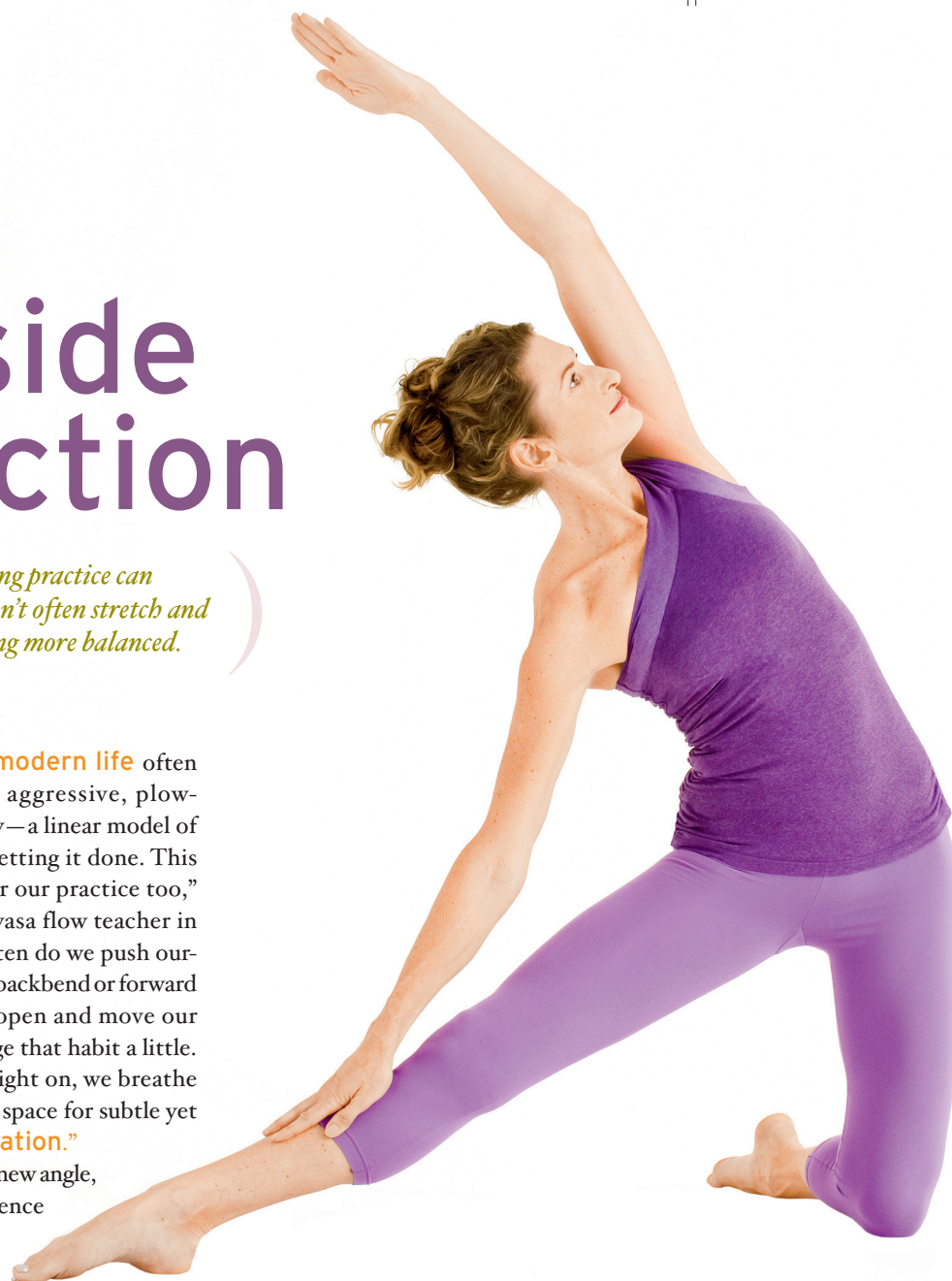


side attraction

A sidebending practice can open areas you don't often stretch and leave you feeling more balanced.

"The craziness of modern life often means we take on an aggressive, plow-through-it-all mentality—a linear model of pushing through and getting it done. This mentality can take over our practice too," says Janet Stone, a vinyasa flow teacher in San Francisco. How often do we push ourselves to attain a deeper backbend or forward bend? "In learning to open and move our side body, we can change that habit a little. Instead of moving straight on, we breathe into our sides to create space for subtle yet **powerful transformation.**"

To help you explore a new angle, Stone created the sequence on the following pages; it includes strengthening, hip opening, and lots of sidebending. And sidebends stretch out muscles, like the quadratus lumborum, that don't get as much attention or release in forward bends and backbends. Stone recommends that as you lean into poses, you send breath through the ribs, lower back, hips, neck, and the entire side portion of the spine. Keep your chest open and enjoy a new, more spacious perspective. DIANE ANDERSON



to begin

Take a seat Sit in Sukhasana (Easy Pose). Walk your hands in front of you. Take a moment to set the intention to flow into a new perspective. Now walk your hands to the right and pause; walk hands to the left and pause; move back to center.

to finish

Kick back Take Viparita Karani (Legs-up-the-Wall Pose). Place both hands on your belly, one hand on top of the other, and send breath there to free up your creative life force. Now move your hands to your heart and take a deep breath into your heart space. Release your hands out to the side, palms up. Rest here for 10 minutes.



1

1 Swingin' Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend), variation

Separate your feet just wider than your hips, turn your heels out slightly, and fold forward. Hold the opposite elbows lightly as your spine lengthens and the crown of your head descends. Swing your torso from side to side, loose and free like a pendulum, for 5 breaths.

2 Malasana (Garland Pose)

With your feet as wide as your mat, squat, reaching your sitting bones toward the earth. Lift your chest and the crown of your head to the sky. If your heels don't touch the floor, place a blanket beneath them. Bring your hands to Anjali Mudra (Salutation Seal) at your heart. Hold for 9 breaths.

3 Parsva Tadasana (Sidebending Mountain Pose)

From Malasana, interlace your fingers; as you inhale, stand up, spin your palms to the sky, and reach to the right, bending and lengthening your side body. Exhale back to Malasana. Interlace, inhale, stand up, and reach to the left. Repeat this sequence, moving from Malasana to Parsva Tadasana, 3 times on each side before moving to Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog Pose).

4 Anjaneyasana (Low Lunge), variation

Step your right foot between your hands, lower your left knee to the earth, untuck your toes, inhale and raise your arms. Lengthen your tailbone. As you exhale, touch your right fingers to the earth (or a block) and reach your left arm up and over to the right, arcing your left side body. Hold for 5 breaths. Inhale as you raise both arms, exhale and lower your hands, return to Dog, and switch sides.



10



2

5 Three-Legged Down Dog, variation

From Down Dog, ground your left heel and raise your right leg to the sky. Find balance, bend your right knee, and open the hip as you lengthen through your tailbone. Send energy through your hands and breathe into your side body for 5 deep, long breaths. Straighten your leg, level your hips, and lower your leg to the earth. Change sides.

6 Parighasana (Gate Pose)

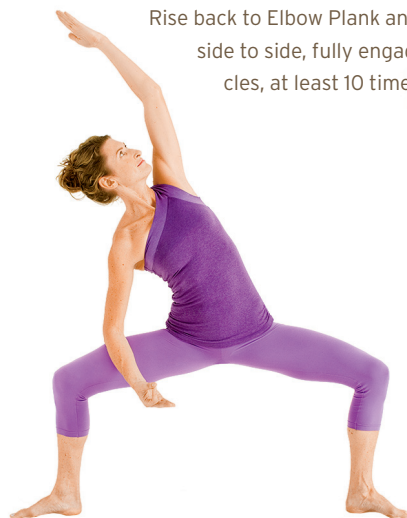
Bend both knees and place them on the mat. Extend your right leg out laterally, turn it out, and place the sole of your right foot on the ground. Inhale and bring your arms out to the sides at shoulder height; as you exhale, bring the right hand to the top of the thigh or shin and reach over to the right. Hold for 3 breaths. Press down through the left shin, inhale, and come up. Change sides.

7 Elbow Plank, variation

Place your elbows on the earth, fingers facing forward and forearms parallel. Bring your legs back into Plank Pose. Feel energy running down your centerline as you send your heels back and reach your heart forward. Engage your low belly as you spin both heels to the right, feet stacked, and drop your right hip toward the earth, hovering just an inch or 2 from the ground, without compromising your center.

Keep both forearms on the floor. Hold for 5 breaths.

Rise back to Elbow Plank and change sides. Move side to side, fully engaging the oblique muscles, at least 10 times.



9



3



4



5

8 Wild Thing

Bring your feet together in Plank. Turn onto the outside of your left foot, stack your right hip on top of the left, and extend your right arm to the sky. Lift the right leg, bend your knee, and place the ball of the right foot 6 to 8 inches behind your left knee. Extend your right arm toward the top of your mat. Lengthen through your low back. Hold for 3 breaths. Return to Plank and change sides.

9 Temple Pose

Stand sideways on your mat and widen your stance. Spin your toes out, heels in. Bend your knees deeply, and draw your low belly in as you extend through the top of your head. Once your spine is long, place your right forearm on your right thigh and reach your left arm up and over to the right. Find your breath expanding through your ribs as your side body opens. Hold for a cycle of breath. Repeat 10 times, alternating sides.

10 Parivrtta Janu Sirsasana (Revolved Head-of-the-Knee Pose)

Sit down, extend your right leg to the right, and draw your left heel into your left groin. Sit tall and reach your right arm toward your right toes. Bend your right elbow, place it inside the right knee, then twist your torso to the left as you reach your left arm up overhead toward your right toes. Lengthen the left side body and roll your left ribs to the ceiling as you open and extend. Change sides.



8



6



7

cut out
and save!