

Exercises for Self-Awareness and Observation of the Functioning and Capacities of the Pelvic Area

1. Pure Structure and Movement

Refer to the description of the pelvis in the “About the Pelvis” handout in doing the following exercise.

Look at yourself in a mirror in shorts, tights, underwear, or naked.

Looking at the front of your body, draw an imaginary line down the center through your navel. Notice any differences in size, shape, quality, or energy between the two sides. While standing naturally with your arms at your sides, note which, if any, of the following applies to you:

- One leg feels or appears to be longer than the other.
- One or both hips are turned, higher, or lateral. If turned, in what direction? Is one more turned than the other?

Next, look from a side view of yourself:

- Your pelvis is in front of or behind plumb line. Is it the same on both sides?
- Flat lower back or sway back. Is it the same on both sides?
- Any distortions in the position of your feet. Are they the same on both sides?

Finally, have a helper look at your spine while you are bent over with your hands and arms hanging toward the floor:

- Any distortions in the curves of your spine?

2. Observation of Others

Observe the pelvic area of other people in a number of different settings and activities, i.e. running, walking, at the gym, at the pool, dancing, ice skating, rollerblading, standing, etc. Notice any structural exaggerations or distortions. Observe any energetic or emotional qualities you notice that may or may not be related to these structural distortions.

As an experiment, imitate and assume the postures you see in others. Do you notice any energetic and emotional qualities that might be related to these postures? Some of the things you might notice are feeling: strong, powerful, vulnerable, centered, directed, unstable, hesitant, connected, an urge to express or create, locked up, fluid, unified, unbalanced, confident, stable, held back, insecure, outgoing, etc.

3. Body Sensing

Do these exercises only after doing #1 above.

Walk around for a few minutes and body sense your pelvis, your movement, and your posture. Next, lie on your back in the Constructive Rest position (see handout). Stay in this position for 10 minutes, relax into your pelvis, breathe into your center, and body sense this area. Slowly stand up. Body sense your pelvic area once you are standing and note any changes from before the exercise. After standing for a few minutes, walk naturally for a bit and again, notice your posture, how you feel in your pelvic area, how you move, and how your lower body moves in relation to your upper body, etc.

Stand sideways next to a wall. Balance yourself with your hand on the wall and swing the leg that is furthest from the wall front to back like a pendulum. Do this exercise on both sides. Some things you might notice are: looseness, balance, freedom of movement, flexibility, stiffness, weakness, more stretch forward or back, more mobility on one side than the other, one side stronger than the other, etc. Now, try this exercise WITHOUT balancing with your hand on the wall. You can stand near the wall to catch yourself if necessary, but you want to observe the qualities and capabilities of this area on its own, without the support. Notice the differences, if any, between using a support and not. If there is a book you can stand on you can try that for each of these as well; this will allow you to swing the leg freely without it dragging on the floor or needing to lift it slightly to avoid such dragging.

Body sense and self-observe how you use your pelvis in a variety of situations. Some of the possibilities are:

- Walking, hiking, or running on varying grades from flat to steep and with varying intensity from strolling to power walking to power hiking, jogging to sprinting; in different settings such as in nature versus in town; and on a variety of terrain such as concrete, pavement, dirt, gravel, etc.
- Dancing
- Making love
- Biking
- Swimming
- Standing after sitting down for a long period of time, such as at your desk, in your car, etc.
- Expressing your feelings, such as giving feedback, expressing excitement, offering an idea
- Asking for help

Record your responses. If possible, do these a number of times to see if, when and how your body sensations differ or change. Additionally, observe any outstanding thoughts or feelings that arise in these situations.