

Introduction

*“As we
get better at
understanding
how little we
know about
the body, we
begin to realize
that the next
big frontier
in medicine
is energy
medicine... It’s
understanding
for the first time
how energy
influences how
we feel.”*

—Dr. Mehmet Oz

There is a secret that runs throughout our world, appearing in everything from music to martial arts, Chinese medicine to Western science, even the human body. The secret is synchronization.

Bringing synchronization to the body can have a profound effect on people’s lives. I have seen medical conditions improve and sometimes completely resolve themselves. Athletes begin to reach their true potential. I have seen an 80-year-old golfer play on a team with 40-year-olds, basketball players jump six inches higher and Navy Seal candidates do 40% more push-ups than they were able to do before. When things are synchronized, running in harmony, and working in balance, wonderful things begin to happen.

At Columbia University Medical Center, I was able to see proof of how synchronization affects the body. I witnessed positive brain changes through electroencephalography (EEGs) while applying synchronization techniques to the brain. Using digital infrared thermographic imaging to map inflammation in horses, I saw this inflammation drastically reduced through synchronization and the horses performed better as a result.

Now, I want to share what I have learned with you. Drawing from my 30 years of study and blending the essence of Western science and Chinese medicine, the character and power of energy from the Daoist Tai Chi, and Qi Gong systems, and the strength of martial arts, I have created a simple, effective, and fun program that anyone can use to improve his or her health.

I want my clients and friends to take charge of their energy and become fastidious about keeping themselves in sync. When you choose to prioritize self-care, you will experience faster healing, vitality, renewed health, and reduced emotional ups and downs such as depression and anxiety.

Through a distinctive and cutting-edge system of physical and mental movements, we will learn techniques to synchronize the body’s energy and motion for enhanced wellness, performance, and energy flow.

This practice will enable you to harmonize the energetic life force that runs throughout your body - what the Chinese call chi.

The exercises that follow are inspired by the masters of various disciplines. They are simple, fun, and can be adapted to anyone, whether you are mobile or immobile. You don't need to spend years learning martial arts or complicated exercise routines. With consistent practice of the exercises in this workbook, you can become your own secret weapon to health and wellness.

Along the way, you will read testimonies from a few of my clients who have experienced improved health and wellness, as well as improved sports performance, through this system.

Our goals are threefold:

1. Keeping your physical body youthful and vital:

You will learn to synchronize the parts of your body, moving them in harmony, freeing up your body, beginning with the energy of your organs and organ networks, to keep yourself youthful for life and maintain freedom of motion.

2. Empowering you to heal your body through energy:

You will become aware of the energy of your organs and learn how to harness it to achieve optimal health.

3. Feeling the power of your energy:

You will learn to manage the character and the quality of the energy in the 12 major organ networks that run throughout your body by freeing up the joints of your body.

Once you have learned techniques to synchronize your body's energy, we can create a practice that will allow you to harmonize yourself no matter what physical challenges or roadblocks come your way. Living in harmony will allow you to enjoy a youthful, healthy, happy, and meaningful life.

I look forward to sharing this journey with you. Let's begin...

Jeffrey C. Zimmerman, OMD

Lesson 1: The Basics of Synchronization

“For reasons we don’t yet understand, the tendency to synchronize is one of the most pervasive drives in the universe, extending from atoms to animals, from people to planets.”

— Steven
Strogatz,
Cornell
mathematician
and author
of “Sync”

Chinese medicine and Western medicine agree: life is all about energy. Just as everything is made up of energy, everything in the universe, from the pacemaker cells in your heart to the planets in the solar system, is constantly striving to achieve harmony.

The physics, biology, and mathematics of synchrony are truly fascinating. Simply, independent parts moving together will inevitably work to move into synchronization. We all know how beautiful two dancers look when they are in sync, what a group of jazz musicians can create when they are playing in unison, or what birds look like when they are flocking together as one. Even inanimate objects such as metronomes forced to start at different times, ultimately synchronize.

When we help our bodies to find this synchrony, we can experience significant reductions in pain and suffering and greater resiliency, vitality, and joy. Chinese medicine has long been based on this principle and now, after thousands of years of research, science is finding itself in agreement.

It’s time to put these principles to work for you. In this first lesson, we will learn how to find our personal balance and begin to move energy through the body with a series of basic breath and movement exercises. It all begins with the plumb-line.

PART A: Finding the Plumb-line

Results indicated that people standing on their center had 22-27% more brain power to perform tasks such as recalling information and processing math and reading problems.

In the following sections, we will learn a few simple techniques to discover your personal balance. As you become familiar with these movements, you will find you can do them anywhere: at home, waiting for a bus, or standing in line at the grocery store.

The plumb-line is the body's path of least resistance, the place where the two fundamental forces of nature—yin and yang—can flow effortlessly. Yin and yang, complementary and opposing forces that make up the world, are concepts dating back to the Shang Dynasty (1600—1100 BC).

In the 1960s, the Royal Society of London identified two fundamental classes of particles, once again breaking the world down into two forces striving for balance.

With this plumb-line we align the meeting point of yang, the center of the top of the head, with the meeting point of yin, the base of the pelvis. This plumb-line is often referred to as the place of effortless power and vitality.

The body is completely relaxed and free of stress when you're standing or sitting in plumb-line. Some people describe a feeling of effortlessness or report that they feel more alive and more powerful in this position. You may notice that your breathing becomes easier, your thighs and calves are relaxed, and you'll feel you have increased

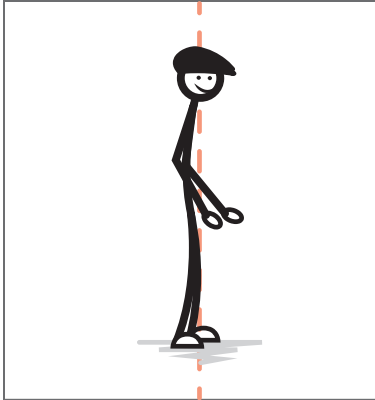
Finding the Plumb-line *continued*

The plumb-line aligns the meeting point of yang, the center of the top of the head, with the meeting point of yin, the base of the pelvis. This plumb-line is often referred to as the place of effortless power and vitality.

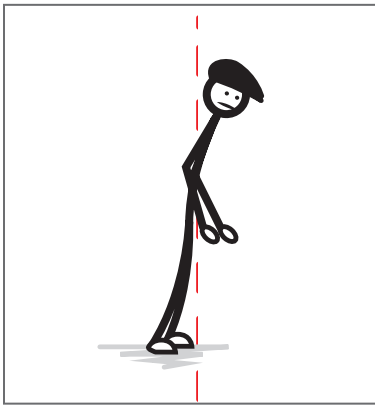
balance. Neurotherapist Dr. Dennis R. Maness conducted a clinical trial to test the relationship between synchronization and specific cognitive brain functions. Sixteen men and women between the ages of 18-54 were equipped with biofeedback, including EEG sensors, to measure their cognitive function. The results indicated that people standing on their center had 22-27% more brain power to perform tasks such as recalling information and processing math and reading problems. Being in balance changes everything.

The body is completely relaxed and free of stress when you're standing or sitting in plumb-line.

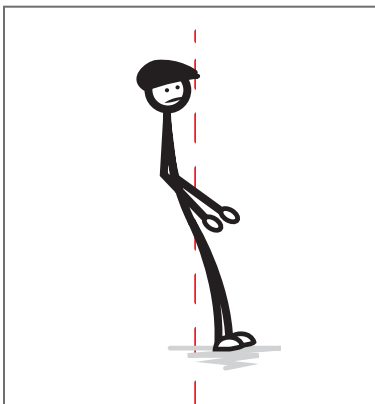
Standing Plumb-line



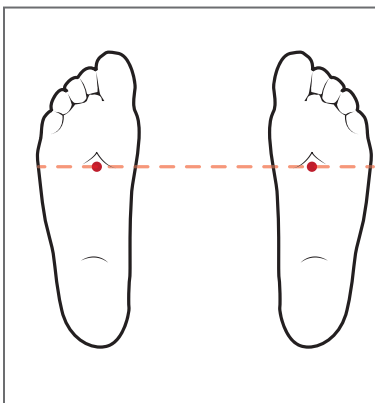
Correct Position:
The Body in Harmony / Y axis



Incorrect Position: Too far forward, too much weight on toes

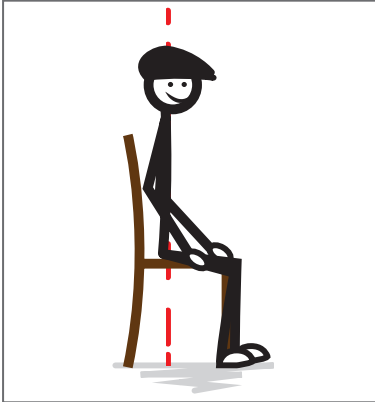


Incorrect Position: Too far back, too much weight on heels

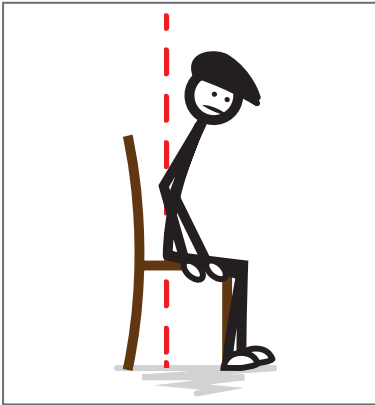


X axis / Kidney 1

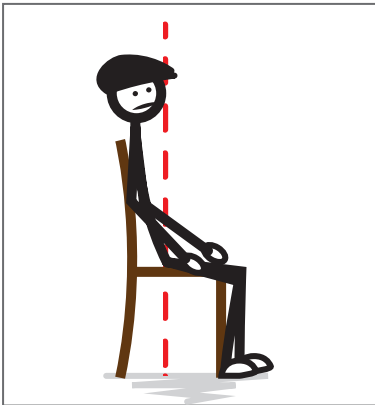
1. Find the center of the top of your head. You may find it helpful to place one thumb at the top of each ear and bring your middle fingers together to meet at the center of the top of your head.
2. Slightly bend your knees.
3. Visualize a line stretching from the point at the center of your head, down through the center of your body and pelvis, ending between your feet. This is your body's vertical axis (Y-axis).
4. Let go of any tension you feel in your pelvis. Some people have reported experiencing a feeling of heat or energy movement in the pelvis when they are positioned correctly.
5. Loosen your shoulders releasing any tension.
6. Place your arms comfortably at your sides.
7. Check to be sure that your chin is parallel to the floor and your neck is moving freely.
8. Position your feet shoulder-width apart standing on the Kidney Point 1. This is the small depression in the upper center of the bottom of your foot, in line with the base of your second and third toes.
9. Imagine a straight line running between the Kidney Point 1 on your left foot and the Kidney Point 1 on your right foot, this creates your body's horizontal axis (X-axis) This line will be perpendicular to the Y axis.



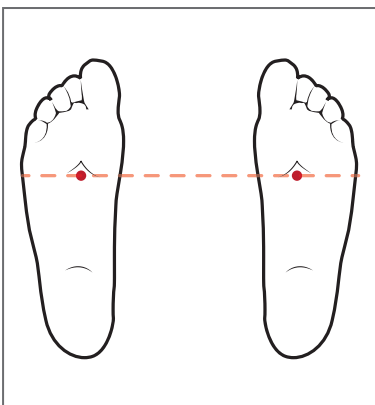
Correct Position:
The Body in Harmony / Y axis



Incorrect Position: Too far forward, too much weight on toes



Incorrect Position: Too far back, too much weight on heels



X axis / Kidney 1

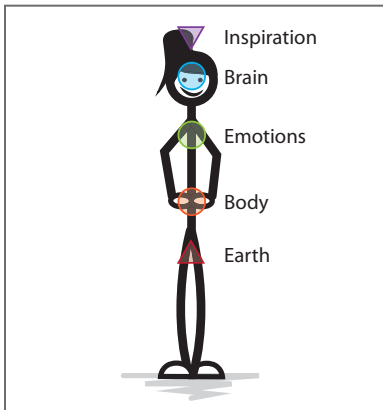
Seated Plumb-line

1. Sit comfortably in a chair with your back straight and feet on the floor. Find the center of the top of your head.
2. Sitting comfortably in your chair, shift your weight backward and forward in your chair until you find that place of effortlessness described above.
3. Visualize your body's y-axis stretching from the point at the center of your head, down through the center of your body and pelvis.
4. Release any tension in your pelvis and let it find the center naturally. Some people will experience a feeling of heat or energy movement in the pelvis when they are positioned correctly.
5. Place your arms comfortably at your sides or on your knees.
6. Release any tension in your shoulders.
7. Check to be sure that your chin is parallel to the floor and balanced and your neck loose and relaxed.
8. Position your feet shoulder-width apart on the ground in front of you, your weight on the Kidney Point 1 of each foot.
9. Imagine your body's X-axis running between Kidney Point 1 on your left foot and Kidney Point 1 on your right foot.

PART B:

Energy Warm-Up

Once you have found the plumb-line, we will warm up your body's energy sources. The following sequence focuses on the meeting points of the two fundamental forces of nature that flow through the body and the three dan tien or energy center points within the body:



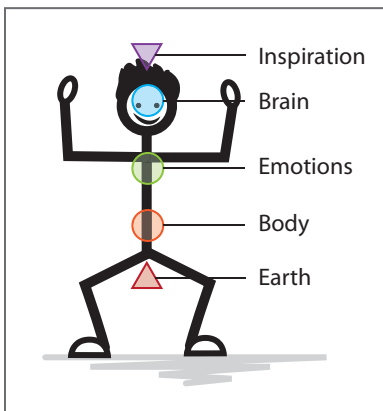
1. Earth/Power: the meeting of all yin, at the base of your pelvis. This is the closest part of your torso to the earth.

2. Body/Health: the lower dan tien, the “sea of health” located on the abdomen just below the navel.

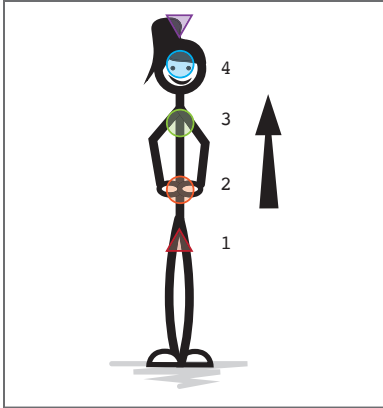
3. Emotions/Health: the middle dan tien, the “sea of emotions” located at the middle of the chest, level with the heart.

4. Thoughts/Brain: the upper dan tien, the “heavenly eye” located on the forehead, between the eyebrows.

5. Inspiration/Brain/Heavens: the meeting of the yang in your body, located at the top of the head, closest to heaven.



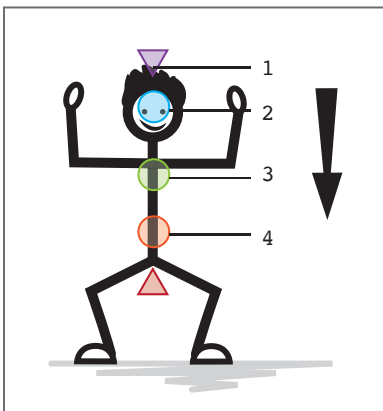
Energy Warm-Up



1. Begin in plumb-line. You can do this seated or standing, whichever you prefer.

2. Inhale for four counts and bring attention to each energy source, beginning at the base of the pelvis and moving up your body: earth, body, emotions, and brain.

3. Exhale for four counts and move back down your body: inspiration, brain, emotions, and body.



4. Repeat, inhaling upward and exhaling downward three times.

This simple exercise can be adapted based on your individual needs. If you are concerned about your physical energy, pay special attention to the Body; if you're wrestling with an emotional or spiritual problem, pay special attention to the Emotions; and if you are struggling with your thoughts, bring your focus to the Brain.

A Word About Practice

*"If I don't
practice for a
day, I know it. If
I don't practice
for two days,
my wife knows
it. If I don't
practice for
three days, the
world
knows it."*

*— Vladimir
Horowitz,
classical pianist*

It is said that you teach what you have to learn. I am learning alongside you.

Every master in every discipline goes over the basics every day, always learning alongside his or her student. The art itself is always greater than the artist. The greatest musicians, through practice, learn to get out of the way of the music. The greatest dancers or martial artists know how to step aside and allow beautiful, effortless movement to reveal itself. These same principles apply to the natural functioning of your body.

This is a workbook: it is all about practice. This information cannot be found purely in books, even this one. It is only through experience, through sincere, correct practice and coaching, that the information will reveal itself. Aim to practice for at least a few minutes every day. The more often you practice, the better you will feel your body's natural harmony.

In the following pages, we will learn some basic techniques that will help you get out of the way of your body's natural desire to synchronize. Work at your own pace and slowly digest this information. Most people have become out of sync through years of stress of modern life, poor posture, lack of proper movement, you name it. It takes time for the basics, your body's natural synchronization, to reestablish itself. Be gentle with yourself, practice sincerely, and enjoy the journey to your natural state of harmony!

PART C: Feeling Your Energy

Four Movements to Put You in Touch With Your Energy Flow

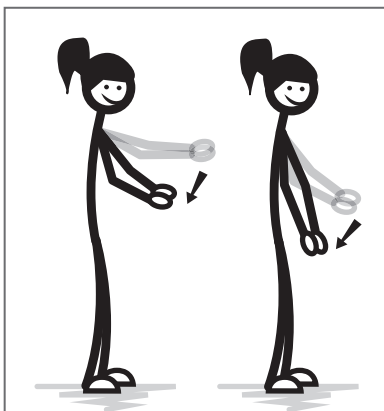
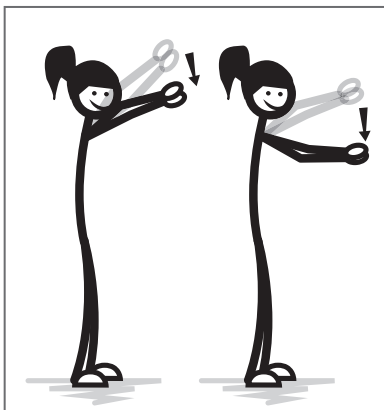
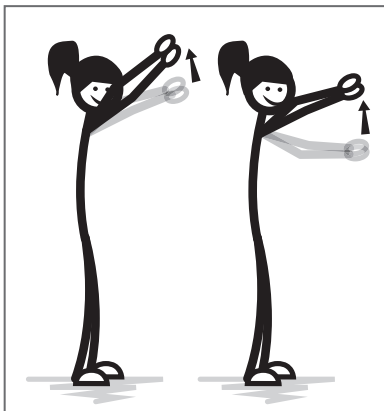
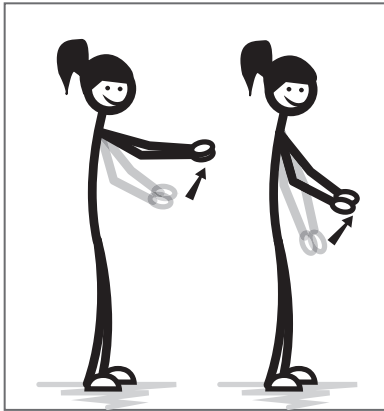
These movements will become effortless and smooth with practice.

Now we will try moving our body and energy through a series of movements. These exercises are designed to bring you back to your natural state of harmony, allowing your energy to flow easily and smoothly. This allows you to function at your physical, mental, and emotional best, effortlessly.

Each of the following exercises may be done from a standing or a seated position and modified to meet your individual needs. We always work as best we can, at a comfortable speed, and as your body allows.

As a starting point, we will breathe through each movement, slowly counting to four as you inhale and four as you exhale. These movements will become effortless and smooth with practice.

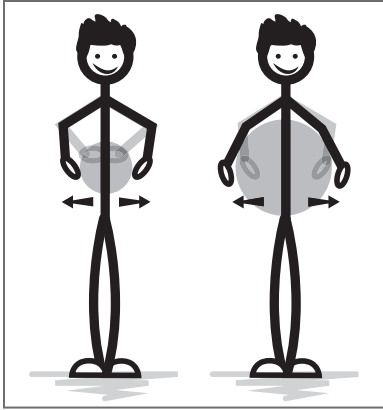
We always work as best we can, at a comfortable speed, and as your body allows.



Exercise 1:

Upward and Downward Movement of Energy

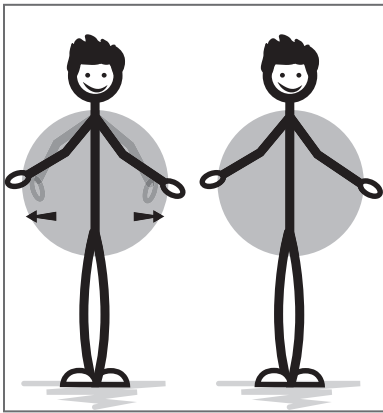
1. Begin in plumb-line.
2. Hold your arms comfortably out in front of your body, bringing your hands level with your navel, palms facing down and elbows and knees slightly bent.
3. Inhale for four counts as you slowly straighten your legs, elongating your torso, maintaining your plumb-line as best you can and allowing your arms to rise with your body. Your hands should be aligned with your eyes when your legs are almost straight. Your legs should never be completely straight during this sequence.
4. Before your legs are completely straight, exhale for four counts and begin to slowly bend your legs, your hands descending back to navel-height.
5. Bend your knees only slightly—these are not squats. We never want to put stress on the body or push past our comfort zone. When your knees are bent to a comfortable level and hands have returned to their starting point, begin the series again.
6. Repeat. Many people report feeling a magnetic force, a tingling feeling, or a breeze between their hands. This is energy.



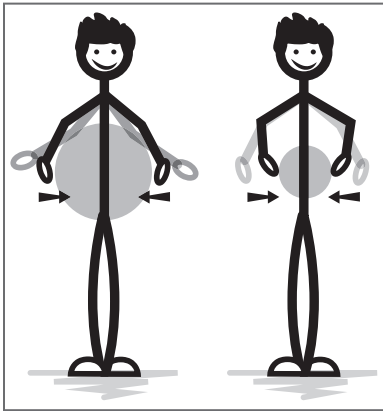
Exercise 2: Inward and Outward Movement of Energy

1. Begin in plumb-line.

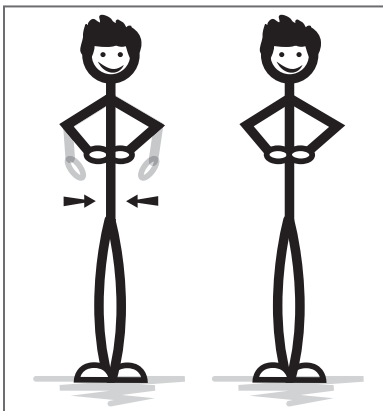
2. Hold your arms straight out in front of your body, bringing them into alignment with your chest. Elbows and wrists are bent and palms facing your body, as if you are holding a beach ball. Knees are slightly bent.



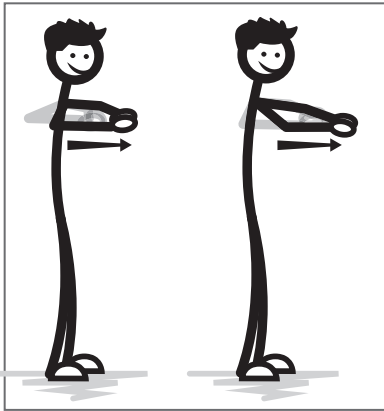
3. Inhale for four counts as you slowly move your upper body and arms outward, as if the beach ball is filling with air and increasing in size. Your hands should not pass much further than the sides of your body. Your legs will follow the same up and down movement as Exercise 1.



4. Exhale for four counts as you move your upper body back to plumb-line position, your arms returning as if your beach ball has deflated back to its original size.



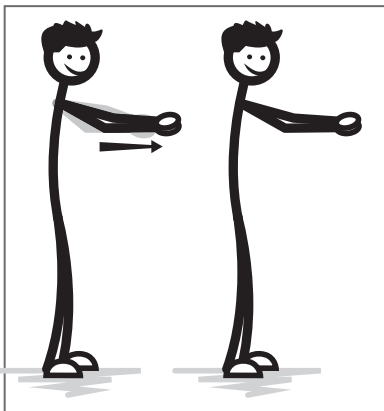
5. Repeat.



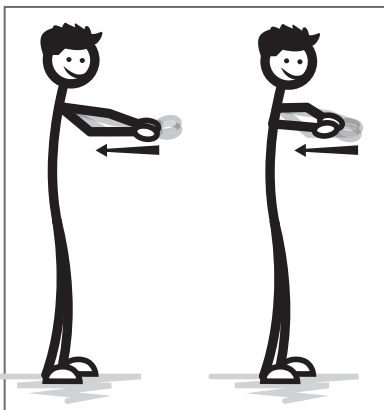
Exercise 3:

Forward and Backward Movement of Energy

1. Begin in plumb-line.

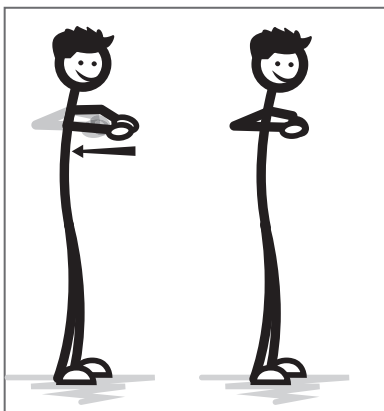


2. Hold your arms out in front of your body, bringing them into alignment with your chest, elbows and knees are slightly bent and palms are facing in as if you are holding a large ball.



3. Inhale for four counts and allow your arms to shift forward and straighten, as if you are showing the ball to a person standing across from you. Your upper body moves forward, your legs following the same up and down movement.

4. Exhale for four counts as you move your body back to plumb-line position, your arms moving backward to their starting point.



5. Repeat.

Exercise Notes:

It takes
time for
the basics,
the natural
synchronization
of the body
to reestablish
itself. Be
gentle with
yourself,
practice
sincerely.

What does this position feel like to me?

What do these stances feel like to me?
Correct / too far forward / too far back?

The Spiral Wave

"The most striking thing about spiral waves is that they seem to be alive. They're self-sustaining. They do not need pacemakers: A spiral wave is its own pacemaker."

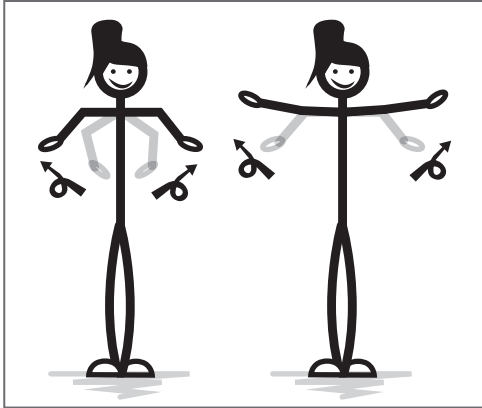
—Steven Strogatz,
Sync

Together, these three arm directions create a spiral wave. Moving in harmony with the inhale and exhale, the spiral wave is a reflection of your body's natural flow of energy, the shape of the energy that is constantly moving through your organs.

When you perform these movements together, moving upward, outward, and forward, you create a spiral wave. When you move downward, inward, and backward, you create a spiral wave in the opposite direction.

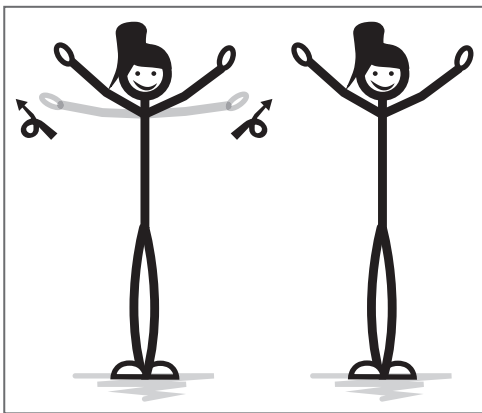
Spiral waves are now recognized to be a pervasive feature of all chemical, biological, and physical excitable media... heart muscle included.

—Steven Strogatz, Sync

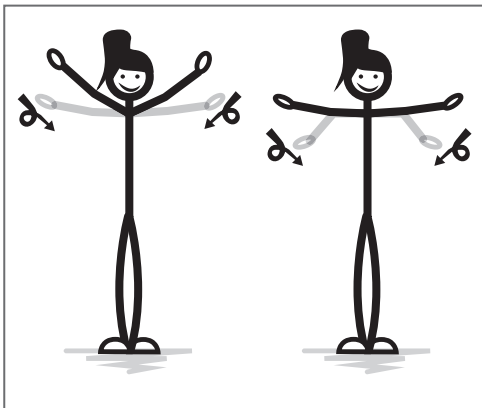


Exercise 4: The Spiral Wave

1. Begin in plumb-line.
2. When you preform the 3 movements upward, outward, and forward all together, you create spiral wave.

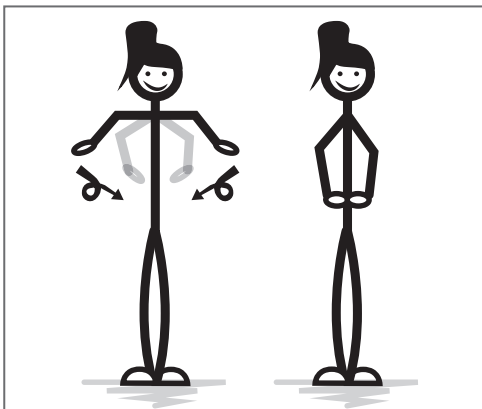


3. Inhale for four counts and allow your arms to rise as they move outward and forward at the same time.



4. Exhale for four counts, beginning with your hand, as you move your body back to plumb-line position.

5. Repeat.



Exercise Notes:

What do I feel during each of the first three exercises?

What do I feel during the spiral wave?

PART D:

Becoming Harmonized

*At the heart of
the universe is a
steady, insistent
beat: the sounds
of cycles in sync.*

*It pervades
nature at every
scale from the
nucleus to the
cosmos.*

—Steven Strogatz,

*Author of
“Sync”*

Setting Your Practice to Music

Your health depends on the networks and systems of your body working harmoniously in rhythm. Each and every part of your body, from your heart pacemaker cells to the biological oscillators in your brain, is constantly keeping a rhythm.

All forms of motion, from dance to sports to martial arts, express themselves through harmony. You don't need to be a master ballet dancer to find harmony, everyday actions like walking to the train or sitting at a desk are opportunities for harmonious movement. Harmony is simply moving with the natural spiral wave in your body, discord is fighting against it.

As we get better at feeling the movement of our energy, we can perform these same movements and sequences to music to take our practice to the next level. Many people find that practicing with meaningful and inspirational music helps in their pursuit of finding their energy and creating, improving, and maintaining a healthy body.

Oftentimes a phrase of music consists of four beats four times, or 16 total counts. This is known as a 4/4 time signature. Each motion we practice is four beats in and four beats out, repeat twice and you have this 16-count phrase.

Your health
depends
on the
networks
and systems
of your body
working
harmoniously
in rhythm.

Some people like to use show tunes with meaningful lyrics and a steady 4/4 beat: “I Sing The Body Electric” from Fame and “Seasons of Love” from Rent fit these criteria well.

If you enjoy classical music, you might try excerpts from Antonio Vivaldi’s The Four Seasons, Johann Sebastian Bach’s Brandenburg Concertos, or any favorite with a 4/4 beat. If you prefer rock, you can stick to the classics, The Beatles or The Rolling Stones, or choose any song from the radio like Pharrell Williams’ “Happy,” that inspires you and keeps a 4/4 beat.

Try moving through each of the four exercises from Part C using music that inspires you today. Here is a plan for 64 beats or 16 bars of music in 4/4 time.

*Many people find that
practicing with meaningful and
inspirational music helps...*