



I am willing to guess there is something in your life you would like to try but for various reasons you hold back. You say to yourself you might not be able to master it, you don't have the time, don't have the money, you can't ... you don't ... you won't.

When it comes to yoga most people say they don't or can't do yoga because they're not flexible. That's like saying you can't play the piano so you're not going to take lessons. Of course you can't yet play the piano, that's why you're taking lessons. Foolish isn't it, when you look at it like that? The same is true with yoga. Some may come into the practice more flexible than others, some may take more time working to increase their level of flexibility, but I guarantee you will find more flexibility in your body.

I don't have time. How will my family manage without me two nights a week? Two hours a week? When considering my own family situation I realise I've been on-call to them for 18 years, 24/7, so two hours away shouldn't be too much to ask. My kids are teenagers so it is somewhat easier than if you have a newborn or are dealing with toddlers. Or, if you have a high level of responsibility at the office. Those

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## PASCHIMOTTANASANA, OR SEATED FORWARD BEND



INHALE, AND KEEPING THE FRONT TORSO LONG, LEAN FORWARD FROM THE HIP JOINTS, NOT THE WAIST. IF POSSIBLE TAKE THE SIDES OF THE FEET WITH YOUR HANDS, THUMBS ON THE SOLES, ELBOWS FULLY EXTENDED. IF THIS ISN'T POSSIBLE, LOOP A STRAP AROUND THE FOOT SOLES, AND HOLD THE STRAP FIRMLY.

THE LOWER ABDOMEN SHOULD TOUCH THE THIGHS FIRST, THEN THE UPPER ABDOMEN, THEN THE RIBS, AND THE HEAD LAST.

WITH EACH INHALATION, LIFT AND LENGTHEN THE FRONT TORSO JUST SLIGHTLY; WITH EACH EXHALATION RELEASE A LITTLE MORE FULLY INTO THE FORWARD BEND.

BEGINNING STUDENTS CAN SIT ON A FOLDED BLANKET IN THIS POSE, WHICH WILL HELP LENGTHEN THE TAILBONE AWAY FROM THE BACK OF YOUR PELVIS. ALSO, USE A STRAP AS NOTED ABOVE.

may be your realities, but there are still many excuses we find to avoid taking a risk and making a commitment.

I'm not skinny enough. I'm too old. From my own personal experience, trust me, these don't matter either when it comes to yoga. I took up yoga at 48, about 30 lbs overweight, and with a rather large frame. Not the typical yoga body you might be used to seeing on the cover of magazines. A good teacher will guide you through a practice that's right for where you are today.

### **MAYBE WHAT YOU REALLY NEED IS TO LET GO.**

- \* Let go of a few obligations in your life and make time for yourself.
- \* Let go of demands made by others that you might possibly say no to, instead of the yes that always seems to slip out by habit.
- \* Maybe you need to let go of expectations you place on yourself.
- \* Perhaps let go of the far-reaching, ever-present expectations you think your family has of you, that are not there at all?

Take some time to examine these and other expectations or judgments.

One of my favourite yoga poses is Paschimottasana, or seated forward bend (see below).



You sit tall, lean forward at the hip joint, rotate the pelvis forward, draw the torso over the legs and bring your hands towards your feet. In practising this posture many will focus on touching the toes while the pose is actually about lengthening the spine. You work to draw the heart centre up and forward, keep your legs active and allow the back of the body to release.

Letting go of whatever is standing in the way

of what you're looking to do in life, also applies in our yoga. To reach the fullness of this posture there's to be no pulling, forcing or straining to grasp at the toes. Rather, we're asked to work with our breath, lift and lengthen. To move forward we need to let go.

So whether it's yoga or something else you want to do – find some firm ground, take a deep breath, lift yourself up, extend beyond your boundaries and go for it! 🙏