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mind-body fusion

MOVES FOR EVERY BODY

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Mind-body fusion classes are very big trends in fitness. Fusion programs are perfect for students who seek an alternative method of exercise. Mind-body practices include workout stress-releasing exercises and focus on breath, precision, concentration and control of movements.

Integrating various modalities trains the body in three planes of motion and balances stability and mobility. Also, fusion exercises emphasize a specific goal such as isolation, balance or muscular strength. It is ideal to commence each class with deep breathing. Breath techniques differ among various philosophies. During flow, however, inhale through the nose and exhale out of pursed lips. Exhale on exertion.

The following exercises integrate poses and concepts from barre, Pilates, Tai Chi and yoga. Each exercise combines a move from one or more concepts and fuses it to create one graceful movement. Students will seek their inner ballerina and expose the Buddha within while blissfully flowing through these seven mind-body inspired exercises.

THREE TOUCH PLANK

Concepts: Barre and Pilates

Set-Up: Place the body into a full plank position with hands under shoulders and feet 3 inches apart.

Execution: Draw left knee toward center of the chest. Extend left leg to tap floor. Next, lift left leg into the air. The movement should come from the glute. The three-point touch is knee forward, toe tap on the floor, and lift leg into the air. Complete 8 to 12 repetitions on left leg before switching to the right.

Regression: Use a quadruped position.



a



b



c



d





a. Grand Battement to Warrior III

Concepts: Yoga and Barre

Set-Up: Stand tall with toes slightly turned out. Place left hand on hip and right arm overhead.

Execution: Stabilize left leg and brace the core. Begin one motion of sweeping the right leg forward (hip flexion) and backward (hip extension). Isolate movement from the hip and add resistance by imagining the foot is sweeping a coin on the floor. Complete 8 to 12 grand battements and then hold the leg back (hip extension). Hinge from the hip into Warrior III. Keep body parallel to the ground and place arms overhead. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds. Switch sides.

Regression: Decrease grand battement range of motion. Or place arms into Airplane (or on hips) instead of Warrior III.

b. Plié Squat to Tree Pose

Concepts: Yoga and Pilates

Set-Up: Stand tall with feet together and toes slightly externally rotated. Hold arms out in front of the chest (similar to holding a beach ball).

Execution: Step the right foot away from the body and open the arms wide (shoulder height). Lower into a plié squat. Lift the right foot off the floor and, when returning to center, place the right foot on the left calf and lift arms overhead. Hold a two to three count Tree pose. Continue the plié (and return arms to shoulder height on the side of

the body) to Tree pose for 8 to 12 repetitions. On the last repetition, hold a 20- to 30-second Tree pose. Repeat on the left leg.

Regression: Keep the right toes (or foot) on the ground for better balance.

c. Chair Pose With Parallel Relevé

Concepts: Yoga and Barre

Set-Up: Stand tall with feet together (or 1–3 in. apart for better balance). Keep toes facing forward.

Lift arms overhead.

Execution: Lower hips into the yoga Chair pose. Hold arms overhead. Begin to lift heels off the ground, similar to a calf raise, then lower heels back onto the ground (2 to 3 sec total). Continue the calf raise for 8 to 12 repetitions.

Regression: Place hands on hips.

Or alternate heel raises.

d. Goddess Flow

Concepts: Yoga and Tai Chi

Set-Up: Bring the body into a wide legged squat (similar to a plié). Keep toes slightly turned out and bend elbows at 90° (similar to a goal post).

Execution: Bring hands in front of the chest. Imagine holding a ball of energy. Push the ball of energy to the right, extend the arms and shift body weight. The right knee will flex and the left leg will extend. Next, pull the energy back toward you. Continue the “push and pull” motion for 8 to 12 repetitions and hold the Goddess pose for 20 to 30 seconds (same position as set-up) before switching to the left.

Regression: Decrease range of motion.

e. Arabesque Downward Facing Dog to Plank

Concepts: Yoga and Barre

Set-Up: Start on all fours with knees hip-width and hands shoulder-width apart. Curl toes underneath and lift the hips into Downward Facing Dog.

Execution: Lift the right leg into a Three-Legged Dog Split (or arabesque). Keep the right leg lifted and point the right foot. Transition the body into a plank and tap the floor with the right foot. Lift the right leg and press back into the Three-Legged Dog Split. Continue 8 to 12 repetitions before switching to the left leg.

Regression: Keep both feet on the floor.

f. Hip Bridge With Chest Fly

Concepts: Yoga and Pilates

Set-Up: Lie on back with feet hip-width apart. Keep arms on the ground, fingers pointing toward feet.

Execution: Lift hips into the air and raise arms over the chest (fingers pointing toward ceiling). Slowly, lower hips and back onto the ground. On the up phase, lift hips and

open the arms into a chest fly. Close the arms while lowering hips onto the ground. The arms and torso work in opposition. A point of contact should remain on the ground (either hips or arms). Complete 8 to 12 repetitions.

Regression: Keep arms on the ground. **AF**

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