



Opening Movement Patterns

A short easy way to get into your body and start firing up your brain!

Project Type: Movement to center and calm participants before entering a project

Group/Individual: Individual

Lesson Plan Audience: Maker Mentor, Makers

Time: 20-45 mins

Hard Skills: Balance, Coordination, Strength and Flexibility

Soft Skills: Self-Motivation, Self-Confidence, Respect

Ideal # of Participants: 2-20

Age Group: 6+

Ideas for Taking it Further

- This can easily become a full activity. Use this movement pattern as a warm-up, continue to a collaborative group movement activity, end with a cool down and centering moment.
- These movements could be altered and become a collaborative activity having to do with weight sharing and safe lifts

Difficulties/Tips

Participants may have poor coordination and/or balance, so a knowledge of modifications may be useful. This could be taking a standing movement to the knees or to a seated position, having two feet on the ground rather than one or doing the movement smaller.

Materials

An open area where the participants can move without hindrance. Softer ground may be a good idea; either on a carpet or outside on grass.



Steps

1. Everyone hold hands and spread out in a circle. Drop hands and take two more steps backwards.
2. Begin with everyone in child's pose. Have the participants close their eyes and focus of how their belly feels against their thighs when they breath. See if they can slow down their breath and allow their bodies to relax. (Not everyone's feet are flexible enough to be comfortable in this position, simple place a rolled up blanket or sweatshirt or cloth under their ankles)



3. To wake up the body from this position walk the hands to the right, breathe and stretch the left side. Repeat to the left.
4. Walk the hands back to center and lift the seat off the heels to be on all fours. Begin Cat/Cow sequence. Inhale arch the back, exhale round the back. Repeat this movement at least 6 times.



5. For a balance challenge and core strengthening reach the right hand forward and the left foot back, imagine energy shooting out of the hand and foot. Lower the hand, then the foot and repeat on the other side. (left hand forward, right foot back). Repeat both sides 3-5 times.





6. To add cross body patterning; reach the right hand and left foot out, and then try to touch the elbow to the knee under the body, really curving the back and holding the center strong. reach the hand and foot out again, and then lower both the the ground. Repeat both sides 3-5 times.



7. Sit down and open the knees for butterfly. Reach the body to the right side, circling through the center and then coming up to the left side. Reverse circles. Repeat both circles 4 times.



8. Cross the right leg on top of the left, turn the body to the right for a twist. Breath deeply. On each exhale try to twist a little further. Repeat to the other side.



9. Return to all fours, tuck the toes and straighten the legs for Downward Dog. Stretch through the legs. Bend one knee, then the other to increase the stretch in the opposite calf. Make sure the weight is focused between the thumb and forefinger of the hands and the the hips and shoulders create a straight line through the back, bend the knees is the back is not straight.



10. Walk the hands back to the feet for forward fold. Bend the knees as needed. The hand can rest on the floor, shins, or thighs. Breath here. See if on the exhales you can fold any further. Sway side to side if you like.



11. Slowly walk the hands up the legs until the body is upright.
12. To activate both sides of the brain begin cross body movement (Contralateral Movement) (for more info on how this works check this blog out!
<http://www.kids-move.com/blog/blog/contralateral-movements>)
 - Reach the right arm across the body while touching the left foot across the body, come back to center and switch sides. Try to create a rhythm with it so everyone is moving together.
 - Lift the right knee and hold it with the left arm, switch sides. If you want to pump the energy up have the participants jump to switch sides.



13. To end have the participants stand quietly with their eyes closed. Notice how your feet touch the ground notice the sounds of the room. Try to relax the space between your eyes and your jaw. Begin to send your breath to your belly when you inhale. You can place your hands on your Belly if you like. Try to feel it expand when you inhale. Take 8 big belly breaths. Blink your eyes open and begin your activity!