

# Self-Love

## 12-minute Yoga-Mini

Self-love is a *journey*. A journey you will take from now until forever. There is no place you need to get to, only a road to travel, that allows you to gradually deepen your love for yourself, so you can fall more and more in love with your most fabulous self. Self-love, when approached in this way, is far easier to navigate - as there are no expectations, only acceptance of what *is* - and this little Yoga Mini is a simple practice you can use to help open up your heart space - your heart chakra - so you can dissolve the barriers you have against love.



As you choose the path of self-love, so too will you notice yourself shifting from a place of fear, to a place of love. Invite things, people, meditations, rituals and Mini's like this one, into your life so that you can continue to connect in with your inner well of love; so you can shed the subconscious conditioning that would have you believing anything other than the truth: That you *are* loveable. Completely *loveable*.

Don't worry if you don't feel that way right now. With regular practise of this **Self-Love Yoga Mini**, your love for yourself will start to grow and expand, until you begin to really feel the energy of your heart radiating outwards. Know that, wherever you are at in your self-love journey, that you are in the perfect place. We can always love more. We can always experience *more* love in our body, in our *life*. Let this practice be an invitation to release fear-based thoughts and attitudes and choose loving ways of being with yourself, others and life.

### HOW TO USE THIS YOGA MINI...

This Yoga Mini can be used to give you a daily self-love top up, or can be pulled out when your cup isn't feeling as full of love as it could be. What's most important when you practise this Mini, is that you continue to focus on keeping your heart open, physically as much as emotionally. In each pose, check in to see where your heart is placed. If your shoulders are rounding forward, gently invite your heart to lift slightly. You may like to imagine your heart is the sole muscle that is holding you in each pose.

Let yourself be open to the qualities of love; compassion, joy, abundance, happiness, heart-felt surrender. It has been found in study after study after study that those who feel more love (for themselves, for others and the world at large), experience far greater health. Love really does heal. And the only thing blocking our ability to be happy and healthy, is the barriers we hold against love. I really can't say it enough: The hardest journey you will make, but the most personally fulfilling journey you will make, will be from your *head* to your *heart*. From a place of *fear* to a place of *love*.



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## 12-minute Yoga Mini Manual

- ♥ **Easy Pose:** 1-min
  - ♥ **Self Hug:** 1-min
  - ♥ **Heart Opener:** 2-min
  - ♥ **Heaven on Earth:** 2-min
  - ♥ **Chakra Love:** 2-min
  - ♥ **Camel:** 90-sec
  - ♥ **Child's Pose:** 90-sec
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### Easy Pose

We begin the **Self-Love Yoga Mini** in **Easy Pose**, sitting cross legged on the floor. Move the flesh away from your sit bones. Your sit bones are the prominent bones at the lowest part of your pelvis that make contact with the ground. If your weight is not centred on your sitting bones, you have no chance of sitting upright with ease. As your sit bones root down into the earth, feel your crown drawing up to the sky, creating length through your spine. Shoulders relaxed, rest your hands on your knees, palms up or down (whichever feels yummiest for you).

Focus on the breath. This will allow you to come into your body so you can settle into this posture. Then I invite you to say the following words of affirmation: *I am open to love. I am ready to experience love. I am so very loveable.*

**OTHER WAYS:** If you can't sit in **Easy Pose**, simply sit on a bolster or cushion or folded blanket in **Easy Pose**. You'll know you need to sit up higher, if you find it difficult to maintain length up through your spine; if your back is rounding backwards. You can also sit kneeling OR an easier option is to sit on a chair. Just make sure your feet are flat on the floor and your spine upright (no leaning on the back of the chair).



**GIFTS:** **Easy Pose** strengthens the back and stretches the knees and ankles. It opens the hips and groin and outer thigh muscles (your abductors). Sitting cross-legged like this demands that the pelvis be balanced and the hip sockets open, which are so important to our stability, posture and keeping a woman's sexual organs pinned in place. Physically, this posture is brilliant to work towards, especially if you can't quite get into this pose yet, and mentally, it helps calm the brain, making it a great all-rounder!

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## Self Hug



Our first moving posture of the sequence is a **Self Hug**. To do this in a yogic way, take both arms straight out in front of you - so they're parallel with the floor at shoulder-height - then let them cross as your arms come round to hug you. As your hands take hold of your shoulder blades you may like to give your back a little massage.

Make sure you keep your elbows lifted so you feel a nice stretch as you **Self Hug** and your spine tall. Releasing out of the **Hug**, take the opposite arm on top and **Hug** yourself again. Not only does it feel nice to hug yourself in this practice, you're stretching your shoulder blades and arms. This posture can also be done sitting on a chair.

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## Heart Opener

Sitting in **Easy Pose** find your sit bones and plant yourself firmly into the ground so you feel fully supported. Bring your hands in front of your forehead in fists, palms toward you, elbows pointing to the floor. Allow your pelvis to rock back so your spine is curved to the wall behind you, shaped like the letter 'C'; your shoulders should naturally relax forward.

On the inhalation, as your pelvis tilts forward your arms move to the sides, maintaining their 'L' shape, hands opening like star-fish, as your chin and eyes look up. Neck long. Your back should be arched - belly and heart forward - and you should feel a nice stretch between your shoulder blades and in your fingers. As you do this movement, imagine your heart is leading the movement. Feel your heart open and expand.



As you exhale, your pelvis tilts back, your arms coming back in front of your body, your hands into fists again as your back curls round and you return to the starting position with your eyes closed. Continue to inhale your heart forward, and exhale your heart back like this, at your own gentle pace. Continue for a full **2-minutes**.

**REST.** Hands coming to rest palm up on your knees, spine tall in **Easy Pose** (or kneeling or on a chair), take three slow deep inhalations.

**OTHER WAYS:** As with the previous poses, you can do this one kneeling or on a chair as well. Simply stick with the option you started out with for easy flow through the postures.

**GIFTS:** This pose helps warm up the spine and get the energy moving from the base of the spine, running up through your heart, all the way to the top of your spine. You're waking up your life-force energy while inviting your heart to blossom open physically, emotionally and spiritually, while deriving all the yummy benefits of a good spinal flex.

Moving your arms and spine in this manner helps get any stuck energy moving so your breasts/chest can be free of blockages and toxins. Looking up on the inhalation helps direct the energy up your spine, so it travels through all of your chakras, to help keep them balanced. The opening and shutting of your eyes also exercises your eyes, giving them a good stretch, which is great for maintaining and improving eyesight.

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## Heaven on Earth in Easy Pose

In **Easy Pose** (or kneeling or in a chair), make sure your sit bones are rooting into the earth so you feel stable. Raise your arms up straight to a 60-degree angle, so they create a V, palms facing up; it's as if you're opening yourself up to the heavens, eyes looking up. In this pose you have two options, 1) If you are familiar with **Breath of Fire** you can do this. But if not option 2) Simply take long slow deep breaths in and out for **90-seconds**.

In the accompanying audio I instruct you to do **Breath of Fire** in this posture, but if you don't know this breathing technique, please don't attempt to do it, as doing it incorrectly could cause you to pass out! I give a detailed explanation in the [Yoga for the Vagina online series](#). You also don't want to do **Breath of Fire** when you are menstruating or pregnant.

To end the pose, inhale your hands together above your head, palms touching, then exhale your hands down until your hands are resting, palms up, on your knees.

**REST** here in **Easy Pose** for taking long slow breathes as you feel your heart's radiance beam forth.



**GIFTS:** This pose is known to help eradicate the ego. When we eradicate ego, fear-based thinking disappears and creates room for us to experience more loving thoughts. Couple this with the **Breath of Fire (BOF)** and you have a very potent pose. BOF improves your quality of radiance and brightens and strengthens your aura, and is one the greatest ways to bust through emotional blocks by stimulating the parasympathetic nervous system, giving you a nice injection of confidence and strong sense of self-esteem.

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## Chakra Love

Come into **Rock Pose** (sitting on your heels) and make sure you're lifting and lengthening through the spine. Heart lifted. Bring your arms out to the sides of your body parallel with the floor, palms facing down. As you hold here for **30-seconds**, see if you can go beyond muscle and bones and send energy out way beyond your fingertips.



Then begin to inhale your hands into your heart, exhaling them back out, moving at a reasonably fast pace for a further **90-seconds**. Feel your heart activate with each inhalation, and expand with each exhalation. Make sure that your shoulders remain relaxed throughout; let them drop down and back as your heart leads the movement.

**OTHER WAYS:** If **Rock Pose** is not comfortable, you can do this exercise in **Easy Pose** sitting cross-legged, or sitting on a chair.

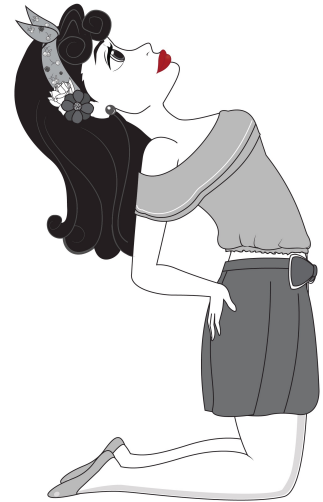
**GIFTS:** This posture helps energise the fourth chakra which is responsible for the health of your breasts and chest area. The more you live in your heart (as opposed to your head) the more love you experience in your life, by way of happy and healthy body, relationships, a nourishing career and finances, and so forth. This posture helps you get back into your heart. Because your armpits are exposed, it also helps get the lymphatic system moving so you are physically moving toxins out of your breast/chest tissue.

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## Camel Pose

Begin by sitting on your heels in **Rock Pose**, then rising up onto your knees, root yourself into the earth by pressing your knees firmly into the floor, hip-width apart. Place your hands onto your lower back near your kidneys, folding your thumbs into your sacrum OR you can leave your palms flush on your thighs. Press your pelvis forward, engage your navel and pelvic floor (simply imagine your belly button being drawn up to your heart), lift your rib cage up and away from your pelvis and on an exhale move into a gentle backbend.

Hold here for **30-seconds** feeling your heart drawing to the sky, neck long and hips pressing forward. You should feel a nice open expansion across your chest in this pose as you take long slow deep breaths. To come out of the pose, as you inhale slowly lift your spine up and over the central axis, so your body comes back to neutral. Rest here for a moment and feel the energy you've generated.



**OTHER WAYS:** Take your time coming into this pose, and exiting it. This is a powerful back-bend so only go as far back as feels comfortable for you. Just a small bend is powerful in helping to open the abdomen and heart simultaneously. If you have a bad neck or it simply doesn't feel right to lower your neck back, then keep your chin tucked into the chest.

It's important you don't crunch the lower back by squeezing your booty. Be sure not to pinch your shoulders together either. It's extremely important with this pose, to enter it slowly, and if you feel any pain at all, slowly come back out of it. If you have sensitive knees, simply place a blanket under your knees for extra support, so your toes splay off the edge.

**GIFTS:** The psoas muscle will stretch pretty much anytime you do a back arch. **Camel Pose** is one of the deepest back bends that increases energy, cleanses the nervous system, and helps heal many different spinal ailments. When practised slowly and safely, backbends like **Camel Pose** have the power to reset your response to stress, training the mind to remain calm in the face of adversity.

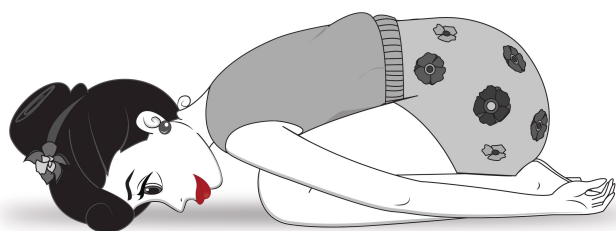
**Camel Pose** gently massages the front sides of the heart and because it opens up the thoracic cage (chest) it can help with vocal disorders, relieve asthma and other respiratory disorders. The deep compression in the sacrum and lumbar spine stimulates the urinary bladder and kidney meridians, thus helping with urinary disorders of the kidneys, bladder and ovaries. Allowing your head to fall back increases blood flow to the brain, which keeps those synapses firing!

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## Child's Pose

From **Rock Pose**, open your knees a touch, especially if you have more voluptuous breasts. Inhale, lengthening up through your spine and as you exhale hinge from your hip creases, laying your torso down between your thighs, arms coming to the side of your body, palms facing up, forehead resting on the mat.

Broaden your sacrum across the back of your pelvis, and narrow your hip points toward your navel, so they nestle down onto your inner thighs. Lengthen your tailbone away from the back of your pelvis while you lift the base of your skull away from the back of your neck.



Release the front of your shoulders toward the floor and feel how the weight of your front shoulders pull the shoulder blades wide across your back. Breathe slowly and deeply, actively pressing your belly against your thighs on your inhale. Consciously rest here for **1-minute**. And in this pose, I again invite you to say some positive words of affirmation out loud to end your practice: *I am loveable. I love and accept myself completely. I am love.*

To come out of this pose, simply roll up through your spine, one vertebra at a time, head coming up last until you're back in **Rock Pose**, head over heart, heart over pelvis.

**OTHER WAYS:** If you have low or high blood pressure, place your forehead on two fists or a cushion so your head doesn't go below your heart. If you have difficulty sitting on your heels, place a thickly folded blanket between your back thighs and calves to ease the strength of the pose. OR you can choose a posture that's more relaxing in your body, such as simply lying on your back, with a cushion or rolled blanket under your knees.

**DON'T DO IF...** you have diarrhoea.

**GIFTS:** **Child's Pose** is a healing, restful pose that calms the body, mind and spirit and stimulates the third eye point, while stretching the lower back and massaging and toning the abdominal organs, thus stimulating digestion and elimination. The spleen and stomach meridians are compressed in this pose while the kidney and urinary bladder meridians are stretched. Feeling stressed or fatigued? This is a beautiful pose to relax into. It's especially comforting if you're feeling cold, anxious or vulnerable.

Regular practise of **Child's Pose** teaches you conscious exploration of the breath. As the front of your body releases onto your thighs, the frontal ribs and abdominal muscles become slightly compressed. This restriction allows for a deeper opening of the back of your torso as the lungs expand behind your body. As this happens, remember to keep the breath slow, long and steady to allow for a new awareness of the breath's pathway through the front and back of your body.