

LIFE

>> WOMEN'S HEALTH FROM THE KIT

Relieve tension without getting up

Five chair yoga poses to lower stress, increase focus and assist in better posture

KATHERINE LALANCETTE
THE KIT

For those times when you've lost control of your inbox, haven't gotten up from your desk all day and have reached your video meeting limit (I call it having a case of the "Zoom gloom"), two words can save the day: chair yoga.

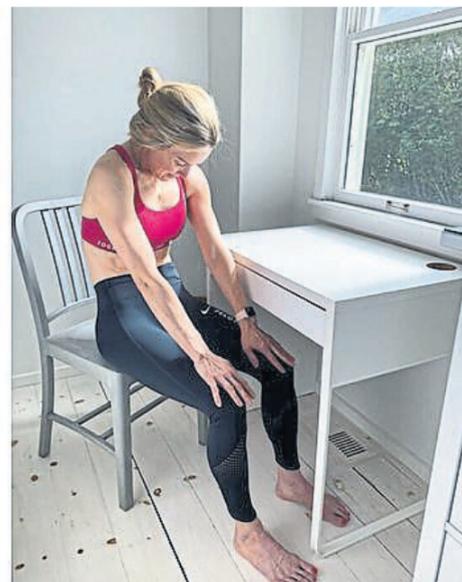
Kristin McGee wrote a whole book about it. "I saw a demand for movement for desk-bound people," says the famed yoga teacher and Peloton instructor (you can catch her many classes — from power flows to meditations — on the Peloton app). "There are many ways to move, stretch and breath when you're

stuck at work." Or, you know, stuck working at your dining table or kitchen island.

Some quick chair yoga can help loosen up tight areas while allowing you to tap into your parasympathetic nervous system, leaving you instantly more relaxed. But that's not all. "It can also help strengthen areas like the abs, assist in better posture and give people a chance to sneak movement breaks in throughout the day," says McGee.

Here, she takes us through five poses she swears by to relieve tension and feel more grounded.

Namaste, friends.



KRISTIN MCGEE PHOTOS

Cat/cow

Sit up tall with your feet planted firmly on the floor. Inhale and open up your chest as you arch up and out of your lower back. Exhale as you round your spine and look to your belly. Continue this back-and-forth motion of arching and rounding as you link your breath with the movement. "This is great to open up the back, shoulders and hips, as well as strengthen the core," McGee says.

**Chair twist**

Sit up tall with your feet planted firmly on the floor. Place your right hand on your left knee and your left hand behind you on the top of the chair (you can also place it lower if you like) and rotate to the right, initiating the movement from your core. Hold for five breaths, come to centre and repeat on the left side. "This is great for unsticking tension or tightness around the spine and through the back, hips and shoulders," McGee says. "It also helps to give us a fresh perspective."

**High altar side-lean**

Sitting up tall, interlace your hands and invert your palms to the ceiling with your arms alongside your ears. Relax the top of your shoulders and lengthen up out of the lower back. As you stretch to the right, hold for five breaths. Come up to centre, then stretch to the left. "I love this pose for helping with our posture, opening up the shoulders and wrists, alleviating lower back pain and strengthening the core and obliques," McGee says.

**Eagle arms**

Sit up tall and place your feet flat on the ground. Open your arms to the sides, then cross the right arm under the left. Double cross at the elbows and press the back of the hands or palms together. Hold for five to eight breaths, then repeat with the left arm underneath. "Eagle arms are great for alleviating shoulder tension as well as wrist pain," McGee says. "They're also great for focus and concentration."

**Ankle-to-knee pose**

Sitting up tall, cross your right ankle over your left knee, letting the right knee drop open to the side. Stay here and breathe or lean forward, placing your forearms on your shin for a deeper stretch. Hold for five to eight breaths and then switch sides.

Get a clue and eat your fruits, veggies, Silverstone says

Star of 'Clueless' turned her focus toward living and eating healthily

ILANA KAPLAN
THE NEW YORK TIMES

"There were people in my life at one time that really did say, 'You couldn't really do the activism thing if you wanted to be an actor,'" said Alicia Silverstone, 43, who after Aerosmith's "Cryin'" video and her role as Cher Horowitz, the spoiled and charming teenager in the 1995 coming-of-age hit

"Clueless," became a Hollywood "It" girl.

After the success of that film, Silverstone endured an iteration of what was not yet called body shaming when she played Batgirl and shrank back somewhat from public life. "I just loved acting," she said. "I never expected to be famous. I didn't know what it meant."

At 21, she began pursuing another interest: veganism, which she had tried off and on since she was eight years old. She has written a bestselling cookbook, "The Kind Diet," and been fre-

quently interviewed, including by the New York Times, about her "green" beauty routine.

Silverstone committed to veganism out of her love for animals, particularly her dog, Sampson, a rescue Rottweiler mix. "I realized that when I was petting his leg, that leg felt the same as the sort of chicken breasts I might be eating, or whatever animal I was eating," she said. "And I started to wonder what my leg might taste like if somebody ate it."

Formerly associated with hippies and animal-rights protests,

the vegan diet has become more mainstream thanks to concerns about climate change and the wellness movement.

Besides the books, she founded, with Garden of Life, Mykind Organics, a line of organic, non-GMO vitamins.

"I've had these amazing experiences where people on the street say, 'I had lupus, I suffer from MS, I have chronic migraines,'" she said. "Or even, 'I had a really bad heart, I was on heart medication.' Or 'I had thyroid medication.' All these things that people, then, with

their doctor, end up not needing anymore because they changed their diets."

Her daily routine involves sensible self-nourishment. "I always bring everything back to diet," she said. "When I don't eat well, I don't feel well, and then my moods go all over the place." Silverstone has been eating meals filled with fresh herbs, greens, miso soup and ginger tea. She has found comfort in cooking, of course, but also in daily long walks, yoga, writing in a journal and meditation.