are held from 2 to 10 minutes.

Yin yoga focuses on relaxing myofascial contractures and stimulating the fascia.

I. INTRODUCTION

The functional Approach to Yin Yoga

“When you learn to view the body as 14 skeletal segments of movements being moved by 10 myofascial groups through 7 archetypal pose then you will be able to adapt the 7 archetypal poses.”

- Paul Grilley

Find a 14.10.7 cheat sheet on the next page.

The 7 archetypal poses

14 skeletal segments of movement

toes, talus, tibia, femur, pelvis, lumbar, thoracic, cervical, fingers, wrist, radius, ulna, humerus, and scapula (scapular).



shoelace



Saddle



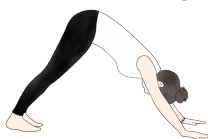
caterpillar



Dragonfly



Twists



Dogs



Dragons

10 myofascial groups

Adductors, quads, hip Flexors, glutes, hamstrings, thoracolumbar, cervical, rectus abdominis, obliques and scapular.

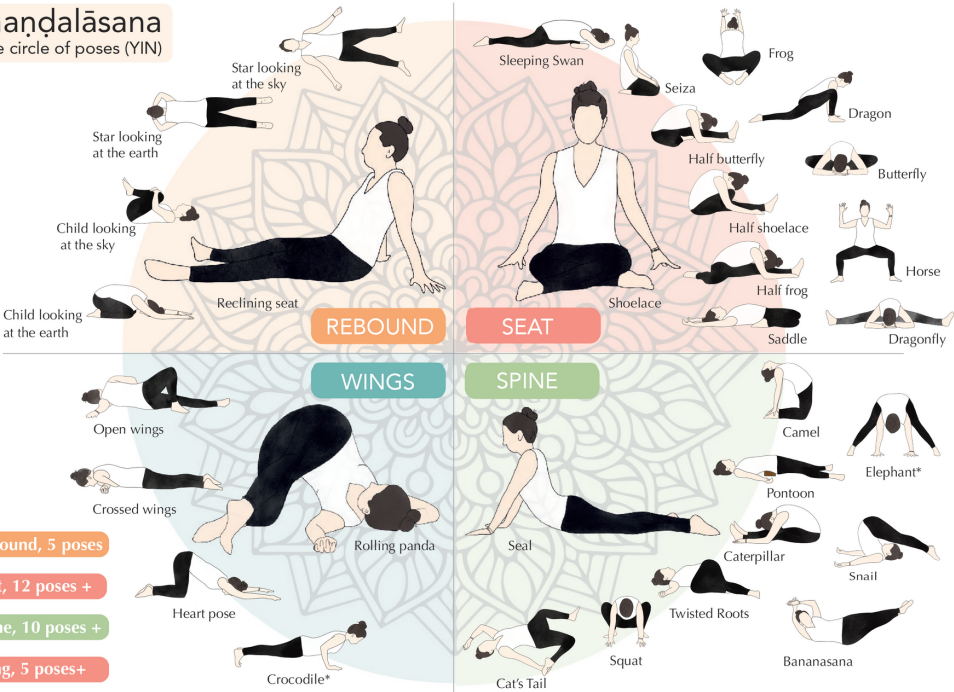
The maṇḍalāsana

The maṇḍalāsana is another approach to grouping poses. It gives you a birds eye view for those still becoming acquainted with the names of the poses.

Mix and match poses at a glance when you're in a pinch to prepare a Yin Yoga session.

maṇḍalāsana

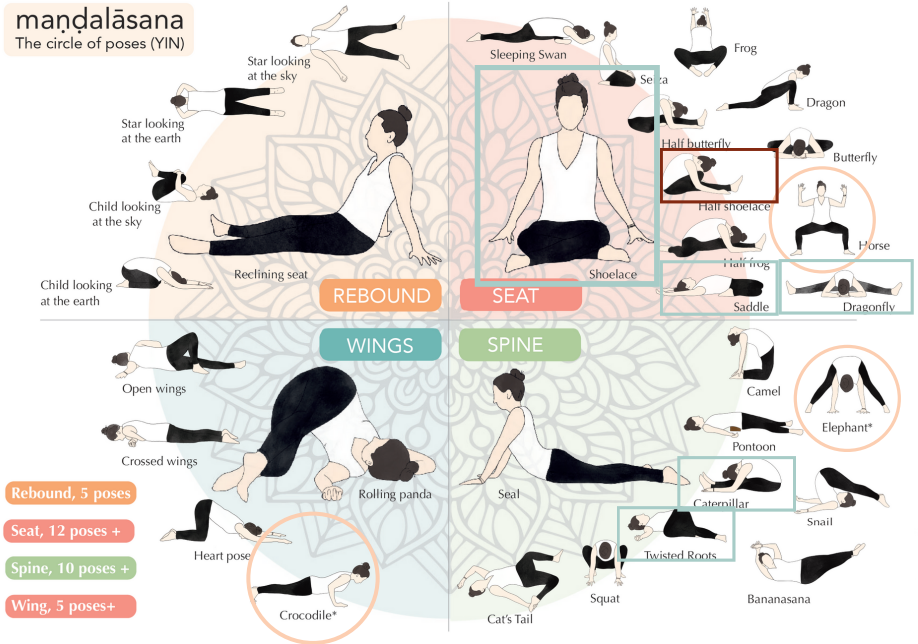
The circle of poses (YIN)



Highlighted here find the 5 Yin Yoga archetypal poses and some yang poses.

 • 5 Yin Yoga archetypal poses

 • Yang poses



II HOLDING SHAPES

Yin yoga is practice that holds five tenets in mind:



1. Seek an appropriate gentle edge: Move slowly into the pose, and do not seek full capacity of range of movement.
2. Find stillness: once you find a comfortable way to remain in the pose, become still.
3. Hold the position: begin by holding for 1-3 minutes gradually progressing to 5 minutes or more.
4. Come out of the pose slowly, as if you were moving through honey.
5. Rebound, this is the space in between poses when you stay a while to feel the effects the pose has had on you; the deep imprint that it has left. In the yin yoga sequences you will find suggested rebound moments.

///

The breath in Yin yoga



In a Yin yoga practice we may or may not do breathing exercises.

The breath can be a way to anchor the mind in the body. Suggested breaths are: natural, abdominal, chest, yogic breath and or even Ujayii. It depends on the poses and objective what you will pick.

Possible rule of thumb with the breath in our approach is to hold it for only the first minute in the pose and then allow the breath to take its natural form.

IV. DIFFERENT WAYS TO SEQUENCE

Yoga classes can be pure Yin or mixed Yin Yang.

Pure Yin Yoga classes can be structured:

- based on target areas and different objectives. The class can hold more asymmetrical, symmetrical, single filed poses, grouping poses together or sides in the right left approach.
- in a journey to approach that focuses on preparing the body from less range of motion to more in order to address a specific target area or aiming towards a pose.
- A class can be a combination of both.

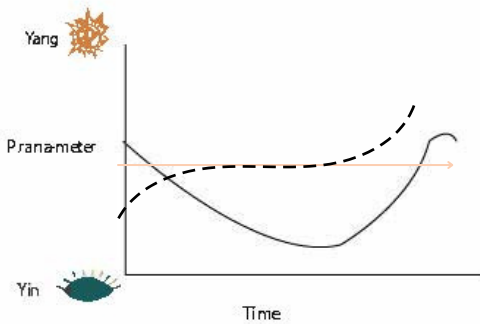
In an only Yin Yoga session. The session is more yang if you hold less time in the poses. The session is more yin if you hold longer in the poses.

This is what will be studied in “Exploring Yin Yoga Sequencing, Rebound, and Counterposes” with Kathy Páez workshop.



IV. DIFFERENT WAYS TO SEQUENCE

Yin Yang Yoga classes are based on the energetic curve. It's a way of gauging what effect you want with the combination of poses or stillness and movement you will be offering.



- Yin can be practiced before yang.
- Yang can be practiced before yin.
- Yang can be done between yin poses.

This is what will be studied in "Exploring Yin Yoga Sequencing, Rebound, and Counterposes" with Kathy Páez workshop.

V. THEMING THE THREE BODIES APPROACH

How to guide awareness and or theme in a yin yoga class.

1. **Physical body:** mention the target area, tissues, and rebound. Invite awareness to the body.

Anatomy based themes.

2. **Astral Body:** talk about emotions, read poetry, light candles, play soft music. Invite awareness inwards and towards the emotions.

Meridians and or chakra themed classes.

3. **Causal body:** talk about philosophy, spirituality, and mental aspects. Invite awareness beyond the body.

Story telling with an inspirational characters in mind such as Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gītā or Siddharta's awakening.



Yin Yoga Sequences

In Yin Yoga, the art of sequencing poses is diverse. These sequences stem from the functional approach. From here we can deepen our understanding of how poses interact and support each other.

Functional anatomy refinement illuminates the interplay of poses, bridging the gap between physical form and functional purpose.

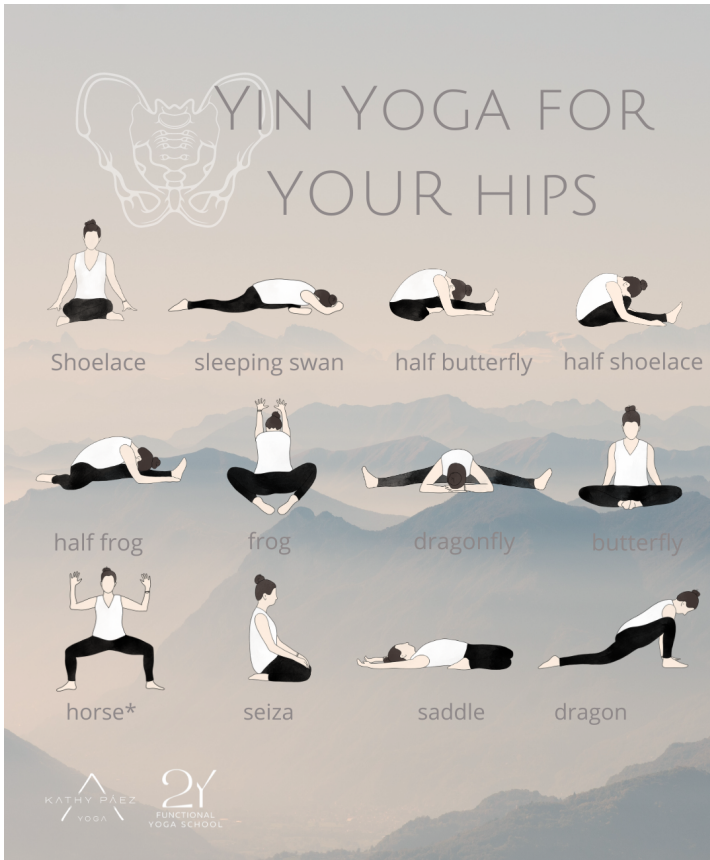
Find here first a foundational sequence that serves as a reminder of the seven Yin-Yang archetypal poses. This sequence alone constitutes a comprehensive class, no whistles and bells needed. Subsequent sequences delve into specific anatomical or energetic focuses, providing practitioners with targeted experiences for their bodies and minds. Towards the end, explore two additional themes: the rebound and combining Yin-Yang.

Through these varied sequences, practitioners can explore the rich tapestry of Yin Yoga, weaving together movement, breath, and awareness for well-being.



In a Yin Yoga class, you can focus solely on the 5 Yin Yoga poses or incorporate all 7 poses for a Yin Yang session.
 Option 1: Pure Yin Yoga Class (Using 5 Yin Yoga Poses).
 Shoelace, saddle, caterpillar, dragonfly and twists.
 Hold each pose up to 4 minutes. Rebound after each pose.
 Finish with śavāsana.

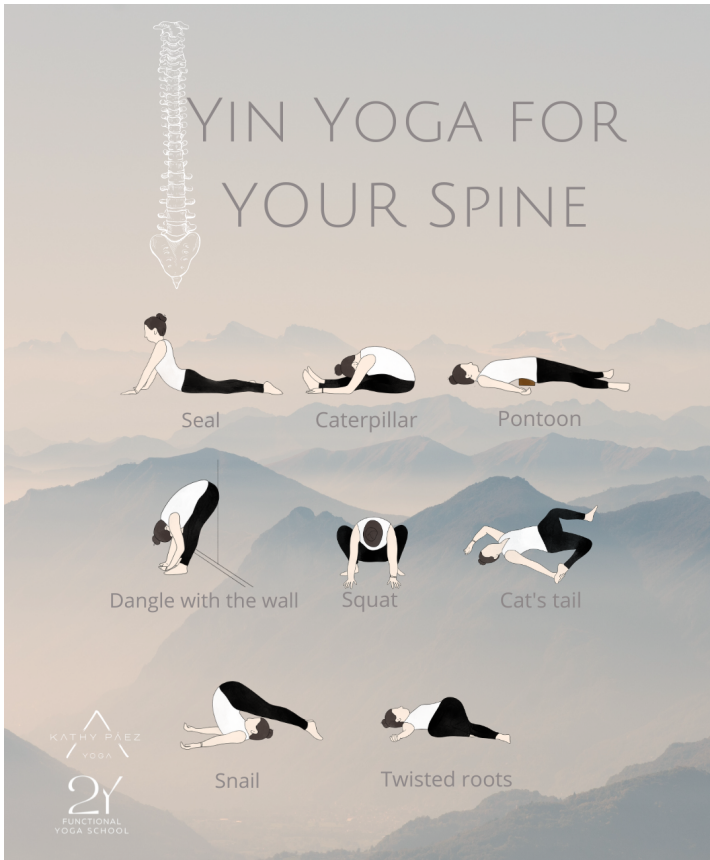
Option 2: Yin Yang Yoga Class (Incorporating all 7 Poses).
 String all 5 Yin Yoga poses together, hold less time. Then do śavāsana. Gently move again to dog and dragon to end the class.



Flow from left to right. Hold for 2 to 4 minutes, embracing a longer rebound after each position. For symmetrical poses, extend your hold up to 6 minutes. End in śavāsana.

A word of caution: Horse pose is a yang pose, no need to use in a full Yin yoga lesson.

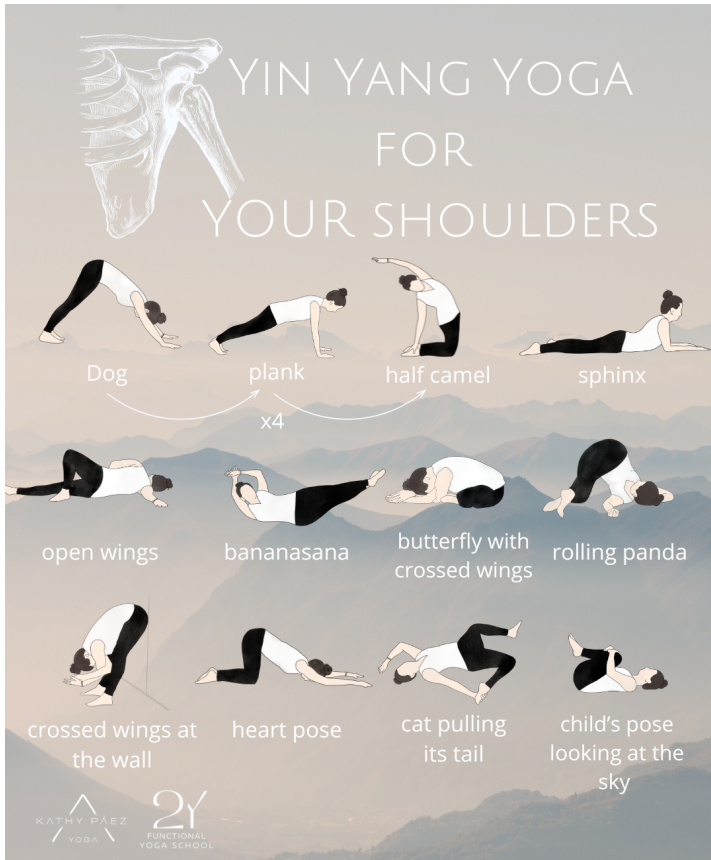
Here's a top tip for sequencing your hip-focused practice: prioritize asymmetrical poses to effectively stimulate all five myofascial groups in your hips.



Flow gracefully from left to right, concluding with śavāsana, in this soothing Yin Yoga sequence crafted to nurture your back.

Hold each pose for 3 to 5 minutes. For asymmetrical poses, hold up to 4 minutes on each side. Embrace a prolonged rebound after each posture.

Here's a valuable tip for sequencing your spine-focused practice: prioritize symmetrical poses and add twists as asymmetrical balance.



Practice from left to right. Hold each pose from 3 to 4 minutes. This sequence can be done when teaching TCM informed classes for the metal and fire element or for upper body release. Hold short rebounds after each pose. Finish with śavāsana.

Top tip when sequencing for the the upper body:
Hold the poses less time as they're mostly asymmetrical and the shoulder has less stability than your hips.

You could teach this lesson without the yang introduction.



Practice flowing from left to right in this revitalizing Yin Yoga sequence, perfect for boosting energy or combating fatigue. Embrace extended rebounds after each pose to deepen relaxation.

Hold each pose for 3 to 5 minutes.

Top Tip for TCM-Informed Classes: Gently remind students that this class serves as a tonic for the subtle body, not a medicinal treatment. Enhance the experience with poems, music, and a soothing tone of voice to set the ideal atmosphere.



Flow gracefully left to right in this express heart-opening Yin Yoga sequence designed for emotional release. Hold each pose for 3 to 5 minutes. Sprinkle rebounds between poses. Finish your practice in śavāsana.

Top Tip for Sequencing Emotions: Incorporate poses inspired by specific elements or energetic themes to enhance emotional awareness. Set the mood with poems, music, and a nurturing tone of voice to create a safe and supportive environment for emotional exploration.



This is not a sequence but a permission slip to combine yin and yang in your classes, if you have the knowledge to do so.

In Yin Yoga we fall towards gravity. In Yang yoga we pull against gravity.

Top tip when adding yang to your classes:

Yang can be done generally at the beginning or end of a class. They can be rhythmic movements playing in some of the proposed poses or set sequences. Creativity is always welcome.



This is not a sequence. These are 5 poses that offer the opportunity for this moment of integration. Some can be considered counter poses. The rebound can be used between poses or a series of poses. The time rebounding has a relationship to the time held in the poses.

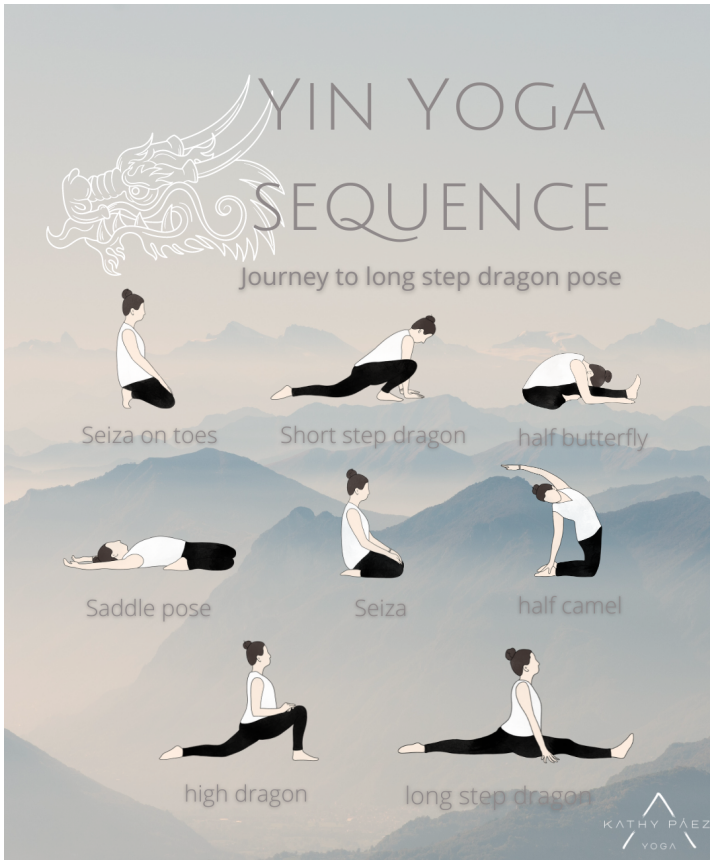
Top tip on using rebound poses.

They can be used between poses or at the beginning and end of the series of poses. The rebound pose is yin within the yin.



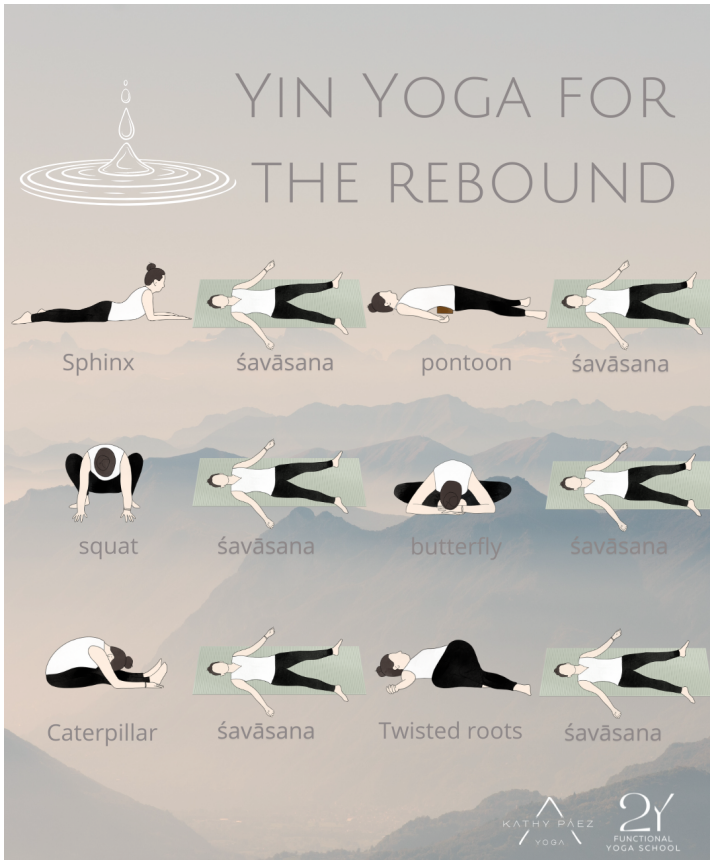
“Yin Yoga class for your 7 chakras” follows the order from the root (mūlā) to the heavens.

The Yin yoga poses were picked according to Hiroshi Motoyama’s extensive studies on the subtle body and a chart based on this study from Paul Grilley that depicts the root & flower of the cakra, physical organ, and meridians.



In Yin Yoga, the “journey to” sequencing approach is vinyāsa Krama inspired, a step-by-step progression that honors the anatomical muscle sheaths. This of course is not the only way to sequence in Yin Yoga.

If Long Step Dragon feels challenging, honor your body with props or ease into the humble dragon pose.



If we want to focus on the rebounds then the poses will usually be symmetrical, longer held, simple without much props (unless needed by a specific student) and followed by long delicious rebounds.

The key to this practice is simplicity.

Practice from left to right. Hold each pose for 5 min.
Rebound for 1 minute.

VI

Bibliography



Grilley, Paul. Yin Yoga Teacher Training Manual.

Páez, Kathy. Yin yoga: Potential in Stillness. 2019. KDP printing.

Illustrations. Yin yoga: Potential in Stillness. A visual guide through the poses of Yin yoga.