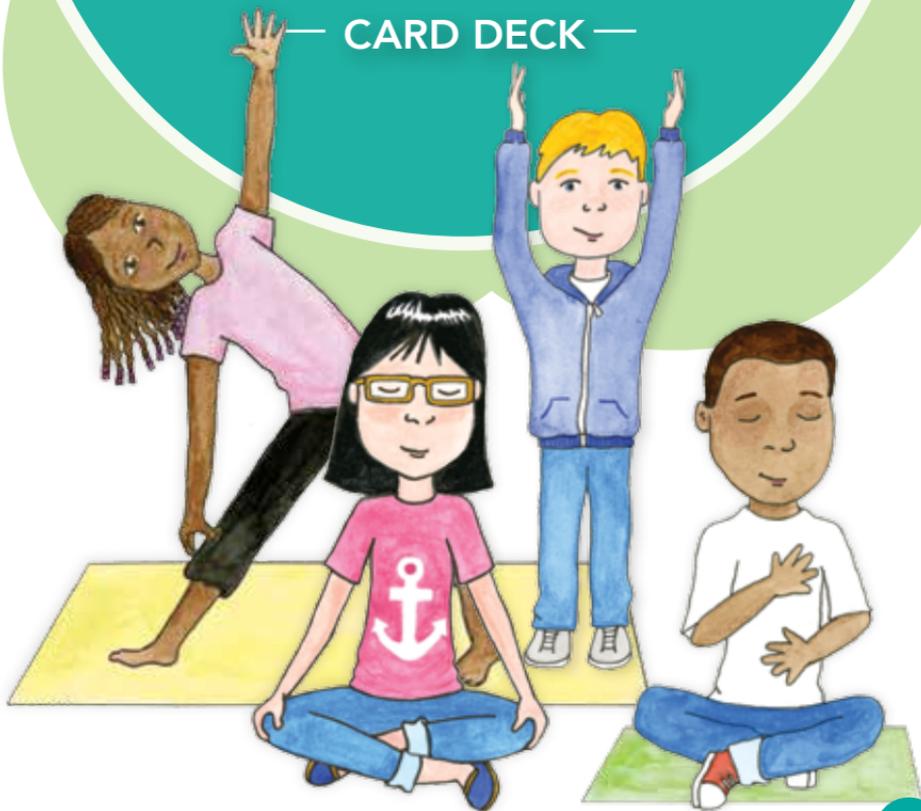


Yoga & Mindfulness

PRACTICES FOR CHILDREN

— CARD DECK —



Jennifer Cohen Harper MA, E-RYT, RCYT

..... Illustrated by Karen Gilmour

Little
Flower
yoga

Welcome

Yoga and mindfulness have a lot to offer. The practices on these cards can help you get stronger and more flexible, manage feelings of anxiety, learn to navigate challenging situations without becoming overwhelmed, and much more. But perhaps the most important thing these practices can help with is the ability to be more connected to yourself - your body, your mind and your emotions. When you are more connected to your own experience you can make better choices about how to care for yourself and how to respond to the world around you.

As you explore the activities on these cards, the most important thing is to notice what's happening with you. What are you feeling in your body, in your mind, and in your emotions as you try the activities? Does your experience change or stay the same as you hold poses, or as you try them multiple times?

As you practice, do what feels right to you and trust your own body. If something doesn't feel right (if it hurts, makes you uncomfortable, freaks you out a bit) pause and check out your feelings, and then make a decision about what to do that works for you in the moment. Have fun, work hard, and be curious about your experience.

Jennifer Cohen Harper

Karen Gilmour



The Five Elements

The cards in this deck are split into five activity types, or elements, that together offer you a complete experience of yoga and mindfulness. You can do them one at a time, or try combining one card from each element for a longer practice.

- **CONNECT:** Activities that help you connect to your own feelings and thoughts, to the world around you, and to other people
- **BREATHE:** Different ways to use your breath, and explore the impact that it has on your energy level and emotions
- **MOVE:** Practices that help you build strength, balance and flexibility, explore what your body is capable of, and develop your own personal power
- **FOCUS:** Activities to help you notice what your mind is working on, strengthen your ability to focus and learn to manage distractions
- **RELAX:** Opportunities for your mind and body to rest and restore

How To Use These Cards

Choose A Single Card: Choose just one card for a short 1-5 minute practice. Consider starting with a yoga seat, and ending with final relaxation each time you practice, even if you are only doing one activity.

Create A Sequence: Combine 3-7 cards for a longer practice. Try choosing a card from each of the categories: Connect, Breathe, Move, Focus, and Relax. See the "Putting it All Together" cards for some ideas, but feel free to mix it up and do what feels right for you.

Bringing Energy Up and Down: Check out the arrows on the right side of each card to learn more about how the activity might affect your energy level.

An ↑ for energizing, ↓ for calming, or ↔ for neutral. As you choose your card or cards for practice, consider what your body needs at that moment. If you have time for a longer sequence, you might want to bring your energy up first, then bring it down for a final relaxation.

Remember that practices affect people differently, so if a card says it will bring energy down, but you feel like it's bringing your energy up, trust your body and your own instincts and decide if another practice would be better for you in that moment.

If You See ... In The Instructions: This is an indication that a pause is needed. Take a few moments between instructions to notice your experience. Usually about 5 seconds is a good amount of time to start, and if longer feels right for you take as long as you'd like.

Yoga Mat Or No Yoga Mat?: Most practices can be done anywhere you are, with or without a yoga mat. You may want to use a mat (if you have one) to make the surface less slippery, or to have a clean space where you feel comfortable laying down, but if you feel good without a mat then it's no problem not to use one.

Eyes Open Or Closed? Many of the practices in this deck invite you to reflect on your inner experience. Sometimes closing your eyes will help you do this, but at other times it may not feel safe or comfortable to close your eyes. Make your own choice, and if closing your eyes doesn't feel right you can always focus on one spot and keep your gaze there.

More Resources: Visit littlefloweryoga.com for additional resources.



RELAX



Mountain Top Visualization



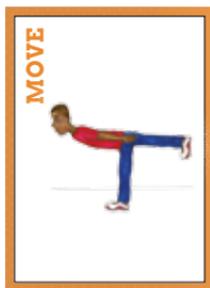
Sit up tall on the floor or a chair. Close your eyes or rest them in one place. Imagine that you are sitting outside, looking up at a tall mountain. Now imagine that you are getting ready to climb this mountain. Imagine standing and beginning to walk uphill. How are your legs feeling? Take a full breath in and notice how the mountain air smells. Look around. Are you in the woods? Are there flowers? Birds? What else can you see?

As you continue to climb, the path gets steeper, and you have to work much harder. Soon you have to use your hands also, and your body is working very hard. Imagine how your muscles are feeling. What is happening to your breathing? Pause in your climb and look around? What can you see now?

As you get close to the top of the mountain, notice how you are feeling. Imagine reaching the very top. You've done it! Stand at the top of the mountain and appreciate the hard work you did to get here. Look out over the surrounding land.

When you're ready, lay down on your yoga mat (and imagine laying down on the earth at the top of the mountain). Imagine how good this rest would feel after your long climb, your hard work. Let your body sink into the ground. Notice the feeling of the mountain air on your body, and the steady support of the earth underneath you. Rest here for as long as you'd like.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER



Recommended
Sequences to Explore,
Experiment with and
Make Your Own

Powering Up

- Mountain Pose
- Five Senses Awareness
- Breath of Joy
- Warrior One
- Warrior Three
- Chair Pose
- I Am So Strong
- Sunrise Visualization
- Final Relaxation

ABOUT US



Little Flower Yoga is dedicated to bringing the life skills of yoga and mindfulness to children and families in developmentally appropriate ways, in a joy-filled environment. LFY serves thousands of students in school and community based programs, trains children's yoga teachers around the country, and offers continuing education to allied professionals including counselors, social workers, classroom teachers, and occupational therapists. LFY teachers are trained to engage, encourage, and inspire all children, while offering powerful tools to help navigate challenging emotions and experiences. Learn more at www.littlefloweryoga.com

Jennifer Cohen Harper, founder of Little Flower Yoga, is a leading voice in the children's yoga and mindfulness community. She is the author of *Little Flower Yoga for Kids: A Yoga and Mindfulness Program to Help Your Child Improve Attention and Emotional Balance*, and the co-editor of *Best Practices for Yoga in Schools*. Jenn provides therapeutic classes to children and families, and continuing education to mental health and education professionals. She is the board president of the Yoga Service Council, dedicated to making yoga accessible to all regardless of circumstance. Her work has been featured in prominent publications including *The New York Times*, *The International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, *Publishers Weekly*, and *Yoga Journal*, and endorsed by thought leaders including Daniel Siegel, M.D., Sharon Salzberg and Congressman Tim Ryan.

Karen Gilmour has been drawing, painting, coloring and creating for as long as she can remember. Her art has been seen in books, on back to school supplies and on the walls of classrooms and kid's rooms. When Karen isn't creating art, she is busy as the director of Alluem Kids, an ever growing yoga program for kids, teens and families at Alluem Yoga in Cranford, NJ. You can see more of Karen's work by visiting: www.karengilmour.com

©2016 Jennifer Cohen Harper and Karen Gilmour
Design by Amy Rubenzer
Published by PESI Publishing & Media
www.pesipublishing.com