



Asanas for Autism and Special Needs

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Our Kids Are Stressed Out Yoga & Mindfulness for Youth



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Special Needs



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RCYT – Registered Children's
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RYS – Registered Yoga School



Yoga Can Support Children With...

- ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)
- Fragile X
- Prader Willi
- Down Syndrome
- Learning Disability
- ED (Emotionally Disturbed)
- ADD/ADHD
- SPD – Sensory Processing Disorder or difficulties
- Landau Kleffner
- OHI – Other Health Impairment
- Behavioral challenges
- LPD – Language Processing Disorder or communication difficulties
- Anxiety Disorders



Common Challenges...

- Anxiety
- Difficulty with expressive and receptive language or LPD Language Processing Disorder
- Difficulty regulating and expressing emotions.
- Difficulty with self-regulation of their arousal states
- Lack of coping skills
- Behavioral challenges
- Limited body awareness
- Sensory challenges or sensory processing difficulties
- Limited social skills
- Irregular sleep patterns
- Limited fine and gross motor skills
- Digestive Problems
- Difficulty with focus and concentration



Impact of These Challenges

- Limited or poor relationships with others
- Low self-esteem
- Poor grades
- Depression or Anxiety
- Aggressive or “Acting out” behaviors towards themselves and others
- Isolation
- Poor health



Benefits of Yoga for Youth

- Self-Regulation
- Balance
- Coordination
- Flexibility
- Increases Self-Esteem
- Improves Concentration and Focus
- Hand-Eye Coordination
- Coping Skills
- Social Skills
- Increases strength
- Self-Confidence
- Increases language & communication
- Supports healthy digestion
- Increases energy
- Supports fine and gross motor skills
- Decreases anxiety
- Supports more regular sleep patterns
- Supports healthy expression of emotions





Our Kids Are Stressed Out

Why?

- Peer & Social Pressures
- Home life
- Community Pressures & Stressors
- School Pressure
- Technology
- Environmental Stimuli
- Lack of Coping Skills
- Lack of Real Social Interaction
- Over-scheduled
- Mental Health Challenges

What?

- Drug & Alcohol Abuse
- Acting Out
- Isolation
- Poor Concentration
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Self-Destructive Behaviors
- Emotional Dis-regulation
- Trouble with Peers & Adults

Fight/Flight



Sympathetic Nervous System

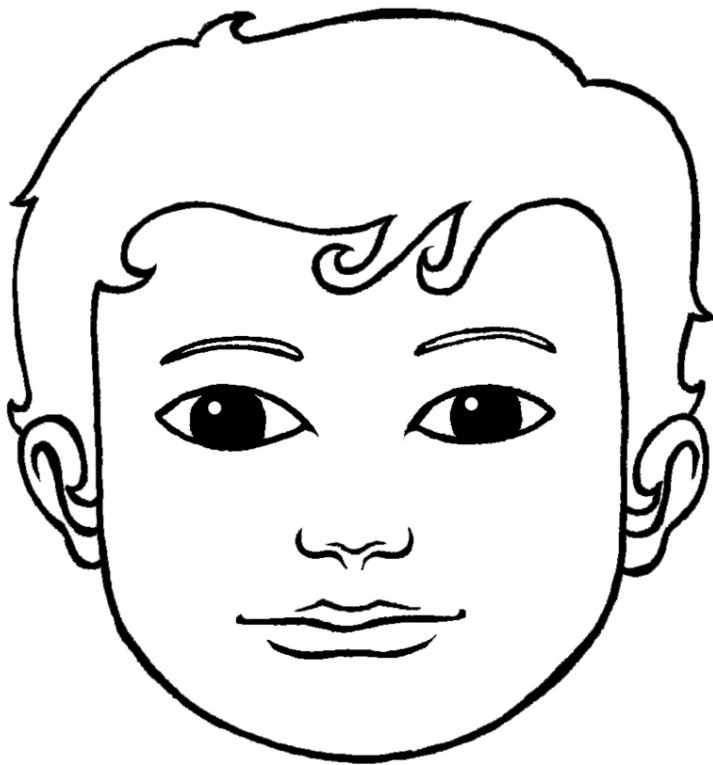


- Chest breathing/hyperventilation
- Impulsivity
- Impaired cognition
- Sleep difficulties
- Impaired communication
- Anxiety, Frustration, Anger
- Acting out
- Difficulty focusing
- Poor health

Calm/Relaxed



Parasympathetic Nervous System



- Improved focus and concentration
- Better Sleep
- Self-Regulation
- Decreased anxiety, anger, frustration
- Improved behavior
- Improved Mood
- Improved communication and expression of emotions
- Overall improvement in physical and emotional health and well-being



How to incorporate yoga in your classroom, home or program

- Pictures of poses/breaths posted in the environment
- Yoga word walls with pictures
- Laminated yoga schedule with removable PECS
- Yoga thematic unit – All about yoga
- Video of children or adults doing yoga (make a yoga video)
- Visuals to support memory and imagination for poses, breath work and guided imagery
- Yoga games
- Chair yoga breaks
- Yoga corner/relaxation space (space in the room for yoga breathing and poses)
- Yoga emotions/breaths choice board
- Art projects
- Teach Body Parts and directional concepts such as left/right and top/bottom.

I can do yoga breathing and stretches to help me feel calm

tug-o-war



open book-close book



butterfly to cocoon



squeeze orange juice



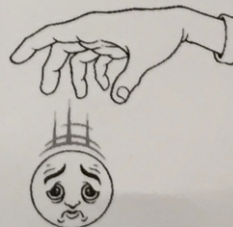
wave breath



balloon belly breath



let it go breath



dragon breath





Behind Every Behavior is a “Need” A need for...

- Communication
- Sensory input
- Attention
- A break
- A deep breath
- To feel grounded, secure and safe
- Release of energy
- Interaction with peers & adults
- Patience from others
- Acceptance, love & understanding



Breathing Strategies Support



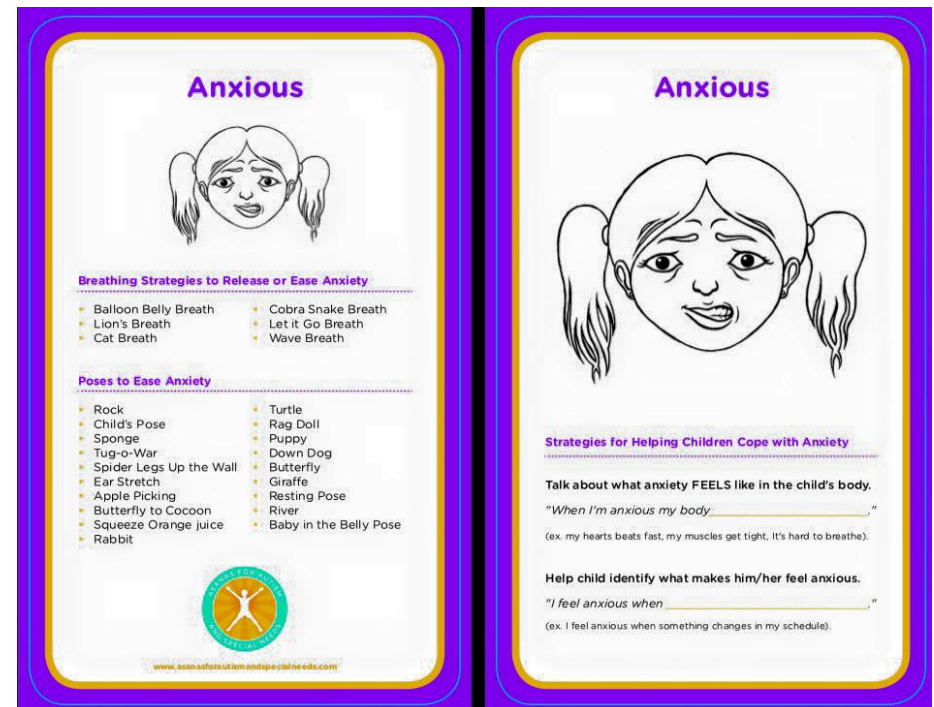
- Communication & language development
- Expression and Release of Difficult Emotions
- Improved Concentration
- Self-Regulation
- Improved Mood
- Calming the nervous system



Expressing difficult Emotions

I can feel C.A.L.M.M

1. Identify emotion.
2. Identify what happens in my body and brain when I feel that emotion.
3. Identify what makes me feel that emotion.
4. Choose something (a breath & pose) that will help me feel better.



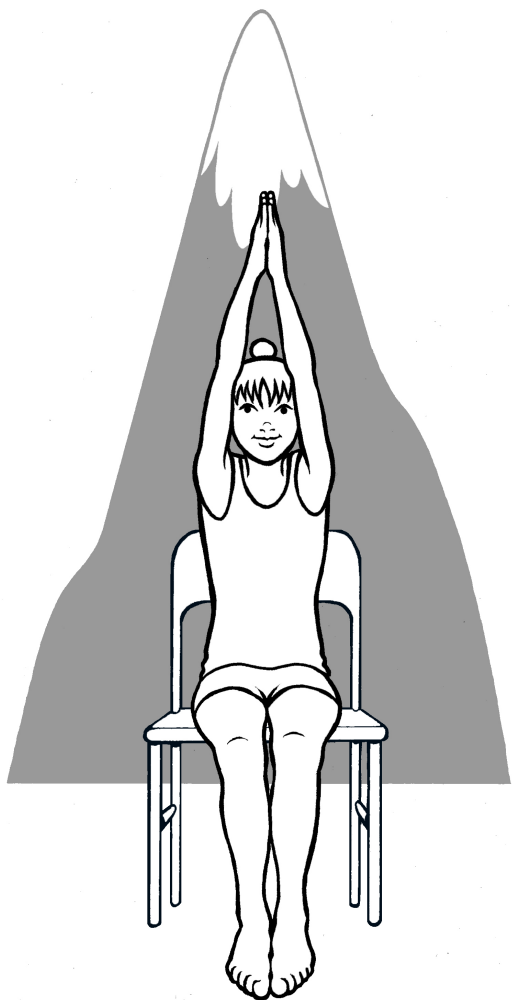


Breathing Strategies

- Balloon Belly Breath and Wave Breath – Calming, Soothes nervous system
- Bee Breath & Bunny Breath – Energizes the brain
- Let it Go Breath – Release worry, anxiety or fear
- Volcano Breath – Release anger or frustration
- “I don’t know, Let it Go Breath – It’s ok to make mistakes – let go of frustration.
- Lions Breath – Release fear, cleansing breath
- Open Mouth Breath – Calming and cleansing
- Choo-Choo Breath – Energizing & uplifting



Benefits of Chair Yoga



- Supports children with limited mobility
- Inclusive
- Convenient – easy to take chair “yoga breaks” in the classroom or program
- Quick way to bring calm and peace to the environment
- Positive Physical and Emotional Effect
- Cross midline
- Proprioceptive and Vestibular Input
- Increased fine & gross motor skills



Examples of Chair Yoga Poses

- Seated mountain
Stretches upper body, increases focus/concentration
- Apple picking
Crosses midline, balances two hemispheres of brain, supports brain/body connection
- Pizza Dough Ear Stretch
Quiets the mind, soothes the nervous system
- Open book/close book
Opens up front of body, calms



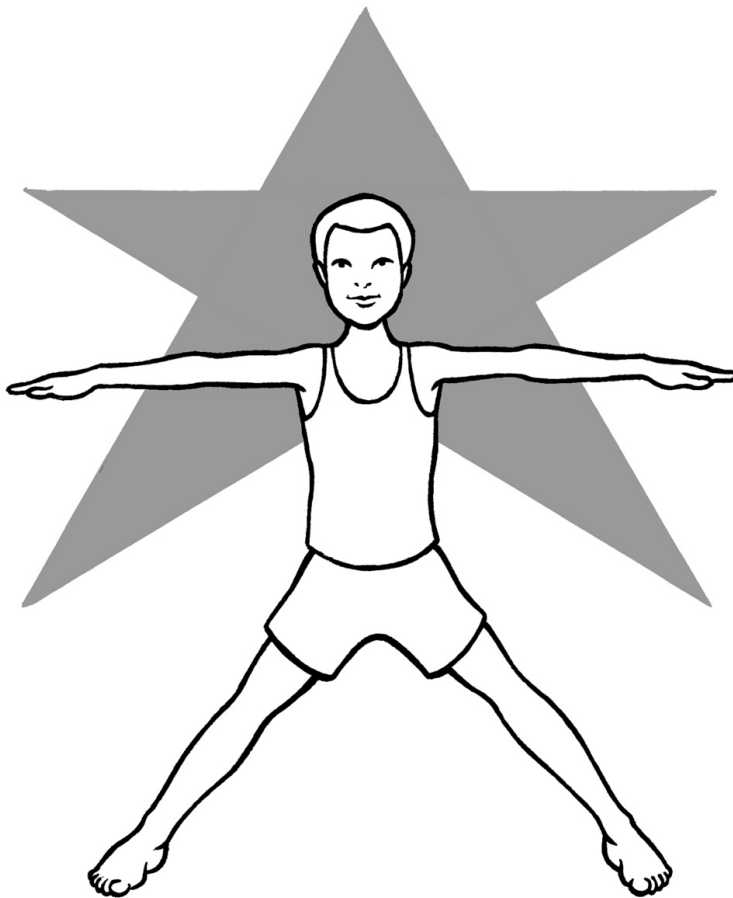
Students Taking a Yoga Break!



Let it Go Breath!

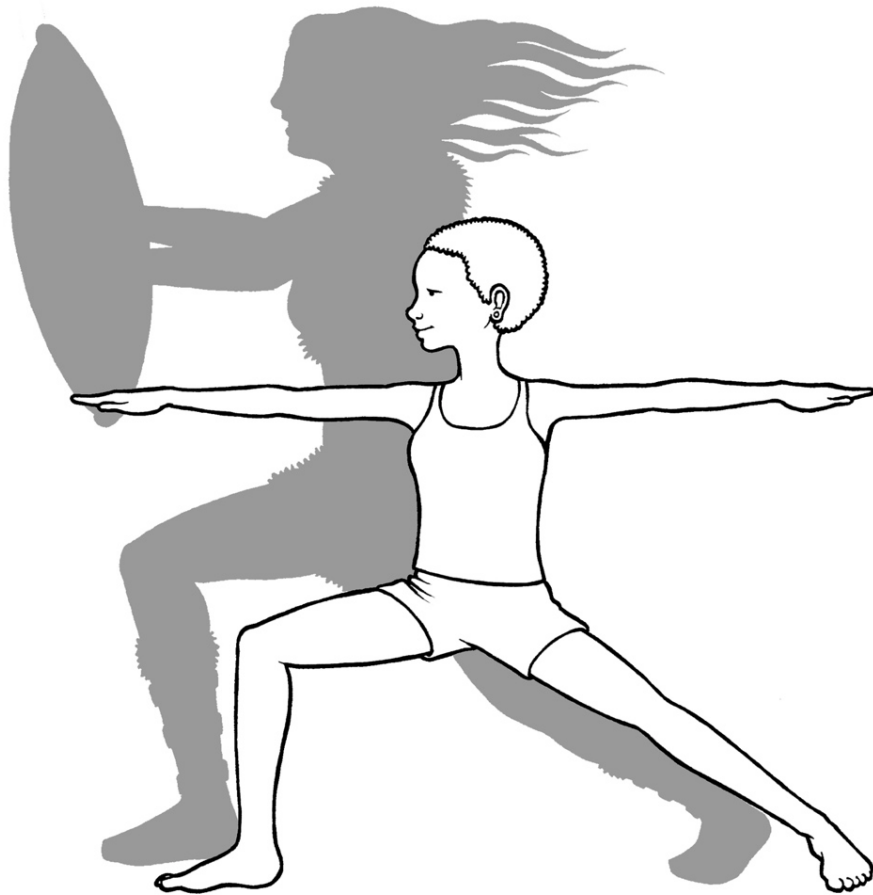


Benefits of Physical Poses (Asanas)



- Balance
- Focus
- Coordination
- Self-Esteem
- Strength
- Proprioceptive and Vestibular Input (Sensory Balancing)
- Self-Regulation
- Body Awareness
- Energize the brain
- Calm the brain/body
- Reset Nervous System
- Release tension in the body

Yoga poses to increase balance, strength, focus and self-confidence



- Mountain Pose (Tadasana)
- Warrior 2 (Virabhadrasana II)
- Tree Pose (Vrksasana)
- Airplane (Dekasana)
- Flamingo
- Star pose (Utthita Tadasana)
- Triangle pose (Trikonasana)



Working on Balance!

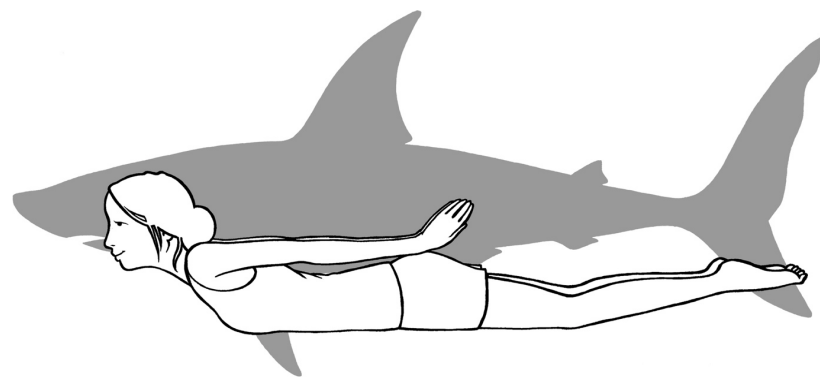


Tree Pose!

Yoga poses and breathing strategies to calm, rejuvenate & energize the body and mind



- Cat/Cow pose (Marjariasana & Bitilasana)
- Shark pose (Salabhasana)
- Bridge Pose (Setu Bandha Sarvangasana)
- Frog Pose (Malasana)
- Cobra (Snake) Pose (Bhujangasana)
- Sun Salutation (Surya Namaskar)
- Elevator Breath
- Bee breath
- Bunny Breath



Energizing our Brains & Bodies!



Frog Pose!



Yoga poses and breath to decrease anxiety and encourage relaxation



- Child's Pose (Balasana)
- Rock (Balasana with arms to side)
- Rag Doll (Uttanasana)
- Butterfly (Badha Konasana)
- Progressive Relaxation
- Resting Pose (Savasana)
- Wave breath (Ujjayi)
- Balloon Belly Breathing
- Let it Go Breath
- 3 part Breathing
- Alternate Nostril Breathing



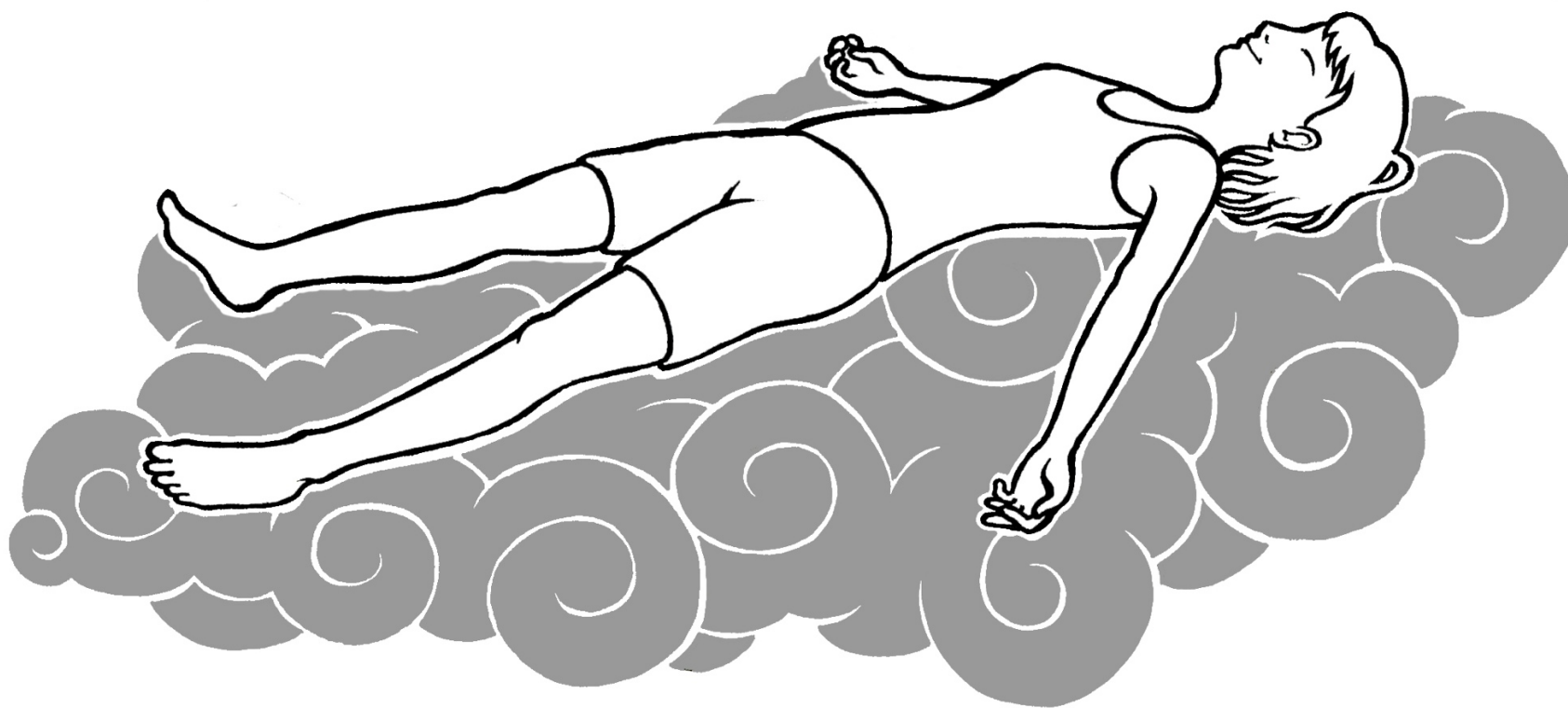
Finding our Calm!



Rocks in the Warm Sun!



Namaste!





The Best Part!



Resting Pose – Floating on a Cloud!



Social Skills

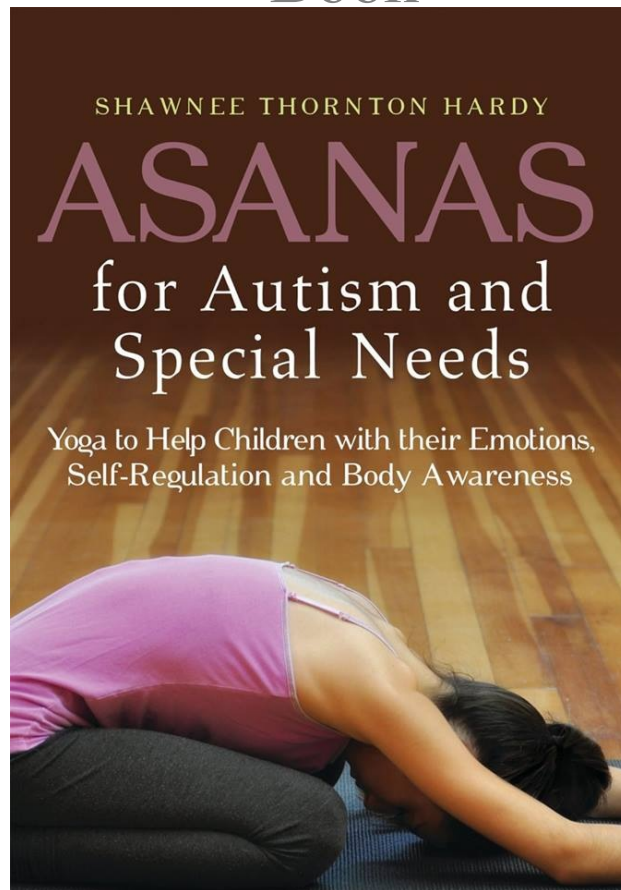
- Turn Taking
- Connection
- Friendship
- Kindness
- Good Sportsmanship
- Attention
- Mirroring
- Communication
- Memory

YOGA GAMES!!!



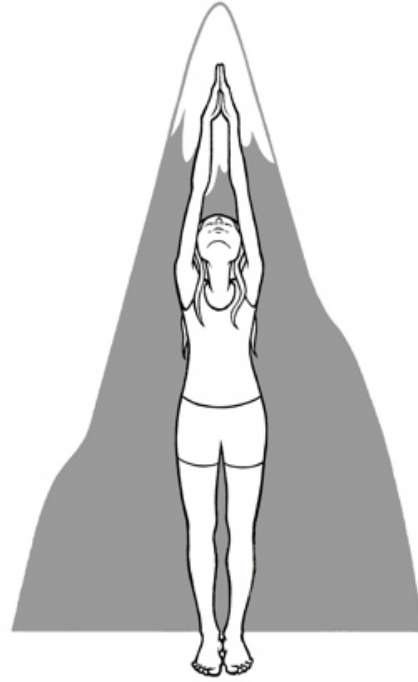
Tools for Teaching

Book



C.A.L.M.M. Curriculum





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