

# LDM Reset

Workshop #3 | February 2021

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## DISCOVER YIN YOGA

Invest in rest to fully restore  
mentally and physically

## DE-STRESS MEDITATION

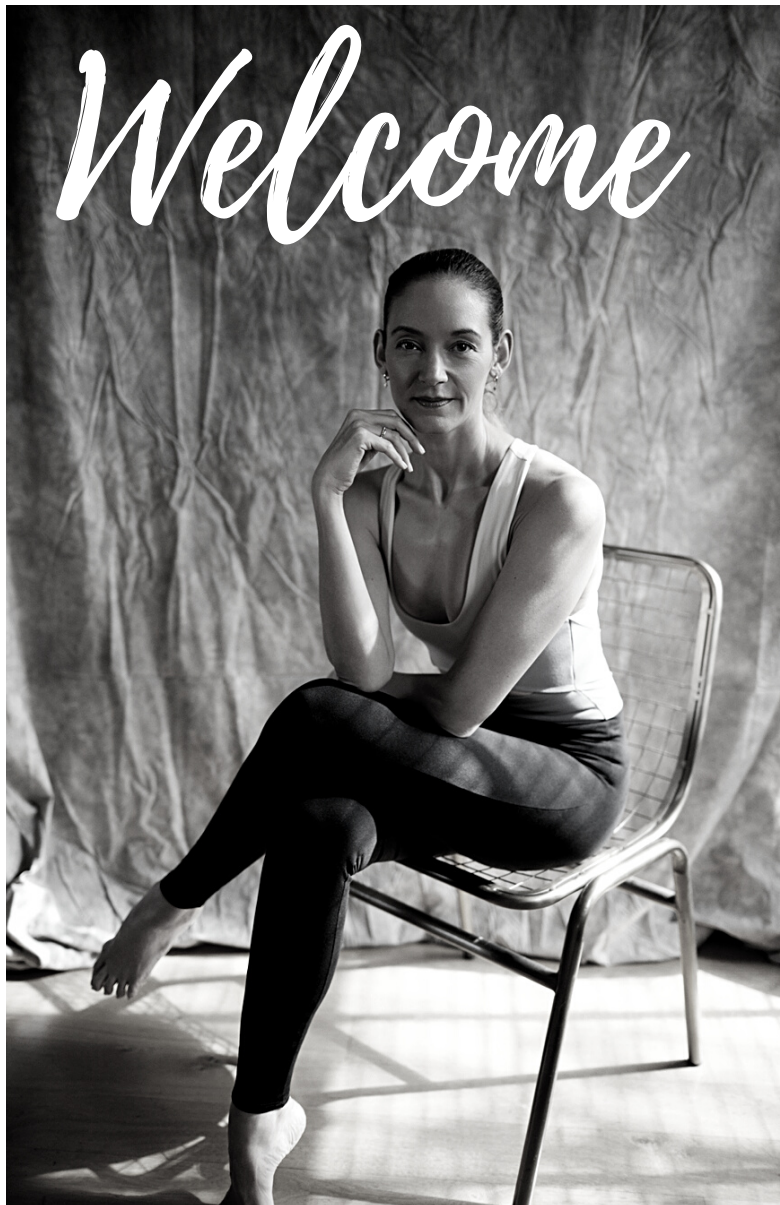
Calm and relax through the power  
of breath techniques

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## YIN YOGA GUIDE

Practise our Yin yoga sequence to  
reset and repair



As we transition further into this third lockdown it is more important than ever to adopt a holistic approach to our wellbeing, something I have always been passionate about. In addition to our live classes on zoom, I wanted to offer a series of workshops that shine some insight into a range of content to help you all stay fit and well mentally and physically.

**"My mission is to make LDM accessible to all, regardless of their shape, size and experience so they can discover a new mindset."**

Throughout this Reset programme I will share some insight into positive practises, nourishing foods to boost immunity as well as mindful solutions to help cope with the changes in the world right now as well as the seasons.

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**Louisa Drake, Creator & Founder of  
LDM**

# DISCOVER YIN YOGA

## *Invest In Rest*

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Sometimes mustering up the motivation to work out is a challenge. But other times, like when we're really determined to reach a goal or we feel like we need to make up for lost time, the opposite is true. Sometimes we take on that frantic "must work out every day" mindset and completely forget that one of the most important parts of exercising effectively is giving our bodies time to recover. This is where adding the principles of Yin yoga into your routine can be a game changer.

Techniques such as Yin, myofascial release and stretching, all offer a chance for regeneration, which also requires water, food and sometimes supplements. These all contribute to rebuilding body tissue and allowing the tissue to grow back stronger.



## WHAT THE YIN?

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The majority of more recognisable yoga is known as "yang" yoga. This include more athletic styles such as Vinyasa, Power and Ashtanga. But there's another equally important style that's completely opposite, Yin yoga.

Yin yoga focuses on your muscles, yin yoga targets your deep connective tissues, like your fascia, ligaments, joints, and bones. It's slower and more meditative, giving you space to turn inward and tune into both your mind and the physical sensations of your body.

It's a more restorative style and poses are held for anywhere between one and up to 7 minutes. The aim is to increase flexibility and encourage a feeling of release and letting go. It is a wonderful way to learn the basics of meditation and stilling the mind. It's great if you need to release tension in overworked joints, and it is also good for those who need to relax.

The practice of yin yoga is based on ancient Chinese philosophies and Taoist principles which believe there are pathways of Qi (energy) that run through our bodies. By stretching and deepening into poses, we're opening up any blockages and releasing that energy to flow freely.



## Benefits of practising Yin

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### Yin Benefits

There are plenty of physical health benefits to practicing yin yoga, but there are plenty of mental health ones, too. Below are some of the most popular, from stretching your connective tissue to reducing stress and anxiety.

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#### 1. Lengthens connective tissue

Think of your fascia like thin tights that wrap around your muscles and bones. When this connective tissue is underused, it becomes less elastic which can lead to aches and stiffness. “If you gently stretch connective tissue by holding a stretch or pose for a long time, the body will respond by making them a little longer and stronger, which is exactly what you want,” Louisa explains.

#### 2. Increases flexibility

Elastic fascia and mobile joints lead to better flexibility, which is one of the key benefits to a regular yin yoga practice. Because fascia needs at least 120 seconds of sustained stretching to actually affect its elasticity, yin is one of the most effective ways at improving your flexibility and releasing tension in tight spots thanks to its long holds.



#### 3. Boosts your circulation

By breathing into each pose and targeting your deeper tissues and ligaments, you bring more oxygen into your body and to your muscles. This helps increase your blood flow and circulation.

#### 4. Reduces stress levels

That calm you feel after a yin class is very real. Studies have found yin yoga to have a significant impact on lowering stress and anxiety and reducing the risk of depression. Plus, it activates your parasympathetic nervous system, which calms your body and slows your heart rate (rather than the autonomic nervous system, which triggers your fight-or-flight response).



## Enhance your home workouts

Props can help to increase stress where there is too little or none at all and props can also assist in decreasing stress if there is too much.

You want to use the props to help access the targeted area for the poses or to help you stay in the pose longer.

Through applying stress in an intelligent way, props can help to lengthen or open the body, creating more room to move. Candlelight removes distractions so you turn your attention within and relax deeply. It's a great complement to a workout or hectic daily schedule.

Below we highlight the most common yoga props but remember you can be creative with a range of at-home items to support.

### Yoga blocks & cushions

The standard use of cushions is to help us gain height. We can sit up taller, which allows a more natural curve to the lumbar spine.

Yoga blocks or books stacked, add height or length to the body, making more poses available and effective as they help bring the floor to you. Blocks are generally higher/thicker than cushions but they are harder and less comfortable.

Blocks are also useful for simple support, you can rest blocks under bent knees in forward folds to allow the bones to relax and the muscles to soften. Blocks are great and you may want to have several on hand when you do a Yin yoga practice.



### Resistance band or yoga strap

The LDM resistance band is ideal to aid you in reaching difficult poses and over time will help you increase your flexibility and alignment.

There are countless ways to use the band in seated poses to lengthen the hamstrings to standing poses and working on binds.

### Blankets

Blankets can keep us warm and we use them for shavasana for that reason, but Yin yoga is a cool practice, and we can use blankets to keep us warm and comfortable while we settle in the uncomfortable postures. Blankets are super versatile and can be used like cushions (just fold them up a couple of times) or like bolsters (just roll them up into cylinders), but they can be used as foundational supports as well, padding under the knees, arms and head.

### Bolsters

Similar to blocks, bolsters also help to take stress off the bones. Where blocks can add height or length to the body, bolsters are mostly used to relax the body in the postures. Remember the bones don't like to be left hanging and the muscles will engage to support them. But the aim is to relax the muscles, so a bolster under the bones accomplishes this. Foam rollers can be used for certain poses in place of bolsters with a blanket or towel on top to soften the service.

# YIN YOGA SEQUENCE TO DESTRESS



## 1. Supported Childs pose

This is a great pose for when feeling overwhelmed.

You can use block under the end of bolster. Option to use blanket under ankles to cushion the tops of the feet.

**Total time goal: 5 mins, 2.5 mins with head facing left, then 2.5 mins head to the right.**

**Tips for practising Yin yoga**

1. Find your appropriate edge: move slowly and gently into the pose. Don't go straight to your "maximum" in the pose and never stretch so far as to cause pain.
2. Stillness: consciously try to release into the pose, and to remain still, without fidgeting or shifting position too much.
3. Hold the position: start with holding a pose for 1-3 minutes and progress to 5 minutes or more.



## 2. Reclined Butterfly

Opens chest, back and shoulders, great if spent most of the day on laptop.

Place a block under top of bolster, option to use another just below bolster for tailbone to rest on. Draw heels closer towards you for a more intense stretch, equally further away for less.

**Total time goal: 5 mins**



## 2. Reclined Butterfly variation

The feet can stay wide and knees touch instead. Also try extending the arms above the head arm.



# Practice makes perfect

## 3. Melting Heart pose

A great pose for bringing space to the thoracic spine (upper & middle back) and for letting go of the days stresses.

Option to place a blanket under knees if need.

If the stretch is too intense bring bolster closer so that your head can rest on it.

**Total time goal: 5 mins**



## 4. Sleeping Swan

A vigorous way to open the hips, allowing gravity to do the work. Energetically, it can help to detoxify the body, this pose targets our liver, kidney and gall bladder meridians.

A few variations shown to try out.

This is a deep external rotation of the hip especially the further away the heels goes, be mindful with your own anatomy as you do this. For those who feel knee pain a block can be used beneath the sit bone of the leg forward in order to elevate you and make squaring the hips a little easier.

**Total time goal: 5 mins each side**



**Top tip - Pay attention to differences from right to left. Connective tissue holds more history (does not regenerate as quickly) than the superficial tissues. Habit, dominance, trauma and other experiences cause one side to differ greatly from the other in a yin practice.**



## 5. Dragon

Increases hip mobility, stretches the back legs hip flexors and quadriceps. Many variations help to work deeply into the hip socket. Stimulates the liver, spleen, kidney, gallbladder.

Many variations for this one - you can have blocks under hands bringing the floor towards you. Bolster under back leg as an option. If knee is on the floor and it's putting too much pressure on the knee, pop a book or block under the shin bone which will elevate the knee off the floor so it is floating. Need a sense of leaning forward for this pose so as to not put too much pressure on the back knee.



**Total time goal: 5 mins each side**



### Split Dragon pose variation

This pose helps restore overall hip mobility where fascia (connective tissue) might be causing irritation and tension. Releases hamstrings and quadriceps.

Also a nice way to restore curvature in the lumbar spine (great to do if you have been sitting for quite a few hours).

**Top tip - Adapt to each moment in the pose. Naturally, the pose will change as your tissues open. Your state of mind and emotion may also change. Keep checking in and make intentional adjustments.**



# Little by little

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## 6. Supported Bridge pose

Benefits include; soothes the nervous system, promotes deep relaxation, stretches neck and shoulders, improves digestion, circulation and respiration.

Bolster or block under sacrum, legs long or knees bent if prefer to modify, option to place arms over head or by the sides.

**Total time goal: 5 mins**

## 7. Shavasana

Increases levels of energy, reduces blood pressure and anxiety.

Option to place a bolster or blanket behind knees, this helps to release the lower back and relaxes and calms the body.

**Total time goal: 5 mins**



## Breathe & de-stress

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One of the biggest challenges for the immune system is stress. Deep breathing is one of the best ways to lower stress in the body, improve immune function, sleep quality and lower blood pressure.

LDM Holistic Lead & qualified meditation coach Natalie Simmonds shares her short, effective de-stressing 4:7:8 breathing technique:

- Place the tip of the tongue to the back of top teeth.
- Breathe in the nose for 4.
- Hold the breath for 7 whilst staying relaxed in the body.
- Breathe out through mouth for 8.

This breathing technique is a great way to relax, relieve tension and alleviate anxiety. Allowing us to react to any negative stimuli (stress triggers) with more mental clarity, achieving a calmer state of mind and body.