#4 ENDOCRINE & AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM: Yin-Yang Vinyasa Flow to Improve Resilience to Stress Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Introduction to Endocrine and Stress Response

Ujjayi Breath Instruction

Warm-Up and Sun Salutations

Standing Flow and Balance Poses

Headstand and Restorative Cool Down

hello [Music] hi I'm Dr Mariella wood and I'm a board certified family physician and certified yoga teacher and welcome back to day four of our body systems yoga series for full body health today we're going to be focused on the endocrine system and the autonomic nervous system so hopefully one of my favorites and I'll tell you why so both of these systems work together to help our body respond to stress so with the endocrine system we have the release of cortisol and with the autonomic nervous system we have the release of epinephrine when we're stressed so what happens is a stressor is induced in our body and that can mean a chemical stressor from processed foods or toxins a mental stressor from just feeling stressed at work or feeling pressure from a deadline or a physical stressor if our body is just very tired or not getting enough sleep so all of those things create a stress response in the body so when that happens on the endocrine side of things our HPA axis gets turned on which stands for the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal access and a lot of different things happen here but ultimately what you need to know is that your body releases cortisol and when cortisol gets released a number of different things happen your blood pressure goes up your heart rate goes up digestion gets put on hold libido or sex drive gets put on hold and all of this is so that you can respond to a stressor in the immediate time and then once the stressor is gone everything kind of resets goes back to normal you start digesting things again your libido turns back on problem in this day and age is that there's always a stressor be it with the food that we're eating all the psychological stressors not getting enough sleep causing physical stressors in our body so unfortunately for a lot of people cortisol is chronically on in the body so going back to what cortisol does in the body this creates chronic high blood pressure chronic constipation weight gain low libido and a number of different things the autonomic nervous system is a little bit different but still produces similar results so we have our autonomic nervous system which is our peripheral nervous system so all the nerves that exit our spinal cord and are not actually part of our brain and our spinal cord and the autonomic nervous system gets divided into the parasympathetic response which is our rest and digest and then our sympathetic response which is the fight-or-flight response so we always have varying degrees of parasympathetic and sympathetic nerves that are being fired if we have more sympathetic nerves being fired we're releasing more adrenaline and we have more of that stress response activated if we have more parasympathetic nerves activated then our bodies allowed to be in a more rest and digest state so similar to what I talked about with the cortisol our bodies are chronically in this state of stress so a lot of people have this chronic sympathetic tone happening in their body which causes very similar things to what cortisol does so fatigue weight gain high blood pressure constipation a number of different things that are just not good so what is the solution to all this so we don't want to turn off our stress response that would actually be bad in the other direction our bodies would be stagnant which would also lead to sluggishness and weight gain what we want to do is optimize our stress response so we want it to turn on when it's supposed to and turn off when it's supposed to which is a hard thing in this day and age luckily there are a lot of different things you can do to help this so first and foremost make sure you're eating the good foods if you're having a lot of mental stressors not getting a lot of sleep at least you can put Good Foods in your body and not just add to more of the stressors by eating processed foods second meditation is a great one third yoga which we'll definitely get into today and specifically today our flow is going to be a yin yang Vinyasa style flow so we'll undulate between more fiery and active poses and then go into some more nurturing and Yin poses to mimic that up and down response that should be happening in our body last there are a special class of herbs called adaptogenics that I want to talk about so as the name implies these herbs help the body adapt to stress and they work on the HPA axis like I talked about earlier in the endocrine system and each of the herbs work on a different part of the HPA axis but what is really special about these adaptogenics is that they don't turn

on or turn off the stress response like some of our Pharmaceuticals we don't fully know how they work but they help the body adapt to stress so it helps the body turn on the stress response and it needs to and turn them off when it needs to as well if you're interested in learning more about adaptogenics you can check out my podcast the trip lab I talk a lot about them and all these other things on there last before we begin our flow our special focus of today is going to be the ujjayi breath so this is that ocean breath that you may have heard a lot of people doing in yoga where it's a very audible inhale and exhale through the nose and what's special about the ujjayi breath is that when you constrict the throat to create that sound you're activating the vagus nerve so the vagus nerve exits your skull right where that throat constriction happens and the vagus nerve is the largest parasympathetic nerve in your body that sends out signals basically throughout your whole body and remember that parasympathetic nerves are your rest and Digest so by actively doing the ujjayi breath you're actively in real time turning on your parasympathetic or rest and digest response so with all that we'll start with a little bit of breath work and meditation specifically focusing on the ujjayi breath and then we'll get into our flow I'll see you on the map [Music] thank you all right we're going to start today's Flow by learning how to use the ujjayi breath so this is a classic yoga breath that you've probably heard in a lot of different classes it's when you make that deep ocean sound with your breath a lot of people call this breath ocean breath instead of ujjayi breaths so I'll give you an example of what it sounds like and then I'll teach you how to do it so you can strict the back of your throat as you breathe in and as you breathe out so let's try together breathing in constricting the back of your throat breathing in through your nose and then on the exhale also constrict the back of your throat imagine you're trying to fog up a window so like so when you do this you're constructing the back of your throat to produce a little bit more heat so try that together it does take a little bit of time to practice and get this sort of breath but just try what you can just try to make that ocean sound with your breath so all together let's try three breaths and together inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the nose twice more inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the nose time inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth keeping the constriction so if you ever want to release heat throughout the yoga flow try this breath work but exhale audibly through the mouth instead of the nose so when you do this constriction and you breathe in and out with the constriction in the back of your throat it activates the vagus nerve which sits right next to that constriction the vagus nerve is the biggest parasympathetic nerve in your body so it starts to induce this parasympathetic response so even though the flows might be a little bit more active faster Pace if you can keep the ujjayi breath throughout this flow you're working on inducing the parasympathetic and the sympathetic at the same time to help balance out your body so with that let's go ahead and start our flow let's all meet in a neutral tabletop position so when you're here shoulders down and back shoulders stacked directly on top of your wrists your hips are stacked directly on top of your knees let's go through a few rounds of cat and cow to begin so inhale to drop the belly gaze up to the sky for cow pose and exhale to round the spine tuck your chin cat pose inhale to round the spine gaze up exhale to round the spine the other direction cat pose do that one more time inhale drop the belly gaze up cow pose and exhale around the spine tuck your chin cat pose inhale back to a neutral tabletop position and then exhale to step back into a high plank position stay here for the exhale then inhale to shift your weight forward over your wrists and exhale down through chaturanga dandasana inhale for an upward facing dog or Cobra and then exhale to tuck your toes send your hips up and back for a downward facing dog and move into our first down dog of the day so take some time here pedal out your feet move your hips around find any movement that feels good for you just start to warm up the shoulders the back the legs the entire body here we'll go through a few sun salutations so inhale to lift your heels bend your knees and then jump up or step forward to the top of the mat inhale to lift up to a flat back and then exhale forward fold inhale to sweep your arms up to tadasana Mountain pose and exhale hands to prayer Heart Center inhale to lift your arms up and exhale micro back bend inhale to lift up once more and then exhale forward fold inhale to lift up to a flat back then exhale to plant your hands and step your feet back into a high plank position inhale to shift your weight forward over your wrists and then exhale down through chaturanga dandasana inhale for Upward facing dog or cobra and then exhale to send your hips up and back or downward facing dog we'll go through that sequence two more times so inhale to lift your heels bend your knees and then jump Hopper step forward to meet your hands in a forward fold inhale to lift up to a flat back and then exhale back down forward fold inhale to sweep your arms up for tadasana Mountain pose and then exhale your hands to prayer Heart Center inhale to reach your arms up and then exhale micro back then inhale to lift up once more and then exhale forward Folds inhale to lift up to a flat back then exhale to plant your hands and step back into a high plank position inhale to shift your weight forward over your wrists and then exhale down through chaturanga dandasana inhale for an upward facing dog or cobra and the exhale to send your hips up and back for a downward facing dog all right one more time just like that inhale to lift your heels bend your knees and then exhale to jump up or step forward to the top of the mat forward fold inhale to lift up to a flat back shoulders down and back and then exhale forward fold inhale to sweep your arms up to devasana Mountain pose and then exhale

hands to prayer Heart Center inhale to lift up again and then exhale micro back bend inhale up once more and then exhale forward fold inhale to lift up to a flat back and then exhale to plant your hands jump or step back into a high plank position inhale to shift your weight forward over your wrists and then exhale down through chaturanga dandasana inhale for an upward facing dog or cobra exhale to send your hips up and back for a downward facing dog all right drop down onto your knees and we'll find a child's pose here take a little bit of rest after that activation so remember that our goal today is to go through a yin yang style flow so we'll go through some Vinyasa flows and then take time to rest and then finally we'll end with some more Yin relaxing poses all right whenever you're ready let's all meet back up in a downward facing dog from here inhale to lift your right leg up and back for depth for a three-legged dog then exhale to step your right foot forward in between your hands for a runner's lunge inhale to cartwheel open your arms and meet open in a Warrior Two position and then exhale to reverse your Warrior inhale back to Warrior Two and then exhale to reverse your Warrior inhale this time to lean forward we're going into a half moon pose so plant your right hand down on the ground and lift your left leg up and back open your chest open to the left side of your mat you're trying to stamp the back of the room inhale here to lift and lengthen and then exhale to open up into a star position inhale to lift up just a little bit higher and then exhale place your hands on your hips and hinge forward and we'll all find ourselves in a wide legged forward fold so we're gonna stay here for a little bit this will be our resting pose in the middle of this flow I want you to feel what it feels like to have your head below your heart and find a forward fold in wide legged position you can sway from side to side find a ragdoll variation just relax here for a few moments on your next inhale plant your hands and lift up to a flat back and on the exhale Bend into your left knee and we'll find Archer's pose towards the back of the mat from here inhale to wind forward to the top of your mat to meet in the runner's lunge sail to step your right foot back to meet the left for a high plank inhale to shift your weight forward over your wrists and then exhale down through chaturanga dandasana inhale for an upward facing dog or cobra and then exhale to send your hips up and back for a downward facing dog all right moving on to the other side now inhale your left leg up and back for a three-legged dog and then exhale to step your left foot forward in between your hands for a runner's lunge inhale to open up unwind into a Warrior Two position and then exhale to reverse your Warrior inhale back to a Warrior Two and then it exhale to reverse your Warrior this time inhale lean forward we'll move into a half moon pose so place your left hand down on the ground in front of you lift your back right leg up for a half moon inhale here to lift and lengthen and then exhale to open up into a star position inhale to place your hands to your hips and then exhale to hinge forward it will meet in a wide legged forward fold again this is our resting pose here having our head below our heart so take some time to see what it feels like here in this position you can grab your ankles you can sway from side to side just find a moment of rest here before we move on with this portion of the flow on your next inhale plant your hands lift up to a flat back and then exhale arches to the back of the mat then deeply into your right leg inhale to shift your weight forward to a runner's lunge towards the top of the mat and then exhale to step your left foot back to meet your right inhale to shift your weight forward over your wrists and then exhale down through chaturanga dandrasana inhale for an upward facing dog or cobra and then exhale to send your hips up and back or downward facing dog from here drop down into child's pose again and we'll take a little bit of a rest great walk your hands back to your legs we'll take one more resting pose before we move on just run around to your back lay down on your back and we'll find a supernasana from here keep your feet planted together and allow your legs to rest outside the reclined bound angle or superconasana take a rest here then we'll go through one more fiery and active flow before we move on to more Yen poses after that all right go ahead and plant your feet back down on the grounds reach for your legs and start to rock and roll back and forth along the length of your spine and try to get yourself all the way up living in a forward fold on your next inhale lift up to a flat back and then exhale forward Folds on our next inhale sweep your arms up and overhead for tadasana Mountain pose exhale hands to prayer Heart Center on our next inhale lift both arms up to the sky and then lift your right leg up for a flamingo pose from here reach your right arm back and grab your knee with your left hand we'll go into dancing Shiva if it's available for you grab for the outside of your left your right foot and straighten your leg out long we'll practice a little balance here all right go ahead and release back to Flamingo pose and then we'll go into Warrior Two so bring your hands to prepare Heart Center and start to kick your right foot back and hinge forward for a warrior two from here just open up into a crescent lunge and then unwind for a warrior two inhale to lift both arms straighten your left leg exhale back down to Warrior Two inhale to lift up once more and exhale Warrior Two this time inhale to reverse your Warrior and then exhale to cartwheel your hands down to frame your foot step back into a high plank inhale to shift your weight forward over your wrists and then exhale down through chaturanga dandasana inhale for an upward facing dog or cobra and then exhale to lift your hips up and back for downward facing dog ah on your next inhale lift your heels bend your knees and jump off or step towards the front of your mat for forward fold inhale to lift up for a flat back and then exhale forward fold inhale sweep your arms up overhead for tadasana Mountain pose and exhale hands to pear Heart Center inhale to

lift your arms and start to bring your left leg up for Flamingo position this time try grabbing your knee with your right hand and reaching your left arm out back for dancing Shiva if it's available for you grab for the outside of your left leg and kick the leg straight and challenge your balance here inhale back to Flamingo pose and then exhale to kick your left leg back for a warrior three inhale here once more and then exhale open up into a crescent lunge inhale to lift and lengthen and then exhale to open it up into a Warrior Two position inhale to straighten your arms and your right leg exhale Warrior Two inhale to lift up once more and exhale Warrior Two this time inhale to reverse your Warrior and then exhale to cartwheel your hands down to frame the right foot for a runner's lunge inhale to step your right foot back to meet your left shift your weight forward over your wrists and then exhale down through chaturanga dandasana inhale for an upward facing dog or cobra and then exhale to sit back into a child's pose all right take a little bit of a rest here and we'll move on to one more fiery and active pose and then we'll cool down so when you're ready we're going to play with supported headstand so the reason I'm choosing to do this pose in this flow is because again like we did in our wide legged forward fold having your head below your heart is really good stress release so if you haven't done these before or you're still learning I would definitely suggest going up against a wall so you feel more comfortable and stable otherwise you can just play with the lead up to this pose and you don't have to bring your legs all the way up but if you want to play and you want to learn how to do this pose start by taking your hands and clasping them together like this you're going to place your hands on the crown of your head instead of the crown of your head is touching the mat but this is giving you a little bit more support so place it down place your hands here crown of the head touching the back of the mat hands are slightly behind it you want to be really strong and firm in your shoulders and your arms so once you feel secure here lift up your hips until your feet towards your hands Begin by lifting one foot then the other and slowly lift your legs up to the sky stay strong through your shoulders and play with opening your legs bringing them back up and then slowly come out sit up reset your body let the blood flow come back all right so now that we have all the blood rushing to your head a little bit of a stress release we can move on to the Yen portion of our flow so we're going to start laying down on our back so go ahead and meet you there pull your knees into your chest and gently start to rock side to side give your back a massage allow your head to rest after the intense work that it was just doing in a headstand and then when you're ready just let both knees fall over to the right we'll do a nice easy gentle supine spinal twist you can place your right hand on your left knee and let your left arm extend out long and just relax here we'll stay here for a few moments foreign inhale your knees back to Center and now just allow them fall over to the left just a simple supine twist and place your left hand over the right knee and let your right arm fall out to the side inhale your knees back to Center give them a good squeeze rock along the side of your body then plant your feet down on the ground and lift up into a short simple Bridge so just lift your hips up to the sky feel the constriction in the throat here the activation through your pelvis and release it back down to the ground do that one more time inhale to lift your hips High to the sky squeeze through the glutes and exhale to release it back down one more time inhale to lift up to a glute Bridge and then exhale to release it down this time take your right foot place it on top of your left knee and we'll do a supine figure four stretch so lift that left leg up and grab underneath your thigh you can grab around the outside and just pull it towards you start to feel the stretch in your IT band in the outer parts of your right glute all right go ahead and release it down we'll do one glute bridge to reset inhale lift your hips to the sky and exhale release it down and take your left foot and place it on top of your right knee grab underneath your right thigh or around your right knee pull your legs into your chest all right release your legs squeeze both knees into your chest squeeze tightly as much as you can into a little ball here and then release everything out long find your final resting pose shavasana release any control of the breath just allow your body to be and surrender into this pose if you'd like to stay in shavasana longer go ahead and pause the video here if you'd like to be guided out in a few moments the surrender and release and I'll guide you out all right go ahead and start to bring some movement back into the body wiggling the fingers and the toes roll out your wrists take a full body good morning stretch roll over onto one side or the other slowly lift up no all meets in an easy seat once you've arrived here go ahead and place your hands to prayer Heart Center and bring your thumbs up to your third eye The Light in Me honors the light inside each and all of you namaste [Music]