***Pronounced juht-har-uh par-ee-var-tuhn-aah-suh-nuh the word jathara means stomach & parivartana means revolving in Sanskrit***

**Jathara Parivartanasana (Reverse stomach pose)**

There are different names given to supine twists such as Jathara Parvritti, and there are many different variations of this pose, but we can apply some generalised teaching points to all of them.

**General Teaching Points:**

* The shoulders and upperback area provide the anchor for this pose so these need to be stable & symmetrical whichever arm placement we use. We need to press shoulderblades into the mat, keeping shoulders down away from ears, chest open.
* Once in the twist it is clear we need to release the shoulder/chest of the side away from the knees to the ground but students also need to ensure they have not inadvertently lifted or compressed the shoulder nearest the knees.
* The spinal column must stay extended, i.e. if there is a curve in the spine then we have gone to far or have simply misaligned in the pose.
* If the neck is drawn into the pose then we must keep the head in neutral, i.e. the chin does not lower or lift too much, and if necessary we can place padding behind the head.
* We can practice dynamically or statically, with breath awareness, and ideally if staying we first stay with knees to the left hand side so we can massage the right side of the torso, and then stay with knees to the right – this is so we are first massaging the ascending colon and then the descending colon, and as such working with the natural flow of substances moving through the digestive system.
* **We never lift and lower with straight legs**. Remember that this is a very unhelpful action because the attachment point for the hip flexors is very close to the hips & legs weigh heavy (i.e. leverage is challenging) so when we lift extended legs this causes the lumbar back to lift creating pressure there; we also pressurise the pelvic floor as the pelvis rolls into an anterior tilt and stretch the lower attachments of the abdominal muscles reducing their capacity to aid the lift; in addition the strength of the hip extensors is greatly reduced due to reciprocal inhibition, where as agonists, the hip flexors contract, the antagonists, the hip extensors must relax meaning they also cannot help stabilise the lift.

**Adjustments**

* When a student’s arms are not placed symmetrically we can use verbal instruction or if needed physically adjust the arms laying them out as needed.
* If a student has a curved spine then we can verbally ask them to start again with their spine straight along the mat, and then enter again very slowly, reducing the depth of their twist by instructing them not to draw the thighs in to the torso quite so much. Here we can help students to know the positive effect this has rather than making them feel that they are somehow reduced in capability – for instance “If we can straighten the spine a little more then we will be able to rejuvenate the vertebral column to a much greater effect.”
* With care we can place one hand on the upper chest/shoulder of the side away from the knees to help encourage that area to release – even if this is just an indication. We can also lightly place a hand on the top thigh encouraging the legs to be drawn to the ground. This all requires some sensitivity to reistance on our part however.

**Variations**

There are many variations for this pose.

A very good variation is to keep knees still then lift and lower the top arm through an arc to really massage and stretch the chest and upper back muscles

Another is to start on the side of the body and then lift and draw the top arm across the body into the full placement of arms, as if drawing a bow string.

We can alter the placement of the arms e.g. cross shape, hands behind head with elbow pointing outwards, arms parallel to ears etc.

We can alter the positon of bent legs e.g. have legs wider then hip-width like window wipers, cross over legs at knees, have the top foot on the bottom knee etc.

We can straighten the top leg or both legs once in the pose**.**

**Cautions & possible modifications**

* Low back conditions, sacroiliac problems and sciatica: keep both feet to floor, padding beneath thighs if needed
* General inflexibility & weakness: keep both feet to floor, padding beneath thighs/neck if needed
* Hiatus hernia: keep upper body raised or use seated twist instead
* Pregnancy: use seated twist instead if needed

#### Possible Staging:-

1. Practice dynamically - feet to floor, allow knees to fall to sides
2. Practice dynamically knees over torso,
3. Pratice statically – bent knees to floor or padding beneath thighs, breathe as massage body
4. Development – straighten legs whilst keeping the spine straight

**Modifications**

Feet to floor

Padding under head and/or thighs

**Alternatives:**

Seated bharadvajrasana, sage pose

Sukhasana twist

**Benefits:**

* Aids digestion
* Massage viscera generally, removing toxins & replenishing with nutrients
* Massages and tones spinal muscles
* Encourages release of breathing muscles
* Release tight neck muscles

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