

Yoga for Fertility: Healing with Spirit

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Meditation and Poses by Sue Dumais

Have you ever wondered why you are facing challenges with fertility? Are you curious why it seems that everyone else is getting pregnant but you? We could ask a similar question about cancer. Why do some people get cancer? Why them and not their neighbor or their brother or their friend? Or perhaps, why do some people win the lottery? What really determines the circumstances of our lives?

Since I don't know the exact answer to that question I have decided to get creative and make one up. Let's imagine for a moment that we made some decisions about our lives before we were born on this earth. In fact, I like to think of it as a life contract. This contract would include every person in your life, the places you live, what you look like, the challenges you face and the triumphs you experience. Most importantly it will include information about how you will heal and grow along the way. Let's use an example. Let's say that Cindy chose to struggle with fertility as part of her life contract. She knew that it would be a big challenge and she knew that it would be an important experience for self-transformation. Since she would not consciously remember that she had chosen this challenge, Cindy made sure to place a myriad of signposts along her path that would help her to remember to heal. She chose several important books that she would read, an acupuncturist that she would meet through a friend, a fertility clinic located near her home, a patient and understanding partner, and practices such as yoga. If Cindy believes that she has chosen this issue in her life she can feel empowered and in choice along her fertility journey.

You could be asking how you can recognize the signposts for your healing. Yoga for Fertility helps women reconnect with their inner wisdom and intuition. Imagine entering an environment that was created solely with your healing in mind. Imagine feeling completely supported by your instructor and completely supported by the women surrounding you. Sometimes just the simple experience of realizing that there are other people in similar circumstances can help relieve anxiety. As participants build relationships and connections with others they begin to break down the walls and barriers that often stand in the way of emotional release. Yoga for Fertility teaches self-love and acceptance and puts an end to the prevalent feeling of isolation.

Yoga for Fertility opens up the door to release pent up emotion. "...All of us at one time or another might feel that the only way to survive is to close off our feelings and emotions." But the truth is that emotional expression "...helps us let go of pain, allows us to be gentle with ourselves, and finally helps us to heal." (Osho) Some women laugh and giggle uncontrollably in the class while others express their sadness and grief.

This class is not about the ego. It is truly about embracing your body the way it is right in this moment. Learning to work with the body you have and even loving the body you have. The poses are simple and modifications for comfort are always given. Each yoga pose is designed to nourish the reproductive organs and open up the pelvis. There is a strong emphasis on the second chakra (located just below the naval). This energy centre represents fertility and creativity.

The class is taught in the yin style meaning that poses are held for 2 to 5 minutes allowing a deep stretch and a quieting of the mind. Meditation is an important aspect of Yoga for Fertility. You will learn to let go of anxious, worrisome, self-defeating thoughts and detach from the labels that you place upon yourself. No longer do you need to subscribe to the labels of “infertile, broken or punished.” In fact as you become an observer of the mind you begin to realize that you are not your thoughts and they do not control you. Meditation gives you a deeper experience of yourself. There is a sacred space that rests within you. To retreat within yourself is the greatest gift you can give. In this sacred place you can find unconditional love, support, understanding and healing from the problems that you experience in your external world.

As you walk along your fertility path and begin to heal the pain inside, you will discover that all of the signposts that you have placed along the way point in the same direction. They point to forgiveness. Yoga for Fertility, on the deepest level aims to teach women to forgive themselves. The act of forgiveness releases guilt and fear from your mind and body. It restores health and vitality and changes the energetic composition of your being. And as you forgive you will experience the life you are meant to. You will reconnect with the love, joy and spirit that you are.

Meditation on Forgiveness

Preparation: Find a comfortable position to prepare for meditation. Close your eyes and bring your attention inward. Keep your breath flowing and natural. Be sure to remain comfortable throughout the meditation and change or modify your position if your body becomes uncomfortable. Once you feel relaxed open your eyes and read the poem. Read each line out loud if you can. Observe your body’s response or reaction. You may notice negative or positive sensations in your body. If you pay attention to the negative sensations (tension, tightness, restlessness) you will discover your inner obstacles. Be curious and open. When your meditation is complete take a few moments to journal your thoughts. Let’s begin.

Best Friends Within

I release the past that holds me imprisoned.
I respect my past from which I have risen.

I release self-judgments that infected my mind.
I respect the thoughts that are gentle and kind.

I release my self critic that made me feel bad.
I respect my inner child who stills feel quite sad.

I will hold my inner child tightly in my arms.
I will comfort her and keep her from harm.

I will tell her she’s beautiful just as she is.
I will tell her she’s good no matter what she did.

I will tell her she is talented and deserves great success.
I will encourage her to reach for the stars, and no less.

I will tell her I'm sorry for being so mean.
I will tell her she's strong after all she has seen.

I will tell her I love her with all of my heart.
I release her to live and make a new start.

She will tell me she loves me and always had.
She was lost but not gone, that why she was sad.

She will tell me she forgives me for all that I've done.
Together again, best friends who are one!

Yoga for Fertility Poses

The following two poses can be used at home anytime you feel anxious or stressed. They help calm the mind and improve circulation to the pelvic area.

Leg-Up-The-Wall Pose

This pose will increase the blood supply to the pelvic area, calm the mind, and relieve tired legs and feet. If you concentrate on breathing, using your diaphragm, it will help you soften the muscles of the vaginal wall and pelvic area. Imagine a softness in the uterus and ovaries allowing the flow of blood and energy without restriction or tension.



Preparation: Lie on your side with your buttocks close to or against the wall. As you slowly roll over onto your back gently lift one leg at a time and place it against the wall. Once you are on your back, rest the legs against the wall. Stay in this pose for 5-15 minutes as you concentrate on your breathing.

Modifications: This pose is ideally performed using a bolster or blanket under the pelvis. The blanket or bolster should lift the pelvis approximately 2-3 inches depending on your level of comfort. *DO NOT use a bolster with this pose during menstruation.

Option: Move the legs away from each other creating a mild stretch for the inner thigh.

To come out of the pose gently bend your knees and roll over on to your side. Remove your pelvis from the blanket or bolster and remain on your side for 10 to 15 breaths.

Child's Pose

This pose calms the nervous system and helps reduce blood pressure and balance the endocrine system. It is a resting pose that relaxes and calms the mind and body while lengthening your spine and reducing tension in your back and neck. In relation to fertility, I recommend performing child's pose with your knees apart; this allows space for the

belly to drop toward the floor with each inhale. Imagine a softness in the uterus and ovaries allowing the flow of blood and energy without restriction or tension.



Option

Preparation: Kneel on the floor with your knees slightly wider than your hip joints. Bend at the hip as you bring your upper body forward. Reach your arms forward and place your hands and head on the floor.

Option: Turtle Pose - Place your hands beside your feet or ankles creating more security and safety as you settle into your “shell” for protection.

Yoga for Fertility can benefit women by:

- Helping to reduce stress and anxiety
- Focusing on a positive self-image and positive thinking
- Renewing a sense of sexuality and feminine wholeness
- Increasing intimacy between partners
- Healing and recreating a mind-body connection
- Belonging to a community of “girl friends” experiencing the same circumstance
- Creating a renewed sense of control by learning simple ways to take charge of her reproductive health



About the Authors: Sue Dumais and Lisa Windsor are co-creators of Family Passages Yoga for Fertility Studio. Family Passages provides a healing spa-like space where women and couples can recover a “lightness of being” during their fertility journey. Through yoga, self-care, sharing and laughter, they learn to take charge of their experience and embrace their full fertile potential. For more information visit their website www.familypassages.ca or call 604-266-6470.

