



TOP TEN EXERCISES

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

Kum Nye - Top Ten **Lesson 1: KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind**

At the beginning of each lesson, you may like to take refuge in Kum Nye, and take on the seven gestures.

The Seven Gestures is the mother of all postures. We do it at the beginning, middle and the end of each exercise and of each session. As in all of Kum Nye, please do not sit in the Seven Gestures too rigidly or dogmatically, rather, we ease into it with respect. The posture evokes a state of being in which the energies eventually will melt, activate, integrate, stimulate and transform into wellness and wholeness. At first, take on the Seven Gestures informally, as otherwise it will tighten the mind and contract your being. If you lead a group, emphasize some of the elements, like a straight back, or

breathing through nose and mouth. Do not mention all the Seven Gestures to a beginner all at once. You *can* emphasize every time that the stillness of the body is essential. The feeling of the stillness of the physical body is a crucial part in opening up to space. Once you are familiar with the exercises, gently introduce the Seven Gestures as a blueprint and as the basic skeleton of all exercises. Ultimately, if it suits you, take on the posture as a ritual because it is in the Seven Gestures that we are safe, they are the gateway to transformation. This basic posture will release tensions, expand our being and make us available for the blessings that are accessible in space.

The first of the Seven Gestures is as follows (always do them in order):

We sit with crossed legs or both feet on the floor when sitting in a chair (of course sitting on a bench will work too). It is the connection to the ground that we are after. The first gesture of crossed legs creates the first of many triangles, between the knees and the bottom. In Kum Nye, never struggle physically to sit. It defeats the purpose. So if you cannot sit too long with crossed legs, very gently lift one knee and put your hands around it. Make the movement gentle so as not to disturb the arising inner calm.

If you follow the Seven Gestures you follow a long line of practitioners that goes back thousands of years. Look at this image of Longchenpa, one of the foremost Nyingma lamas in the 13th century. Longchenpa is sitting in the Seven Gestures. When you sit like this, you will join an ancient lineage; not of people, but of embodied awareness.

Witness the body sitting in the Seven Gestures. Gently relax in the first gesture of crossed legs. Let go. This is your base. There is a small nuance that adds to this posture. In your bottom there are two boney protuberances (ischial tuberosities). As you sit, contact these two bones. The contact with the two bones will give your energy a sense of stability. That is because the two bones connect you to the earth element.

In daily life, keep both feet on the ground. While you are in the office or in a meeting, put both feet on the ground. They connect you to the earth. Feel your two bones making contact with your seat and your feet on the ground. When the two feet make contact to the ground, you are actually opening your awareness to the energy of the earth. This is a major resource for energy and nourishment. If you go through a long and arduous meeting, you can actually replenish yourself during your participation. In the next lesson, we will discuss the second gesture.

Number Ten –KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind

Obvious benefits:

- Grounding
- Presence in the body
- Promotes core strength
- Stimulating lower body energies
- Roll-breathing
- Transforming long held tensions in organs and tissues
- Connecting body, heart, throat

When we lead a weekend or five day retreat, it is likely we will include KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind on the first day along with the series described below. This exercise aids in bringing us into the body. It helps us to ground and arrive at the location where we are. The exercise promotes grounded-ness for many reasons, the simplest being that we are laying on the floor, touching the ground. The body contacts the ground and the energies of the earth. The posture also opens up the bottom or base of the body which is where grounded feelings manifest physically.

Secondly, throughout the entire body there are pockets of accumulated tension. Some tensions are very old, even passed on from generation to generation. The more “personal” tensions(from early childhood or more recent) are often unprocessed feelings. These accumulate in the body as tension and in the mind as emotions. Our lives are fast, we move around a lot and all the impressions we encounter need to be processed through feeling. This takes time. Later, or at night feelings sometimes emerge from what happened before. The head processes the experience quickly, but it needs time to be distributed in the throat center as well. The abdominal area is often an area where unprocessed experiences accumulate, especially the most recent experiences; of this day or the past weeks. Usually the unprocessed experiences accumulate until we either recycle them through Kum Nye, other physical activities, or until we cannot ‘stomach them’ anymore. Emotions like stress, communication issues, and sluggishness are caused by accumulated tension in the abdominal area. KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind is perfect to help us connect to and release some of the holding in the lower body.

The Breath

When we are in this posture, ideally we breathe all the way down to the base of the trunk. We expand our bellies on the inhale and before we exhale we pull the abdominal area in and let the energy from the expanded belly area roll down to the chest, and continue to the throat and only then exhale. We are trying to initiate a rolling energetic movement that originates in the abdomen, flows up through the chest, into the throat, and is then released. This is one way to promote movement of accumulated tension in the lower body.

For the best results, we also want to make sure that the breath is even (through nose and mouth), soft, and slow. Some exercise will be best with a quicker breath, but KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind matches better with a slow breath. Developing all three (soft, even, and slow), we create a self-sustaining calm breathing that massages us from within the body.

Hints & Reminders

***Perform the Exercise Differently Each Time**

In general, the main obstacle for experienced Kum Nye practitioners is to perform the exercise in a habitual way. KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind can be a perfect example of a posture where you automatically take on the posture in the same way each time. You probably always go to the same height with the belly button, you always spread your knees to the same extent and you automatically position the feet and

distribute the weight on the soles of your feet. You wait and park your consciousness; waiting for the sign to go down again. Kum Nye will always provide benefit; however, if you perform the posture in the same habitual way the benefits are limited. New areas and dimensions are not discovered and deeper layers remain untouched. You are relaxing only the area that you have already relaxed many times before. Habitually positioning yourself will not allow you to reach deeper levels and release layers of tension. Stay open, explore, use your creativity. Do not stay on the bench, go play. There are probably new ways of performing the exercise that have not occurred to you yet. Until you penetrate all layers of holding, you will not restore the wholeness of your being.

*** Extend Energy & Awareness**

Always make it fresh; experiment, check the position of the feet, distribute the weight, and try to keep the whole foot on the floor. Try walking your feet closer to your trunk and then spreading your knees a bit further. Once you are in the air, you can probably spread your knees even further. In your mind continue spreading them even if physically they remain in the same position. The addition of engaging “mind Kum Nye” is critical. It will extend awareness beyond the physical body. Only then will the Kum (sKu) begin to expand to its fullest. Once your abdomen is in the air, even if you physically cannot go higher, your energy and your awareness in that area can continue to go up and up. In Kum Nye you always want to keep moving beyond the physical. You can do this with your energy and especially with your awareness. Imagine there is a little string from the sky coming down that hooks into your bellybutton and keeps pulling you up. Physically you go as high as possible without straining. Then on the next exhale go a millimeter higher. You can extend more, maybe just the width of a hair. This physical extension will help you go over the edge of the physical into the space of Kum. In the beginning, many people experience shaking in the belly and legs in KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind. This is helpful; it loosens up the blockages in the lower body. Do not, however, make the shaking a habit. After some shaking, still the belly and imagine that your belly is going up higher and higher. Do not stop.

***What to watch for in the instructions**

The exercise instructs you to do the exercise one to three minutes. If you are really into it, your awareness is in the body, and you keep extending your knees and raising your pelvis, one minute can be a long time. If you do it in a habitual fashion, maybe you can do it longer. It will be far less effective than if you perform the exercise for a shorter duration with the continued expansion.

The exercise describes that you may feel heat or sensations. Don't worry if you do not. Feel the physical stillness of your body. Most importantly keep going farther. Once your awareness is in the body and you sense its stillness, your mind will open to space. This is essential for developing Kum. Awareness, space and Kum are of the same family.

Afterwards stretch first one leg and then the other. Then you bring your arms to your sides. Rest for the same amount of time that you were in the air. Because it is relaxing and mind-expanding, people sometimes fall into a nourishing sleep. When we are busy, we are accustomed to falling asleep when we stop thinking. This exercise brings awareness into the entire body and into the circulation of energy. This will soften the thinking activity and therefore people may fall asleep or enter a state in between waking and sleeping. At the beginning of a retreat, we certainly allow and even encourage

sleeping, but on the second day we need to remain awake. It is suggested to do the exercise three times; one is dedicated to the body, the second is dedicated to the breath and the third is dedicated to the mind of our embodiment, but let's not be too rigid about this. In Kum Nye you always want an element of playful exploration. Trying the exercise one time for an extended period (like ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes) might be interesting and worthwhile. At the end of the exercise, make sure that you draw your knees toward your chest and put your hands around your knees. Try this motionlessly and rocking back and forth a little. If you practice KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind by itself and do not continue with the series suggested below, then lay on your right side, pull up your knees and rest a moment before you get up.

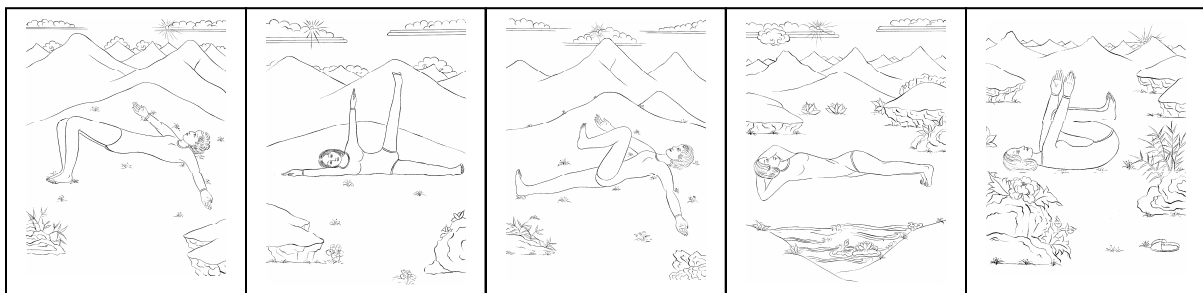
It is worthwhile to explore the variation of this exercise, especially in this week entirely dedicated to KN #110 Energizing Body and Mind. Be gentle getting into the posture. Be mindful of the duration of time in which you sustain the position.

***Transforming long held tensions**

The beauty of this exercise is that it activates the engine or motor of our ability to feel. Our lower body is like the engine room on a ocean freighter. In the solar plexus and abdominal area we tend to hold experiences that take time to process. Because much of our energy goes into thinking and seeing, our ability to feel and express ourselves tends to be weaker. Feeling is a major source of health and wellbeing and also the link to others and the environment. If our experience does not give time and space to feeling, this part of experience will go 'on hold' and eventually be suppressed. It will become increasingly harder to breath into the belly and this entire area will not fully participate in our experiencing. In addition to loosing our inner resource of feeling, we will also have a harder time to express ourselves fully.

By awakening the lower body, as promoted by KN # 110 Energizing Body and Mind, the energies are not only awakened but also transported to the heart and throat. From this moment, feelings will be part of our experience. Intuition improves and we feel what is going on around us better.

Suggested series centered around KN # 110



KN #110

KN #56

KN #92

KN #66

KN #75

Start with KN #110, then KN #56, KN # 92 and/or KN # 66, and finish with KN #75 (first slowly, then in quicker rhythm). The series can last about 60-90 minutes. Always end lying on your right side with the knees pulled up.

Q & A

“I have a hard time breathing through nose and mouth with the tip of the tongue touching the upper palate. Is this necessary? Why do we do this? Do you have any advice? “

Answer:

In Kum Nye we breathe through nose and mouth unless otherwise specified. It is the fifth of the seven gestures. As in many Kum Nye exercises, there is really no completely satisfying, conceptual explanation regarding why we do what we do. For a good reason, the description is usually omitted. The conceptual realm is only one tiny aspect of our Being. The other aspects of our Being cannot be addressed or clarified by verbalization. There are some explanations, but please realize that the basic answer is: ‘because it works better this way’.

Before we give a limited explanation of this aspect of Kum Nye, please understand that it is unusual to breathe in this way for almost anybody starting Kum Nye. It brings mindfulness to an aspect of the body that we are not accustomed to paying much attention. It is fair to say that most of the time we breathe unconsciously. So if we are now suggested to breathe with mindfulness, we might actually tighten up; just because we focus on the breath. It is for this reason, that we usually do not start with the more specific breathing exercises. Until we have created some inner space with the physical postures and movements, breathing exercises take too much effort. When inner space has been created, it is easier to direct your attention to refining the breathing patterns and rhythms. In the beginning, we find ourselves swallowing a lot. This too will change. Over time, Kum Nye breathing begins to grow on us and it becomes more natural to breathe through nose and mouth, especially when we add the sixth of the Seven Gestures(the tip of the tongue). We place the tip of the tongue lightly on the upper palate, the little ridge behind the upper front teeth.

Each explanation will be incomplete. We can say, however, that we breathe through nose and mouth in order to distribute the incoming energies equally through nose (feeding the head) and through the mouth (feeding the trunk). Of course the oxygen goes to the lungs, but the energy that we participate in distributes throughout the subtle body energy system. By breathing through nose and mouth, the head will receive half and the trunk the other half. This is good because it feeds the mental capacities in the head and the sensations and feelings through the body. The benefits of half the breath going into the mouth are extensive. It activates sensations and feelings in the body and thus supplies a major resource of energy. Just like the eyes can see and the ears can hear, contact with the body enables us to sense and feel. It is fair to say that in our Western world, with so much emphasis on images and thoughts, the world of sensations and feelings is neglected and often barren. By breathing through the mouth and developing the subtle body energy system, we nourish the mind, the heart, and the senses and create physical wellbeing through sensations and feelings. This way of breathing is not only self healing but actually supports us to be able to self-sustain. If the energy does not go to the trunk, we

will run on mental will power and we will lack the organic self nourishing system that sensations and feelings provide.

There is a more subtle reason why we breathe through the mouth which is connected to the tip of the tongue. The culmination of breathing through nose and mouth with the tip of the tongue included, gives the oral breath a similar 'twist' as it has when it enters the nostrils. This enables the energies of the oral breath to directly enter into the central column of our subtle body energy system. This is important!

The central column is the most important energy channel of our entire subtle body energy system. If the central column is clear of blockages, it is much easier for the energies to integrate and circulate, which is essential for mental, physical and spiritual health. This is how the breath harmonizes thinking, feeling and action. It is the central column in the subtle body system which acts as the one and only freeway in our system. All other channels connect here, especially the important pathways on either side of the central column.

It is sometimes said that at the time of death, the energies will withdraw from the extremities, enter into the central column, and leave through the top of the head. Whether this is true or not; we do not know. It is, however, another way to exemplify how important it is to have an easy flow of energy throughout the central column (from the base of the spine to the top of the head). By breathing through nose and mouth with the tip of the tongue touching the upper palate, a good amount of the energy directly enters and purifies the central column. It stimulates the flow of energy through the main energy channel of our subtle body energy system, removing blockages. The central column will be clear and empty.

Finally, you know that the breath has different levels. From the more physical or outer breath to the more subtle or inner breath, we can learn to sense different progressions within breathing. As the Kum expands, the breath becomes increasingly subtle. We may not know if we are breathing or not. This transition is healthy for our organs, tissues and most of all for our chakras. Breathing through nose and mouth with the tip of the tongue facilitates the flow of energy in the central column and therefore aids the transition from physical breath to the subtle or inner breath. Our being will be self-healing.

Om Ah Hum

The e Kum Nye Team at Dharma Publishing

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