

IYASE Prop Corner May 2020

By: Rosa Lopez Santana, CIYT Jr. 3

Yogarosa, Miami, FL

<https://www.yogarosa.com>

The Sage Patanjali, defines yoga as *Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodah*. (Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuation of the consciousness.) BKS Iyengar (Guruji as he is affectionately known), took us on a deep journey of self-discovery with the teachings of Patanjali in mind. Patanjali then promises that when we can do that (to cease the fluctuations), we can then dwell in our own true splendor. Guruji brought many of us closer to the understanding that we are more than just the body, but he was able to brilliantly teach us that through the asanas. He once told us that he could teach us everything there is to know about yoga in *Tadasana*, but that it would be too hard for us. So he gave us so many poses, and devised creative ways of exploring and experiencing them. Let us not lose sight of the purpose of these sacred shapes that are known as asanas, these are the vehicle that can help us to understand ourselves better and to get us closer to the quieting of the mind, for the purpose of self-realization. How many of us can honestly say that we have seen our own true splendor? I certainly haven't, but the promise of it is quite fascinating, and worthy of exploration. If nothing else, at least we are blessed with improved health as a side effect of this ultimate quest.

I really could have chosen any posture, but since this one has been in my recent explorations, I will share my insights of working with *Parivritta Trikonasana*. This is a pose that I detested when I first began my yoga journey in 1995. It used to be painful, uncomfortable, and I would usually lose my balance and get frustrated. After 25 years of cultivating a healthy relationship with this pose, I can honestly tell you that we have not only become friends, but this pose has helped me over the years to balance my uneven legs, ill-informed hips, and scoliotic spine. It has become like a trusted friend, which guides you when you are experiencing discomfort, or feel out of sorts. I can also feel when I have stayed away from it too for long.

Parivritta Trikonasana, Revolved Triangle Posture Prepare by doing a few standing poses such as *Utthita Trikonasana*, *Adho Mukha Svanasana*, and *Parsvottanasana* to warm up the legs. We will use the classical pose to inform us of the deficiencies, and where we can work better, followed by a modified version using a chair. A variation that I learned from Dena Glazer, CIYT, who is now 85 years old, and has been teaching me how to practice when I become her age.

Parivritta Trikonasana, the revolved triangle pose can be a challenge for tight hamstrings and backs, but with a regular and well-rounded practice of all postures possible, that will improve. This pose is great for relieving back pain, strengthens the hips, and invigorates the abdominal organs.



1. Take Parivritta Trikonasana without props to see where you are. (Follow instructions in Light on Yoga if you're new.) Observe the mobility in the legs, how the hips behave, and see how much you're turning, and what's turning, and what's not. Repeat on the other side, with keen observation.



2. Take Parsvottanasana with hands on a chair. See how much you can send the thighs back and the chest forward. See where you have more space compared to the previous pose. Observe the legs, trunk, and abdomen.

Helpful tips:

- Stamp the right inner heel down
- Press the thighs and outer hips back and lengthen the trunk.
- Roll the thighs out in such a way that your right hip moves back, and the left leg heel presses down.
- Move the chest away from the belly and place the hands on the seat or backrest of the chair, to lengthen the trunk.

Repeat on left side, then repeat on both sides. See how much length you can cultivate in your spine, as our spines will *parivritta* (revolve) better when the spine is long.





3. From *Parsvottanasana* with right leg forward, place your left forearm on the chair. (If forearm is not possible, build height on chair seat for your height and mobility, or place the hand on the seat of the chair.)

Keeping *Parsvottanasana* actions:

- revolve abdomen from left to right
- roll right shoulder back
- move right shoulder blade towards the spine, left shoulder blade away from the spine to turn the chest
- push down the left hand or forearm to help twist better

Come back through *Parsvottanasana* and repeat on other side.

Repeat pose with chair and explore how much more freedom to twist there is, without having so much demand in the legs.

I realized in these pictures something that I don't realize when I practice. I actually close my eyes when I am feeling something in my body. Since I usually practice alone, and no one is there to take pictures, this was a revelation to me. I remember Guruji always telling us to keep our eyes open and where to look. Eyes closed was reserved for *Savasana* and *Pranayama*. It seems that over the years, I have been exploring closing the eyes in certain poses, as it helps me to become calm. For some people, closing the eyes can be disturbing, especially during this lockdown. For me, it has helped me to maintain a calm demeanor. This was not supposed to be part of this tutorial, but sometimes things show up. I hope this little gift of tips can help you to cultivate a healthy relationship with *Parivritta Trikonasana*, as much as

the chair has for me. I thank Geeta Iyengar for her persistence eagle eyes not letting me escape this pose in Pune, and Dena Glazer for teaching me soft ways to go deeper in my practice.

Namaste, and Love to you.