



JULY 2009

### Whole Movement / Mindful Movement



Following millions of years of evolution, our bodies are natural movement machines. 206 bones and 639 skeletal muscles all work seamlessly together to allow us an incredible variety of motions.

All too often, though, we think of movement and exercise as something we have to awkwardly force into our lives. Crunches for the abs, jogging on a treadmill for the heart, stretches with elastic bands to reshape our thighs. Our exercise regimens tend to treat the body like a bunch of separate check boxes we have to quickly get through before we can go home and get back to our lives.

It's time to slow down. The slow food movement has emphasized the place that meals of whole foods have in improving the quality and healthfulness of our whole lives. We can also savor movement. Everyday movements, done in a wholesome and integrated way, add to the quality and enjoyment of our lives. Instead of adding to our list of chores with reps and sets of exercises, we can transform our everyday chores into sensual bodywork experiences.

### NEWS OF THE MONTH

#### **National tour:**

GM 101 is coming to seven cities in September / October:

- Ann Arbor, MI
- Boulder, CO
- Los Angeles, CA
- New York, NY
- Phoenix, AZ
- Portland, OR
- San Diego, CA

L.A. is nearly sold out, the other cities are half sold out, Phoenix, AZ (actually Tempe) is under-enrolled at present. Please let your family and friends know about this once in a year opportunity! They can enroll online or by calling our office at 1-888-557-6788

#### **Stretchsit™ Cushion:**

The Stretchsit cushion has a new demo video on YouTube {}.

#### **SF Chronicle Article:**

The Datebook section of the SF Chronicle will feature an article about Esther Gokhale and her work on July 27, 2009.

### PHOTO OF THE MONTH



*These Portuguese women are getting strong back and arm muscles as well as a clean floor from their work.*



*Me carrying my third baby on my back. This is the best child care measure I ever learned. Wish I got to teach it more often*

Here are some hints on how to make your everyday movements more wholesome:

- *Pay attention to your breathing.* Breathing isn't just about getting oxygen into your body. The movement associated with breathing also has therapeutic value. Check in from time to time to see that your rib cage and spine move freely with your breath. If not, reposition your bones and release muscle tensions that inhibit natural movement of these areas.
- *Use your body to protect itself.* With impact, weight-bearing, vibration or distortion of your spine, use your inner corset to cushion the spinal disks, nerves and vertebrae. [Click here for more about the inner corset.](#)
- *Use your eyes to help you move better.* Observe yourself and those around you. We mimic each other all the time. By making this a more conscious activity, you can copy what is healthy and beautiful, and avoid copying unhealthy movement.
- *Use your ears to help your gait.* Listen to the sound of your footfall – is it symmetric? Is your landing heavy? Use what you hear as a feedback loop to help you walk more lightly and evenly.
- *Consider your life to be part of your exercise and medicine.* Exercise and healing can and should be a part of everyday life. Choose activities that provide you a variety of physical, mental and emotional stimuli so that you are challenged and rewarded, exerted and rested. Dance. Garden. Hike. Build. Clean. Play sports. Sleep. Do it all with good form!

## QUOTES OF THE MONTH

*Good for the body is the work of the body, good for the soul the work of the soul, and good for either the work of the other.*

~ Henry David Thoreau

*Our bodies are our gardens – our wills are our gardeners.*

~ William Shakespeare

*Our own physical body possesses a wisdom which we who inhabit the body lack. We give it orders which make no sense.*

~ Henry Miller

*How idiotic civilization is! Why be given a body if you have to keep it shut up in a case like a rare, rare fiddle?*

~ Katherine Mansfield, Bliss and Other Stories

Esther

## SUCCESS STORY OF THE MONTH

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I discovered Esther Gokhale's work on YouTube and was completely amazed: By following her short simple instructions I suddenly found myself not only sitting painlessly for the first time in 14 years, but also so very comfortably.

After I got the book and followed the detailed instructions, I discovered that I had missed the most important thing about her stretch-sitting technique: When done correctly, it is not only painless and comfortable; it is actually healing. The pain I had had since my first childbirth, a pain that had worsened over the years, was now suddenly just gone.

As I continued working through the book, I learned to transform poses and activities that used to strain and wear my back to ones that heal and strengthen it. It felt like I was reversing the effects of gravity and time!

~ Yonat Sharon, Israel

### Free class offer:

Explore wholesome movement in any of our dance / yoga / stretch & strengthen classes at the Center. For the months of July/August, please be our guest in any one of our Live It Up! classes – there is no need to call, just drop in. Please forward this invitation to your friends as well.

To help people be able to continue to attend classes, we have reduced our drop-in fee to \$20. The monthly fee for unlimited attendance in Live It Up! classes is \$140. [Click here for a schedule.](#)

### Useful links

Video presentation: [authors@Google](mailto:authors@Google)

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