

cosmic dance

Journey into a dazzlingly different atmosphere with these innovative and dynamic asanas.



to begin

Personalize Make your own daily yoga ritual: Light a candle, say a prayer, or dive into movement as medicine.

Breathe Tap into your creative power by becoming intimate with your breath. Sit cross-legged; inhale and exhale.

to finish

Release Sit with your legs extended, then fold into Paschimottanasana (Seated Forward Bend).

Counterbalance Lift up into Purvottanasana (Upward Plank Pose).

Rest Exhale an audible “Ahhhhh,” and lower to the ground to rest for 10 minutes in Savasana (Corpse Pose).

Laughing Lotus co-founder and yoga teacher Dana Flynn wants you to feel inspired. “Everything seems so uncertain in this world today, but your practice is one thing that can be certain,” she says. “It’s totally possible to face your fears, make your home practice a prayer, and ensure that it’s meaningful as well as fun.” Flynn suggests that by moving in a dynamic flow through the sequence on the following pages, you can free your body and mind.

Don’t worry if the poses look unfamiliar or have strange names—like Stargazer, Funky Tree, or **Dancing Ganesha**. Flynn has dubbed the entire sequence a “shape-shifting cosmic dance” and recommends that you approach it with the intention of being spontaneous, open, fearless, and free. “It’s energetic, empowered, ecstatic, alive,” she says. “So keep your sense of humor, especially if you aren’t used to sticking your tongue out at your difficulties,” which you will do in the pose called Kali.

Part of the series is moving from Kali to Peaceful Warrior to Utthita Parsvakonasana (Extended Side Angle Pose). Cycle through these three poses as many times as you like until you feel like a dancing dervish. You will tap into your intuition and sense your unlimited, boundless, infinite potential. “You might feel small,” Flynn says, “but you’ll soon realize that you are bigger than you think you are. Now that’s cosmic!” DIANE ANDERSON



1 Janu Sirsasana (Head-of-the-Knee Pose), variation

Sit with your left leg extended in front of you and bend your right knee so that your right foot presses against your left thigh. Turn your torso to the right; with both hands on the floor, rise up onto your finger pads and soften through both elbows so that your heart can spread wide even as it stays lifted. Let this soft twist become a doorway into your true Self. Turn your listening within as you breathe deeply for 3 to 5 breath cycles.

2 Stargazer

Press your right hand down behind your hips. Now root down through your right shin and left foot as you lift your hips off the ground and sweep your left arm up on a big inhalation. Begin to reach your left arm alongside your head as though you're sending out a cosmic telegram. Ground down and lift up. Breathe and reach for the stars!

3 Three-Legged Down Dog

From Stargazer, bring your legs together, sit down, cross your shins, bring your hands in front of you, and roll onto all fours. Reach through your arms and legs, coming into Downward Dog. Use your breath to open the spine from your shoulders to your hips. Inhale and lift your right leg up. Puff up your inner right thigh as you drop the baby-toe side of your foot to the right to rotate your leg internally. Imagine moving your breath from your hands all the way into your lifted leg. Step both feet forward and fold fully over your legs in Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend). Bow down at your own feet for a few timeless breaths.



4 Funky Tree

Stand tall like a mountain. Shift your weight to your left leg and press your right foot into your left thigh (or shin if the thigh is out of reach). Inhale and extend your arms out wide, exhale and weave your left arm underneath your right and then press the palms together so that your arms are in Garudasana (Eagle Pose). How's your balance? Focus on a spot in front of you. Breathe and express your own funkiness, your own uniqueness!

5 Dancing Ganesha

From Funky Tree, softly bend your left leg and lift your right knee in front of you. Bend your right knee. Breathe as you unravel your arms out to your sides and then shape your left arm like Ganesha's trunk. Open your right hand, facing it away and letting it fall on the top of your left wrist. This open right hand forms Abhaya Mudra, which represents fearlessness, and is placed out in front of your heart. Dance with Ganesha, the elephant god who removes obstacles. He can help you see what gets in your way. Breathe into Ganesha's positive vibrations.

6 Kali, Fierce and Loving Goddess of Darkness

Jump your legs wide and bend your knees into a Horse Stance. Put your right arm underneath your left, as in Garudasana. To channel Kali, the wild goddess of destruction, stick your tongue out and roll your eyeballs up toward your third-eye center. Breathe and let yourself sway from side to side, pulsing Kali's fierce protective love.

7 Shanti Virabhadrasana (Peaceful Warrior)

Move from Kali into Peaceful Warrior. Turn your right leg out, bend the right knee, and send the arms





out and away from each other. Turn the right palm up and sweep it up and over your head as you send your left arm back.

8 **Utthita Parsvakonasana** (Extended Side Angle Pose)

Inhale, lift up from Peaceful Warrior, exhale, place the right forearm on the right thigh, and then run the left arm alongside your head. Begin to move and dance through these mystical shapes: Parsvakonasana, to Peaceful Warrior, shape-shift to Kali, over to Peaceful Warrior again, and back into Parsvakonasana.



9 **Urdhva Prasarita Ekapadasana** (Standing Splits)

From Parsvakonasana, turn to face forward and place both hands by your right foot. Walk your hands in front of you and come onto your fingertips as you lift and straighten your left leg into a split. Create length in your front body and room in your back leg by keeping your hands out in front of you and coming up onto your finger pads. Inhale and exhale for 5 breaths.

10 **Gomukhasana** (Cow Face Pose) with Ganesha Mudra

Lower your left leg as you soften your right knee. Tuck your left knee behind your right knee, and sit between your heels. Bring your hands in front of your heart and clasp your hands together to form Ganesha Mudra. While exhaling, pull your hands away from each other without releasing them. As you inhale, relax the pulling. Repeat 3 times. Place both hands on your heart space. Pause before extending your right leg out and exploring the sequence on the other side.

