

## COW FACE SERIES

By Richard Rosen

Gomukhasana, "Cow Face Pose," is a well-known asana, but it has several variations that aren't as well known or not known at all. Here's a practice series using the Cow Face variations to lead up to the familiar standard pose. You can do the right side first all the way through, then repeat with the left, or alternate right and left sides for each pose in turn.

For all the poses described below, it's assumed that the right leg is the top leg. When doing the left leg over, simply reverse the instructions (if applicable).

| <b>PRACTICE</b> | <b>HOW TO</b>   |
|-----------------|---|
| VIJAYA          | Left hand rests in right palm, hands rest palms up in lap<br>Triumph  |
| GOMUKHA         | a) Spin hands palm down (right hand now upper hand), stack on top knee<br>Cow face (also called GOVINDA, "one who gives pleasure to the senses," VIRA)      |
| MATHANA         | From above, gaze at tip of nose<br>Churning   |
| DHENUKA         | From above, place hands palms down on left thigh<br>Female cow  |
| CARPATI         | Place back of hands on hips, palms turned up<br>Open palm with fingers extended   |
| MARGA SVASTIKA  | Swing hands just in front of torso (elbows bent to sides of torso), forearms parallel to floor, perpendicular to torso, palms face each other<br>Deer Charm |
| DURVASA         | Press the tips of the right fingers to the middle joints of the left<br>Difficult to stay with<br>Benefit: Cools body heat                                  |
| DAKSHINA JANVA  | Clasp hands over belly (reverse called VAMA, "Left")<br>Right   |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| DAKSHINA<br>CHATURAMSA PADA | From above, gaze at tip of nose (reverse called VAMA)<br>Right  |
| ANASUYA1                    | Catch hold of the opposite feet with the hands (also called SANAKA, Without malice "old, ancient")<br>Benefit: Body becomes lustrous "like gold" and disease free |
| DATTA DIGAMBARA<br>KANKANA  | From above look between eyebrows<br>Bend torso forward, touch head to top knee, gaze at tip of nose (also called TURA)<br>Bangle                                  |
| GHODACOLI                   | From above, reach arms behind back, clasp hands   |
| GOMUKHA                     | b) cross arms behind back, hold big toes<br>> c) raise arms, bend elbows, hold opposite shoulders<br>> d) standard arm position                                   |