



M A R I A D E S O U S A

HOW TO GO ABOUT LIFE WITH
GOOD POSTURE

*The 3 Pillars of
good posture*

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part 1

i n t r o d u c t i o n

The concept of the **3 pillars of good posture** is to help you understand the fundamentals of good posture and for you to see that good posture is something we all can achieve. Once you understand these fundamentals you can teach yourself and, if applicable, start planting the seeds of good postural habits in your children.



part 2

PILLAR #1

self-awareness

I want to introduce you to this idea:

***If you know what you are doing,
you can do whatever you want,
the way you want.***

Quote inspired by Dr Moshe Feldenkrais

Can we reflect upon this for a moment?

How powerful and freeing it is to believe that you are in control of your life?

You are! Let me explain...

Don't blame your phone!

You may have seen headlines such as 'Your phone is bad for your neck' or something along these lines.

I want you to realise that phones, ipads, computers or any other e-devices aren't to blame for the epidemic of poor posture and all the pain that comes with it.



PILLAR #1

self-awareness

If we had to blame something for this it would be the lack of education.

By blaming something – or someone, for that matter – you are putting yourself in a powerless position. Because, what you are saying is that, that thing or person has control over your life.

This couldn't be further from the truth!

You are in control of your life. You are in the driving seat.

When it comes to the way you hold yourself, your phone cannot be in control of your body or your posture.

It's impossible!

Realise that it is up to you to hold yourself in whatever way you want, be it with good or poor posture.

You must realise that:

If you know what you are doing,

you can do whatever you want, the way you want.



PILLAR #1

s e l f - a w a r e n e s s

But here's the catch, you can only notice how you hold your body if you pay attention to yourself.

This is where ***pillar #1 - self-awareness*** comes to play.

Self-awareness means paying attention to ourselves.

In the context of posture, this means to pay attention to the way we move and hold ourselves as we go about life.

We can only notice and correct what needs to be corrected if we know what's going on.

How can it be any other way?



PILLAR #1

self-awareness

Self-awareness vs self-conscious

When you hear the word self-awareness, you may think it means being self-conscious.

But these are *very different* concepts.

Being self-conscious is thinking about ourselves or what's going on around us.

This can be either negative eg. 'I look fat in this dress' or positive eg. 'I feel hot in this dress'.

On the other hand, being self-aware is to observe/catch yourself being self-conscious.

And when you are aware you can, if you choose to, change the negative state.

Can you see the differences and the power of self-awareness?



PILLAR #1

s e l f - a w a r e n e s s

Self-awareness vs autopilot

On the other spectrum of self-awareness is the autopilot.

A lot of us live in, what they call 'autopilot' mode.

This means we are not aware of our behaviour or of what we do or think. Something else is.

This something else is our habits, beliefs and conditioning.

With practice and commitment we can control all three.

However, not all habits, beliefs and conditioning are bad.

So, by paying attention to yourself as you go about life, you can start noticing what is serving you well eg. the good habits and what it isn't eg. the bad habits and, act accordingly.



PILLAR #1

s e l f - a w a r e n e s s

Summary of pillar # 1

There are 3 modes we can choose to be in:

- Self-awareness mode
- Self- conscious mode or
- Auto-pilot mode

Homework

Your challenge here is to practise being on self-awareness mode more often than not, so that you can control the other two modes.

Self-awareness is self-care



part 3

PILLAR #2

p o s t u r a l h a b i t s

Good habits die hard.

OK, OK, I know the saying is 'Old habits die hard' but I want to give you a different perspective on habits.

We all have habits, some are good eg. the daily shower (thanks goodness for that!) some not so good like the daily (or nightly, should I say) gin and tonic.

Habits are also conscious eg. brushing our teeth and we have many others that we are oblivious of eg. crossing our legs as soon as we sit down.

When it comes to the body and the way we handle it, most people are oblivious of how they do it.

For instance, the way we hold our mobile phones, or wash our hands or pickup something from the floor, it's not something a lot of people pay attention to.



PILLAR #2

postural habits

Summary of pillar #2

Only by noticing what (poor) postural habits you created along the years, can you start acting upon them.

You do that by adjusting the way you use your body as you go about life.

Indeed, *old habits die hard* but with new habits in place you will slowly replace the bad ones and turn those new habits into old habits that will *die hard* too!



PILLAR #2

postural habits

Homework

So with pillar #2, I want to encourage you to pay attention (pillar #1 - self-awareness) to your postural habits.

Start keeping an eye on how you hold your body while on your mobile phone, brushing your teeth, washing your hands, bringing food to the mouth and many other activities we do every single day – if you follow my work, you know how to do it all in a way that keeps your back safe.



part 4

PILLAR #3

m o v e m e n t

In order to keep our body in good working order and upright, we need to move and exercise.

Now, you are probably thinking that I'm going to tell you how exercise is essential to keep a healthy body and mind. That we all should get some yoga pants and hit the gym on a regular basis.

As much as this is a cliché, it is indeed, part of a healthy lifestyle.

However, there is another part to this equation that is paramount to keeping the body in good working order.

This, you will be glad to know, can reduce your visits to the gym, if so you wish.

And, you won't need yoga pants for this, either!

You're welcome!



PILLAR #3

m o v e m e n t

I'm talking about **movement**.

By movement, I mean the natural movements the human body is designed to do in order to do all the activities we need to live life. These are walking, going up and down the stairs and squatting.

These movements, apart from allowing us to move around, are also what keep the joints lubricated, nourished and moving smoothly.

The lack of these movements leads to the development of many health issues such as stiffness, back problems and arthritis.

The birth of chairs, lifts, escalators, cars and toilets meant the (near) death of these natural movements.

These modern commodities are robbing us of the opportunity to move – and the result is discomfort and pain.



PILLAR #3

m o v e m e n t

But I'm not here to bring you the bad news (although I need to mention it for context) but to inspire you to bring back these movements into your life.

You may think that you can't escape or avoid all of these commodities and as much as I understand that it isn't always easy or even convenient, I want you to know that you can do better, if you wish to.

It's time we all took ***personal responsibility for our health*** and stopped allowing modern commodities rule our lives – just like we can't blame our phones for giving us neck pain.

We cannot go on given our power away to technology and modern commodities.

We must claim our power back, if we want to live with less pain and more enjoyment.



PILLAR #3

m o v e m e n t

Indeed, there will be times when we may need to use them.
However, if we make an effort, there will be plenty of times
when we don't need to.

We have the power to choose!

Summary of pillar #3

If we want to keep our bodies in good working order and
upright we ought to do better and integrate more of the
natural movements in your lives.



PILLAR #3

movement

Homework

Your challenge here is to start noticing your movement habits and patterns in your life.

Here are a few things for you to think about:

- What do you do when you come across an escalator?
- Do you, out of habit, choose the lift vs the stairs?
- Do you avoid squatting because it's difficult?
- How many times, out of habit, do you take a sit just for the sake of sitting down, even though you may have been sitting for hours?
- Do you park the car as close as you can to where you need to go?
- Do you drive when you know you could walk instead?
- Do you take the bus when it would only take you 10 or 15 minutes to walk to your destination?



PILLAR #3

movement

We all know we sit far too much and how bad that is for the body. But, I also know that a lot of people don't have much choice but sit to do their jobs.

However, when it comes to sitting less and move more, we can do better.

During your day, if you pay close attention, you will come across many opportunities to move.

Here are a few ideas:

- Take the stairs vs lift more often (1 or 2 flights each time/day is better than nothing).
- Walk up and down on an escalator – don't just stand there waiting for the ride, you don't have to!
- Get off the bus 1 or 2 stops earlier.
- Park the car further away from where you need to go.
- Divert your route to work/home that will force you to walk for a bit longer.



PILLAR #3

m o v e m e n t

- When someone comes to see you in your office, take this as an opportunity to stand up and talk standing or going for a walk.
- Practice squatting each time you pick something from the floor, put the washing in the washing machine or talk to a child.
- When taking your coffee breaks at work, go for a walk or stand to drink your coffee.

Your aim is to change your movement patterns and habits. By keeping up with these natural movements on a daily basis, you will help your joints work smoothly and prevent stiffness from developing.



conclusion

The 3 pillars of good posture will help you take care of your back and image as you go about life.

Self-awareness

– use self-awareness to empower yourself in all areas of your life. But, when it comes to your posture, notice how you hold yourself as you go about life.

Postural habits

– once you see what poor postural habits you've created along the years, start working on creating new good habits to replace the bad ones.

Movement

– exercise is essential but cannot replace the natural movements. Both will help your body stay in good working order and upright.



conclusion

Taking good care of your back is a daily affair and needs to be on the top of your priorities.

I know that posture talkings aren't sexy, but neither are the aches & pains that follows us around or living with a rounded back.

Also, if we want to go about life looking good, feeling elegant and living with confidence, we need to be having these posture talks.

Moreover, we ought to teach our children, so that they don't end up wonky and in pain.

Please remember this:

You have the power to choose!



what's next for you

I will be in touch, please stay tuned.

Subscribe to my youtube channel and follow me on social media (links below) to learn how to go about life with good posture.

Start with this **video** - <https://youtu.be/qlkNGAsJegc>

And if you fancy, join me on:

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I look forward to hearing from you.

XO

