

Yoga

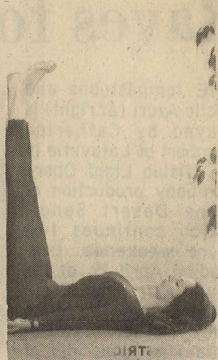
By RAMA VERNON

Preparation for The Shoulderstand

Attentiveness is a key word in this as well as every posture. Observe with your eyes open to see if your feet, legs and hips are even in alignment and that your chin is not jammed into the chest but that the chest comes up to the chin.

Concentration makes the EXercise the INercise of yoga. If you haplessly throw yourself into the pose...it may throw back.

No. 1 — Lie down (on padded surface) with buttocks and legs against wall. Press small of back into floor raising chin slightly toward ceiling.



Note: repeat No. 2 and 3, at least three times the first day and increase the duration spent within the final position each succeeding day. Pose will be progressively continued next week.

No. 2 — Bend knees toward chest extending arms away from shoulders.



No. 3 — Exhaling, press palms, arms and back of shoulders into the floor as you raise hips up as high as you comfortably can. Hold for one slow abdominal inhalation. Lower to position No. 2 on next exhalation.



“Bring your chest to your chin, not your chin to your chest!” is the mantra for those interested in developing precision and awareness in the practice of The Shoulderstand.

This preparatory practice for it increases strength of back and abdomen as it decreases the fear of raising the hips higher than the head.

The first position alone is used daily by those who are limited in other postures and exercises by tight hamstring muscles as well as by those who desire relief of swelling and pressure of the lower extremities. Just the act of lying down with the legs up and supported by the wall, makes it an effective position for relaxation and quick renewal of lost energy.

As the hips are raised, the torso can be brought to the desired perpendicular alignment to the floor by pressing the balls of the feet into the wall as the shoulders, arms and palms are pressed into the floor.