

I. CONSTRUCTIVE REST POSITION (CRP)



This is the main psoas release that we work with. It is a gravitational release of the psoas that allows the force of gravity to have its way with the contents of the trunk and the deep core.

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your heels situated 12 to 16 inches away from your pelvis, in line with your sit bones.
- You can tie a belt around the middle of the thighs. This is a good thing to do, especially if you are weak in the inner thighs. You want to be able to really let go here and not have to think too much about the position of your legs.
- Then do nothing. You want to allow the body to let whatever happens to it come and go. Discomfort arises from conditioned muscular patterns. Try to allow the body to release rather than shift or move when unpleasant sensations arise.
- You are hoping to feel sensation that is something you can sit with and allow it to pass.
- Try to do this for 15 minutes a day, twice a day—in the morning and at night. If you have time, longer sessions are advisable.

But we are not here to suffer. If sensations come up and you feel that you just have to move, feel free to move, then come back to where you were and try again. It's possible that you'll do this exercise and not feel anything; that is fine also.

II. PELVIC FLOOR/ KEGELS

The pelvic floor is a large sling, or hammock, of muscles stretching from side to side across the floor of the pelvis. It is attached to your pubic bone in front, and to the coccyx (the tail end of the spine) in back. Make sure not to use your butt muscles in any of these exercises.

Doing these exercises correctly will help you find the correct placement of the pelvis which is key to all of the work we are trying to do.

When you tone or lift the pelvic floor the energetic quality should be a free lift up the central channel of the spine. If your pelvis is tucked under it is likely that your pubic bone will interrupt or stop the lift of the pelvic floor. Likewise, if your pelvis is rotated too far backwards you might feel that the sacrum or the back of the pelvis stops the upward flow of the pelvic floor. You know your pelvis is in the right place if the lift of the pelvic floor goes straight up the front of the spine.

There are three layers to the pelvic floor. You are trying to find the top layer, just slightly above holding in your pee (it can be very subtle)

- Tone your pelvic floor muscles, hold for a count of five. Do in sets of ten.
- Tone and lift your pelvic floor slowly, trying to stop and start as you go up, like an elevator stopping on several floors.
- If that seems easy enough try doing the opposite, lifting the pelvic floor, holding it at the top and lowering it incrementally.
- Practice quick contractions, drawing in the pelvic floor and holding for just one second before releasing the muscles. Do these in a steady manner aiming for a strong contraction each time building up to a count of fifty.

III. FEET 3 INCHES OFF THE FLOOR



This exercise works the deep low belly muscle called the transverse abdominus. First, we're going to show how this muscle works and how another abdominal muscle, the rectus abdominus, works as well.

- Lie on your back on your mat. Bend your knees so that your feet are resting on the floor beneath your knees. Bring your hands onto the lower belly. Inhale and exhale. Inhale again and exhale but this time push the exhale at the end and see if you feel that your navel moves down to the spine and the muscle engagement is a feeling that wraps from the back to the front. Let that go.
- Now lift your head and shoulders and look at your knees. Here you should feel how when you lift the head and look at the knees, the belly pushes up into the fingers. Let the head release.

The first muscle that we engaged was called the transverse abdominus, a muscle that supports the lower back and wraps from the back to the front. The second muscle we engaged is called the rectus abdominus and connects the pelvis to the ribcage and moves in a direction straight up and down. We're going to try to isolate and engage only the deeper transverse muscle.

- Lift your right foot three inches off the floor and try to stabilize the spine as you lift the left foot three inches to meet it. Did the spine move up and the belly push up? Or did the spine actually stabilize and stay still? Release your feet.
- Starting with the second foot, lift the left foot three inches off the floor and lift the right foot three inches to meet it. Feel if the two sides were different.
- When lifting the feet without any movement in the belly or the spine becomes effortless and you can sustain it easily, bring the feet up to the height of the knees and parallel to the floor.
- When this becomes easy extend your knees forward two or three inches.

IV. BLOCK BETWEEN THE THIGHS ON THE FLOOR



- Lay on your back with the knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- Place a block between your inner thighs. Engaging the inner thigh muscles against the block try to isolate them and use the quadriceps, and outer thighs, as little as possible.
- Don't grip your buttocks.
- Lift the hips up and continue to squeeze the block, drawing the low belly in to stabilize the spine.
- Make sure you are lifting the hips up with a neutral spine and not by tucking under.
- Hold for a count of 10 breaths. Try to hold longer as you feel stronger. Hold for less if you need to. See if you can build up staying for three minutes.