

CORE STRENGTH VINYASA YOGA FOUR FOUNDATIONS



WHAT IS CORE STRENGTH VINYASA YOGA®?

Core Strength Vinyasa Yoga® (CSV Yoga®) is a modern approach on traditional yoga created by Sadie Nardini.

Core Strength: We focus on cues and ordering that harness the Ground Reaction Force and move it through the chain of the Deep Core Line (DCL). This moves your body back into balance: releasing the superficial (outer myofascial lines from overworking in ways they were not designed, and activating the DCL in the way it is meant to work--as the primary mover of your body!).

We teach from the ground up and the inside out, and use the Four Foundations to achieve this in any pose.

As a teacher in this style you help and guide the student to seek inwards to find their own core strength on a deeper and philosophical level as well to become the rockstar of their own life both on and off the mat.

Alignment in CSV Yoga® is done mainly in the transitions - how you enter into and from every "main pose" . These principals are based on contemporary discoveries in anatomy and biomechanics.

Vinyasa (Flow): CSV yoga incorporates many aspects from traditional yoga, including sequencing blueprints and many traditional asanas, in a strong flow where your own flow of physical healing (blood flow, lymph flow, nervous system flow, breath, cleansing), as well as the flow of fierceness, compassion, joy, uniqueness and more can arise.

Yoga: The word "yoga" means unity, and in this style, we aim to find a connection with nature, and a holistic flow of health and wellness, strength and creative expression on all levels. Sadie's signature CSV Asanas and Core Philosophies bring both the movement and thought of classical yogis into today's world (and bodies) in a fresh and applicable way. These principles can be used to enhance your already existing yoga practice, or done as a straight CSV Yoga style, which looks almost like a dance, an organic wave of unity, flow and individual core connection, from beginning to end.

THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF CSVYOGA

SOFTEN DOWN - GROUND DOWN
CORE LIFT - EXPRESS OUT

THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF CSV YOGA

These Four Foundations simplify decades of anatomy, movement and yoga alignment knowledge so you can easily remember what to do, and in what order for the best possible outcome for you and your students.

They will naturally allow your outer/superficial body to soften, and your Deep Core Line to take over, powered by the Ground Reaction Force of physics!

SOFTEN DOWN

To be able to build your poses from the ground up and to activate the DCL (Deep Core Line) we first have to **soften down**. Without this step, no others will work.

To soften down: We do various things to surrender closer to the earth with the whole body. Soften what you can in each pose to get closer to the earth: bend arms and/or legs, wave the spine, loosen joints, fold down, and generally back off to allow for more movement from this surrendering place.

Although Soften Down is always cued before moving into a pose, you can usually also re-soften, and bend limbs from a fully expressed pose, like Triangle, to return to this place, which we call to rebuild your pose again through the Four Foundations to make it more stable and to align your pelvis and spine in an optimal way. We do this often in CSV Yoga.

Words we use: Soften down, breathe, circle, wave, bend, melt, rag doll, cascade, get wavy gravy, wavelike, release, relax, exhale, sigh it out, release tension, let it go, come back to a neutral place. What others mean softening to you?

GROUND DOWN

After you soften down, then you want to access the Ground Reaction Force (GRF) by pressing strongly through your foundational points, known in CSV Yoga as **ground down**.

Press the bony points of whatever is in contact with the floor: evenly down. This will change with the pose.

Feet (Pada bandha/ Arch support):

Three points of the foot: ball under big toe, ball under pinky toe, center of heel.

Hands (Hasta Bandha / Palm support):

Outer ring of palm where all fingers join palm, fingertips. spread wide and grounded. Second knuckles can lift.

Forearms: Press equally down from elbows to fingertips. Same instruction for hands as above.

Sit Bones: Two points of sitting bones left and right, but also move pubic bone and tailbone toward floor.

Head: We avoid any pressure on the top of the head. Headstand turns in to an arm balance in CSV Yoga and is rarely taught. The back of the skull presses in Shoulderstand, Bridge, etc, but the neck curve should stay lifted and never flatten.

Anything Else: If hips, legs, belly, or any other part is on the floor, they become part of the foundation until they leave the ground.

Words we use: Root down, press down, connect to the earth, dedicate, plant, mindfully plant your hands, feet ground, evenly press, root, whatever's on the mat, press it down strongly. Think of more for you!

CORE LIFT

In this case, core means more than just engaging the abs.

The interplay between **soften down** and **ground down**, causes a GRF-based wavelike motion rising up through the deep core muscles of the limbs until they meet the pelvis and lumbar spine. This **3-part activation** (each counterbalances the other) creates a pelvis that, for whatever pose you are in, is harnessing and lifting that energy BUT not over-stretching, or constricting the gateways of the hip joints, nor compressing the sacrum or lumbar curve to do it.

The Core Lift is both a 3-part alignment you always want to look for as you move into a pose, BUT it is also a sweeping, quicker movement you do as you're moving into a pose, instantly after you grounded down.

This collects the GRF in the right place: the psoas muscles, first. Then you can move into the other 2 areas once you're past that transitional moment.

Always keep your low back spine in natural curve though as you move through this process:

(continued next)...

CORE LIFT

2 Parts To Core Lift:

1) Quick, through the transition:

As you press your foundation down (Ground Down), sweep your low belly and front lumbar spine in and up!

This wave will activate the psoas muscles, keep your front pelvis from tipping forward and compressing the low back. You still want to support your spinal curve, so keep this Core Lift wave subtle, not so aggressive as to round away the low back curve.

2) Once you're past the transition, and into the pose, do a 3 point Core Check (This is the Trinity we talk about in CSV Yoga): Always cue this check (a dance of movement to align pelvis and lumbar spine) in the following order:

- **Psoas:** You did this already but return to it: **"sweep your front, top pelvis and low belly/front lumbar in and up!** Moves front of lumbar IN and UP - keeps low back curve from dumping forward and compressing, activates low abdominals. psoas and lengthens tailbone.
- **QL (Quadratus Lumborum): "Now sweep your sacrum and low back in and up"** Moves sacrum and back of lumbar spine into alignment - draws low back curve and sacrum IN and UP.
- **Pelvic Floor & Diaphragm:** Draws base of spine in and up, protects the pelvis. Great during weight-bearing transitions and ab work. Known as Mula Bandha in yoga but often taught incorrectly. Instead of squeezing the pelvic floor, we say **"hug your root muscles/pelvic floor muscles in and up"** on some exhales -- when appropriate for the transition or pose.

Words we use: Draw front pelvis and low belly in and up, draw your front lumbar in and up, sweep your belly in and up, sweep your front spine in and up. Sweep your low back in and up, move your low back in and up, curve your low back in and up as the front pelvis and spine draws in and up. Like fire moving up your low belly and spine! Like kitty cat paws walking up your front spine. What else?

EXPRESS OUT

Many teachers and students make the mistake of trying to "make expression happen" before setting the foundation, or activating the inner thighs and core.

Express out is an outcome state created by the other 3 Foundations.

Here, from the power you gathered by softening, then grounding down, and moving that through your core lift, now **"wave your spine long from root to crown, and lengthen out into the full expression of your pose!"**

What we want is a holistic lightness and freedom AND structure and stability in every pose in a way that can only be fully achieved when you are connected from the ground, and moving through the activation of your Deep Core Line.

Most styles rush for expression and long limbs first, and this locks the student out of healthy joint actions, keeping them stuck and heavier and strained. So don't rush towards the "goal".

Value organic expression over straight limbs. Once the GRF energy is ignited, rising as you wave up the spine, it will naturally infuse the limbs, which then will inspire you to move into your full expression, whatever that is, today.

The true goal in CSV Yoga is quality and integrity in every movement.

The key of CSV Yoga is that we know that expression cannot be forced, or gripped into, but is an almost effortless outcome of the dance of boundaries and freedom in the first 3 Foundations.

Words we use: Lengthen, Unfurl your arms, long spine, reach through the crown of your head, shine the pose, express out through your limbs, stretch, stretch into, make space in your joints, press out, expand, express yourself, rock this pose!