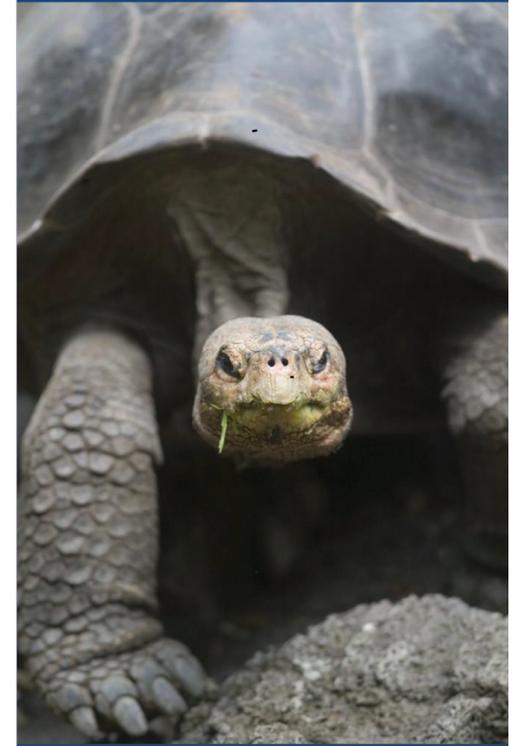


THE TENSEGRITY SERIES

THE POWER OF THE CURVE



Written, gathered and compiled by

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The Tensegrity Repair Series

This work is dedicated to Gioia Irwin for the gift of the Tensegrity Series.
To Swan of the Path Yoga Centre, and Chris Clancy, as their classes are an inspiration.

A deep thank you to all Yogi and Yogini friends who have generously allowed their feelings, thoughts and ideas to become part of this. Finding names for the individual movements was the brilliant idea of Marie Claude. Thank you to her and to the people who have helped name the individual movements of the series. A very special thanks to Alix Rodrigues of Green Room Yoga in Vancouver for the use of the photographs.

This book is the required final project of the three year Vijnana Yoga teacher training.
It is through the effort and insight of many people that it has grown into what it is today.

Things change, and so the intention is that this E-Guide can be adapted to reflect those changes. As new information becomes available, or if a certain component has lost its relevance, items can be added or deleted. With this in mind, please send in your thoughts, insights, and any information you come across. In this way the work stays current, and it will truly continue to be a reflection of our practice.

The material is organized in three sections:

1. General information and teaching points.
2. The specific movements explained.
3. Testimonials that give insight into the personal experience of those practicing the series.

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What is Tensegrity and why do we practice the series every day?

The word Tensegrity is a compound word from tensional and integrity.

Balanced tension in the muscles and fascia allow us to hold our shape with ease and grace.

We are stronger and more resilient, but work less.

In the simplest of terms we could say that our bodies are structures where tension is the primary force and compression is secondary.

Compression members in our bodies are the bones. They are spacers and provide the framework and an appropriate amount of rigidity and strength to maintain the structure.

Tensional elements are muscles, fascial connective tissue, tendons and ligaments. These make up a multi-dimensional network throughout the entire body wherein force can be transmitted with ease and resilience.

We require the right balance between structure/compression and tension/tissue. Balanced tension along the "anatomy trains" (see Thomas W. Myers website www.anatomytrains.com) comes through bringing awareness to the tips of the body, the magnets and to the core — by finding the bows, the nests, and the domes, and by letting the layers of the body slide.

Fascia is the soft tissue component of connective tissue.

Finding the TRUE range of motion in a given moment, during a specific movement, and then to find clarity about the sensations in the body — this is how we practice.

We look to keep the joints floating like a neutral zone, as in a canister, a balloon.

So Tensegrity applies to a balloon, three-dimensional anatomy, as well as to a line. (Mark Finch)

Interpenetration of fascia, from the outside of the body to the inside.

Fascia can contract, but it takes about 20 minutes and the contraction is miniscule.

Why should we make enquiries into the myofascial part of Yoga practice?

It helps us to find space, as we open the body, and as we release and break down the adhesions between and through the layers. This allows for the natural fluid state of the body to return. Once we feel in to the FLUID body, we can start to feel the sliding between the layers, from the skin down through the superficial fascia, deep fascia, muscles, bones, organs and so on.

It helps us find the balance between tension and compression, i.e. tensegrity, which gives us stability.

So, the Tensegrity Series is a sequence of movements designed to break down adhesions, rehydrate, tone, strengthen and bring more flexibility and function to the energy network of the body's connective tissue system.

“Imagine a cloverleaf at a highway junction. None of the roadways touch one another, the cars move freely along the lines. Over the years our fascial bands often sink into one another through inactivity, improper use, injury, emotional holding etc, in turn creating adhesions. The goal of practicing the Tensegrity Series is to loosen and separate the fascia lines from one another, so that “the cars”, the energy conduction can be appropriate, light, loose, easy. In this way proper connections can be made throughout the body.” — Gioia Irwin.

TEACHING POINTS

- Let the chi sink. How can we stay rounded and soft? Locked joints block the chi.
- At the beginning, lie down and establish the Radiant Breath. Feel this breath throughout the movements, as well as between the separate pieces.
- Always allow for a pause to find the 3 primary masses of the head, the rib cage and the pelvis. Let these masses have their bowling ball weight, completely relaxed and settled into the mat or block.
- Feel or the connections from the feet to the hands and the hands to the elbows, and find the rim of the feet. Notice that when these become clear how the whole body feels unified, connected. All the lines are clear, the joints line up and movement becomes even and symmetry is easier to find.
- Go slow to feel the connections in the body.
- Find the beaming heels, anchoring through the back of the body.
- Feel the willow branches of the toes, anchoring through the front of the body.
- Feel the heels, round, full, fluffy — like owl eyes.
- Feel the sliding of the layers (for more information see www.gilhedley.com).
- Keep the joints ‘boxed’ by sensing into the range of motion that feels appropriate in the moment and do not “push beyond what feels correct”.
- Never move one part of the body away from another. Always stay “threaded”, connected throughout the entire body, and if you lose it — pull back, find it and go again.

- When the joints remain inside their proper space, they are energy gates, open, yawning.
- Feel the leaning and rooting at three primary curves of the body:
 1. Back of the head.
 2. Middle back (ribcage and area between the shoulder blades).
 3. Three plates of the pelvis (two pelvic bones and sacrum).
- Feel the secondary curves of the spine, the back of the neck, and the low back.
- Moving through the arm lines, following the hands with the eyes, quiets the optic nerve and settles the nervous system.
- As we “arrange ourselves around the line” (Ida Rolf), we find equanimity, stillness, grace and resilience.
- Fifty percent of all the nerve tissue in the body connects the eyes to the brain; they are channels from the eyes to the brain.
- We can energize the “reins” around the iris, as these are a part of the Tensegrity web. The eyeball is suspended in four slings of supportive myofacial tissue, and there are three rings of muscle around the eyes.
- Feel for the funnels of the hands and find the feedback into the elbows. Feel the feet to knees connection. Find the stability of the 3rd heel. Then also notice the rooting back into the back, the area between the shoulder blades. This is always present during the practice.
- Use the crane lines to go up and down as though the torso is a cocoon, a box or a bottle, until you cannot go any further. Then engage the organs in support of the vertebra to complete the motion.

- Energy gets drawn in through the tips of the toes, the top of the head, the fingertips, and into the very marrow of our bones.
- Feel the brain relaxing, the jaws releasing, and the tongue soften, leaning into the roof of the mouth. Feel the chin release back into the back of the head. Rest into and onto the "jade pillow" (the diamond shaped energy centre at the base of the skull, soft, deep).
- The front arm line rests (not collapsed) into the back arm line and slides softly over it.
- Let the wrist joints be open, find a feeling of yawning, of soft space.
- Be very kind to yourself. Loving, caring.
- Let there be a lightness of being, as though you are a flower moving, swaying in a gentle summer breeze.
- Effortless effort.
- Cellular intelligence: a cell likes to take a tensegral form. It likes to stay in its original "full" form. Dr. Bruce Lipton, PhD, considers how we have two trillion cells and how each one is a sentient human organism.
- Always invite that beginner mind into the practice.
- Opening the heart, feel the roundness of love.
- When the body is light, when it moves with ease and we are in stillness, tensegrity expresses itself.
- Beaming the heel is a gentle reaching, allowing the light through. Think of a flashlight coming on when beaming the heels. A passage for the light, an anchor for the body.
- It is in the pauses where we understand, where truth is seen — viscerally, as well as intellectually.

- The funnels of the hands are like satellite dishes, beaoning energy in and out of the body. (Swan)
- When we feel a disturbance in the ribcage, it means that there is a disturbance in the back.
- We look for an evenness of tone, an appropriateness of tone, throughout the entire body.
- When the relationship between the diaphragm and the pelvic floor is uneven, the hip flexors will fire and we lift from these, i.e. the Psoas, Iliacus, etc., rather than feeling the lift come through the deep front line. We may lift the head, which is another indication of loss of connection with the deep front line, and then we are back into the hip flexors, and likely in discomfort.
- Jellyfish image - inhale into the domes, as though you are pulling water in and up and under, to create volume and a sense of expansion. Then contract inward through the exhalation to create velocity and thrust.
- Not all joints have the same range of motion. We can learn where there is neutral space in each joint.
- Myofascial tissue is not like elastic. It does not readily spring back. Therefore, the practice needs to be deep and slow. We need to “be” with it, yield into it, and in this way our practice becomes a moving prayer.
- In the beginning, it is mentally taxing, but as the practice deepens it becomes very calming.
- This is a spiritual practice. (Swan)
- We find equanimity, stillness and grace.
- Notice how the bones feel light, as though suspended and floating in the tensile web of support.
- Work with the 70% rule which ensures we remain relaxed, at ease and safe.

- At all times, attempt to keep the eyes wide and soft.
- Be aware of the ribs and belly, and allow them to stay quiet, dropped down, not “propped”.
- Look for the space and the sense of the length between the floating ribs and the hips.
- Use toe spreaders (Joy-a-Toes; www.joyatoes.com) and relax the feet. Bring awareness to the tips of the toes, to the pads of the toes.
- Feel the bubbling spring points draw in as the heels beam and the toes round down a bit.
- Think of the heels as having a dilating and beaming quality. They are round and fluffy, as are the toe pads.
- Have a sense of the front of the ankle yawning. It is like "Tadasana" when you get that.
- Rooting down (lean), gives rebound, and when working together these two forces allow for yielding. As we practice the Tensegrity Series, this quality of yielding becomes embodied in the asana practice.
- Stay relaxed, open and connected to the vertical and horizontal lines. We find the vertical line by feeling the snaps, i.e. the magnets of the inner ankles knees, and groins. We can connect into the horizontal bar through streaming awareness to the magnets in the inner elbows, and by feeling our eyes soft and wide, softly reaching for the temples. The more these lines find their quality and their proper place, the better the energy can flow.
- Horizontal strength comes through the cobra hood, the turtle back. But first, and always, find and establish the connections through the vertical lines from the feet up, then horizontal balance follows easily.
- We have “avalanches” in the body which block the flow. These are places where the tissue layers are stuck together. Keep working to become aware of and penetrate these blockages.
- Lean the body, reach the index finger, wriggle the finger tips, wriggle the toes — because when we do this, connections into the body become clear, energetically as well as physically.

- Rest into the fascial web as though you are releasing the weight of your body into a hammock.
- Always be aware of feeding back into the "sacred centre". Magnets to core, then feel into the nests.
- The series is a tonification for the nervous system, as there are lots of nerve cells in fascia.
- The brain thinks of the body in terms of movement patterns, not in terms of individual muscles.
- In order to change old patterns that are no longer beneficial, we need to change the sensory input between the brain and rest of the body
- As we practice, we find the true range of motion in a given moment and during a specific movement. By attuning ourselves to the sensations in the body, we find clarity and a sense of stillness.
- Ways to maintain the soft and yielding quality in the body:
 1. Keep the body moving.
 2. Allow these movements to be fluid, coordinated and coherent.
 3. Keep the passageways of the body clear and open.
 4. Do not lose the cohesiveness of the whole body layers by stretching one part of the body away from another part.
 5. Slowing down maximizes the exchange of information between cells.
 6. The quality of the breath is an important factor in the overall health of the body.

For more information about the vayus please see "Vayu's Gate" by Orit Sen-Gupta
www.vijnanayoga.org

THE TENSEGRITY SERIES

These movements can function as foundation for all asanas; each section suggests a few asanas which the particular movement supports.

Pose 1	Name Canoe Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Check In pose to see how the body is moving and to put things into place. Surrendering chi, “yawning” of the feet, plates of the pelvis, shoulder blades.</p> <p>With toe-spreaders, relax feet and bring awareness to the tips of the toes. Beaming heels, the circumference of the heel has a dilating, beaming quality. The tendency is to tighten.</p> <p>Place a tensegrity block under the sacral area. Feel the front ankle yawning. Tadasana when you get it.</p> <p>Stay relaxed, open and connected to the vertical and horizontal lines by finding the magnets between the inner ankles, knees, groins and inner elbows. The more these lines find their quality, the more the energy can flow. Myofascial lines are what threads the joints of your vertical and horizontal lines.</p> <p>Find the nests in the groins and shoulders.</p>	<p>Elbows threaded as you wiggle the fingers.</p> <p>Arms/hands follow legs up and down. Arms and legs can move in opposite directions as well.</p> <p>Bend the knees slightly to find the bows of the legs.</p> <p>Elbows threaded and connected.</p>	<p>Eyes are relaxed.</p>	<p>Apana Vayu Samana Vayu Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Deep Front Line All Arm Lines Superficial Back and Front Lines Functional Lines</p>	<p>All asanas</p>

Pose 1	Name Canoe Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>There are "avalanches" in the body which block the flow. Keep working to penetrate these blockages.</p> 					

Pose 2	Name Sacral Smile I Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Twists</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Move hands with arms, keeping knees bent.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Move head with the vertical lines along with the knees.</p> <p>Feel the separation and connection of vertical, lateral and horizontal lines; at the same time feel the connection between these lines.</p> <p>Do 15 to 40 rolls.</p> 	<p>Use both dowels.</p> <p>One leaning between the “eyes” of the hands, threading the elbows.</p> <p>Lean the elbows toward each other, finding the tips of the fingers.</p> <p>The other dowel behind the knees, leaning the inner knee and ankle points, so that there is the Tadasana quality to the knees.</p> <p>Try not to straighten anything.</p>	<p><u>Beginners</u> Eyes relax.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Eyes are in line with the vertical line, and move with the knees.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu</p>	<p>Spiral Lines</p> <p>Lateral Lines</p> <p>Deep Front Line</p> <p>Arm Lines</p>	<p>Tadasana</p> <p>Marichyasanas</p> <p>Parsva Bakasana</p> <p>All Parivrttas</p>

Pose 3	Name Sacral Smile II Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Snap up points along big toe line, inner knees and groins into abdomen.</p> <p>Align the horizontal and vertical lines into superficial front and back lines.</p> <p>Feed into the latissimus dorsi - really concentrating on the many layers of the back muscles. Kite-like quality to the back body. Feel the nests in groins and shoulders.</p> <p>Work only 70% NO further.</p> <p>Do 15 to 30 rolls.</p>	<p>Move arms and legs in opposite directions.</p> <p>Lean dowel into “eyes” of the hands, with threaded elbows.</p> <p>Find the fingertips, leaning elbows toward each other, trying not to straighten anything.</p>	<p><u>Beginners</u> Eyes relax.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Eyes are in line with the vertical line and move with the knees.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu</p> <p>Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Superficial Front and Back Lines</p> <p>Arm/Spiral / Lateral Lines</p>	<p>As in #2</p> <p>Jathara Parivartanasana</p>
					

Pose 4	Name Beaming Heel Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>As in #1, this helps to put everything back into place. Head rests into the "sling" formed by the hands and arms; no pulling or straining, sinking the chi.</p> <p>Elbows leaning, really pay attention to separateness and connectedness of the vertical and horizontal lines. This pose really establishes the vertical line. Beaming the heel connect you to the back line. Connect through all five toe lines (bows of the toes) a beaming quality of the feet Yawning ankles, evenness of the toes.</p> <p>Do each side twice to the count of 20.</p> 	<p>Arms and hands cradle the head; head leans into the sling of arms without straining the neck Shoulder nests yawning.</p>	<p>The eyes follow the foot (or beyond when the foot is on the floor) and to the navel. Count 1, 2 - look away. Count 3, 4 - look at navel. Count 5, 6 - look away</p>	<p>Prana Vayu Udana Vayu</p>	<p>Deep Front Line Superficial Back Line</p>	<p>All transitions of standing poses Eka Pada Ardha Navasana Eka Pada Bakasana I + II Adho Mukha Vrksasana</p>

Pose 5	Name Swinging Gate Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>This pose is about warming up the lines through the whole circumference of the body.</p> <p>Feel the fullness of the back ribs.</p> <p>Feel the threads of the cocoon body, of the shape of the whole torso being like a cocoon. Feel the strength of the threads of the cocoon. Do not disturb the cocoon.</p> <p>Feel the swooshing quality of the myofascial lines of the body.</p> <p>Connect through all four sides of the body.</p> <p>20 – 40 counts each side.</p>	<p><u>Beginners</u> Take ribs and lean ribs down OR hold dowel between “eyes” of the palms of the hands.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Catch ribs, take fingers and wrap around lower ribs, thumbs on top and pulling down a bit.</p>	<p>Open the eyes to the count of two and close the eyes to the count of two, having a sense of opening the eyes wide without bulging or hardness.</p> <p>Bring awareness to the orbital muscles which are part of the upper and lower eyelid, and feel the aperture quality of them opening and closing.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu</p> <p>Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Deep Front Line</p> <p>Superficial Back and Front Lines</p> <p>Lateral Lines</p>	<p>All leg stretches.</p> <p>Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana</p> <p>Virabhadrasana III</p> <p>Uttanasana</p>
					

Pose 6	Name Seesaw Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>This pose helps with the lines that move diagonally across the body. A yawning quality to the feet (toes, ankles, arches). Toe spreaders spread out the sides of the toes; toes wrap around toe spreaders in a nice relaxed way.</p> <p>On the bottom of the foot, at the place in the midpoint between heel and ball of foot (about 1 ½" from "Bubbling Springs" in the centre of the arch) is a yawning quality as well.</p> <p>10 – 20 counts</p> 	<p>The arm "saws" forward as the leg comes up, and backward as the legs goes down.</p>	<p>The eyes follow the hand as it moves forward, the elbow as the arm goes backward</p>	<p>Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Spiral Lines Arm Lines Deep Front Line Functional Lines</p>	<p>All twists Parsva Bakasana</p>

Pose 7	Name Three Heels Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>As in #6.</p> <p>Keep yawning quality of the feet. Catch and lean lower foot into floor.</p> <p>10 – 20 counts.</p> 	<p>Arms support head and stabilize the body as in the photo.</p>	<p>Eyes follow foot up, and as the foot comes down look past the foot. Or look from floor to ceiling with motion of the leg.</p>	<p>Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Spiral Lines</p> <p>Lateral Lines</p> <p>Deep Front Line (BTL)</p>	<p>Vasisthasana II</p> <p>Visvamitrasana</p> <p>Anantasana</p>

Pose 8a, b	Names Roll Ups Pose I & Roll Ups Pose II				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Roll Ups — rolling bum up off the floor a bit. Reaching many layers of intrinsic back muscles. The vertical and horizontal lines.</p> <p>Dowel behind knees. Leaning points between inner knees, toes, ankles connected. Groin and shoulder nests.</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Do 10-30 of each, with knees bent, and feet and legs up.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Do 20-30 of each, with knees bent, and feet and legs up.</p> <p>Don't make it a goal to touch the knees to the elbows, although with practice that will happen.</p> <p>Feel pulsating opening-expanding and closing-shrinking quality (like the basic movement of a cell).</p> <p>Body does the movement with knees bent as well as with knees straight(ish).</p>	<p>Arms and hands as in #4, cradling the head.</p> <p>The head leans into the sling of the arms without straining through the neck and jaw.</p>	<p>Eyes closed.</p>	<p>Apana Vayu</p> <p>Samana Vayu</p>	<p>Deep Front Line</p> <p>Superficial Front and Back Lines</p> <p>Arm Lines</p>	<p>Forward folds and backbends</p> <p>Dwi Pada Supta Vajrasana</p>

Pose 8a, b	Names Roll Ups Pose I & Roll Ups Pose II				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
					

Pose 9a, b, c	Names Scissors Pose I, Scissors Pose II, Scissors Pose III				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Legs</u> Thinking of the knees. Even though the legs are apart, there is an energetic/magnetic connection of leaning the inner knees together to help keep the connection to the deep front line, which dives into the perineum and up through the centre of the body. Fingers relaxed and leaning into floor (lotus hand mudra).</p> <p>Use tensegrity block under sacral area.</p> <p>Do 20 -30 of each different arm movement.</p> <p>Do the three different arm movements with legs as explained.</p> <p>With beginners legs only at first, do arms separately and then start to integrate them after about a month.</p>	<p><u>Three different arm movements.</u> Beginners do first one only, with arms in Setu Bandha position.</p> <p>Arms above the head, elbows leaning toward each other, finger and thumb tips on the floor in lotus hand mudra.</p> <p>This helps to open up the cobra hood of the horizontal lines. Palming - hands over eyes.</p> <p>(9a Pose: eyes can open and receive warmth and energy or they can be closed.)</p>	<p><u>For Scissors I</u> The head stays still and the eyes look to the left and right through the windows formed by the arms.</p> <p><u>For Scissors II + III</u> Let the eyes look left and then to the right with each count rolling the head.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Superficial Front and Back Lines</p> <p>Deep Front Line</p> <p>Arm Lines</p> <p>Functional Lines</p>	<p>Eka Pada Sirsasana</p> <p>Eka Pada Sarvangasana</p> <p>If you have less time for the practice you may consider #1, #2 and #9 a, b + c</p>

<p>Groin and shoulder nests.</p> 					
<p>Do additional arm and leg movements as follows: lower and raise right arm and right leg in synchronicity, then left arm and left leg. Alternate sides. Head rolls from side to side toward the upper arm. Keep ribs and belly still. No strain anywhere, so do less if tightening occurs (70%!).</p> <p>Groin and shoulder nests.</p> 	<p>Head rolls toward the arm that goes up above the head.</p>	<p>As head rolls side to side the eyes gaze at the wall on that side of the room.</p> <p>Note: if there is a wall on one side and a window on the other there is the added benefit for the eyes to dilate and expand between the light outside and the dark inside.</p>	<p>Apana Vayu Samana Vayu</p>	<p>Superficial Front and Back Lines Deep Front Line Arm Lines Functional Lines</p>	<p>Eka Pada Sirsasana Eka Pada Sarvangasana</p> <p>If you have less time for the practice you may consider: #1, #2 and #9a, b + c</p>



<p>Head rolls toward the arm that goes up above the head.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>Apana Vayu Samana Vayu</p>	<p>Superficial Front and Back Lines Deep Front Line Arm Lines Functional Lines</p>	<p>Eka Pada Sirsasana Eka Pada Sarvangasana If you have less time for the practice you may consider #1, #2 and #9 a, b + c</p>
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Pose 10	Name				
Cricket Pose					
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>People with weakness in the lower back, take angle up more (keep feet higher). Look for the nests.</p> <p>Very good pose for the knees. Thread knee joints.</p> <p>Slide heels away and back to the torso on an even line (more like a locomotive wheel rather than a bicycle wheel).</p> <p>20 – 60 counts (one leg movement is one count).</p> 	<p>Arms and hands in position for palming the eyes, with palms cupped sufficiently so you can open the eyes and even blink with the eyes open. The heat and energy from the hands can penetrate the eyes.</p>	<p>Eyes should be in total darkness and fully relaxed.</p> <p>Feel the tunnel of the eyes open right through to the brain.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu</p>	<p>Deep Front Line</p> <p>Superficial Back Line</p>	<p>All asanas that involve leg extension</p>

Pose 11a, b	Names Butterfly Pose, Side Angle Butterfly Pose (when pelvis is to one side)				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Advanced only</u> Keep hands on the eyes, palming them. Roll pelvis to side on a tilt. Butterfly legs on the left side. Tilt to the other side and butterfly legs on the right side. Butterfly legs in the centre, rest lifted head in interlaced hands.</p>	Arms and hands as above.	Eyes should be in total darkness	Apana Vayu Samana Vayu	Deep Front Line Lateral Lines	Forward folds and backbends Hip openers
<p>11b:</p> <p><u>Beginners, Intermediate + Advanced</u> Butterfly legs to centre.</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Rest hands on belly or lower ribs. Do this without tension in the shoulders.</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Pay attention to keeping the feet connected.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Don't pay attention to keeping the feet together. They will separate naturally. Let the back of the lower leg and upper leg have a magnetic seal.</p> <p>20 – 60 counts at each position (three positions).</p>	<p>Rest hands on belly or touch lower ribs.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Hold the back of the skull as in #8.</p>	<p>Kurma Vayu.</p> <p>Roll the eyes toward the brow. You can still blink without disturbing the gaze.</p> <p>Very good for strengthening the “reins” of the eyes.</p>	Apana Vayu Samana Vayu	Deep Front Line Lateral Lines	As above

Pose 11a, b	Names Butterfly Pose, Side Angle Butterfly Pose (when pelvis is to one side)				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
					

Pose 12	Name Whale Tail Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Straighten legs up and then bend at the knees, bringing the feet up and down. Maintain magnetic knees throughout.</p> <p>20 – 60 counts.</p> 	<p><u>Beginners</u> Hold onto the thighs and roll them in as you straighten and bend the legs.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Catch ribs; take fingers and lean them into the under side of the ribcage as in #5.</p>	<p>Open and close the eyes to a count of two, having a sense of opening the eyes wide without bulging or hardness.</p> <p>Bring awareness to the orbital muscles which are part of the upper and lower eyelid, and feel the aperture quality of them opening and closing.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Superficial Front and Back Lines Deep Front Line</p>	<p>Squat Uttanasana Utkatasana</p>

Pose 13	Name Sacral Smile I				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>REPEAT #2</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Move hands with arms, keeping knees bent.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Move head with the vertical lines along with the knees.</p> <p>Feel the separation and connection of vertical, lateral and horizontal lines; at the same time feel the connection between these lines.</p> <p>20 – 40 counts.</p> 	<p>Use both dowels.</p> <p>One leaning between the “eyes” of the hands, threading the elbows.</p> <p>Lean the elbows toward each other, finding the tips of the fingers.</p> <p>The other dowel behind the knees, leaning the inner knee and ankle points, so that there is the Tadasana quality to the knees.</p> <p>Try not to straighten anything.</p>	<p><u>Beginners</u> Eyes move with the hands and arms.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Eyes move with knees.</p>	<p>Apana Vayu</p> <p>Samana Vayu</p>	<p>Spiral Lines</p> <p>Funtional Lines</p> <p>Lateral Lines</p>	<p>Tadasana</p> <p>Marichyasanas</p> <p>Parsva Bakasana</p> <p>All Parivrttas</p>

Pose 14	Names Jelly Fish Pose I and II				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> No block under pelvis. Come into a neutral position with arms and legs in “dead dog” position. Arms and legs open to the sides at the same time. Then alternate arms and legs. 15 – 20 counts for each position.	Make a “V” shape with arms and legs.	Relax eyes.	Apana Vayu Samana Vayu	Lateral Lines Deep front Line	Variation leg stretches Supta Konasana Upavistha Konasana

Pose 15	Name Roll Ups Pose III				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>REPEAT #8 roll ups.</p> <p>This time transitioning from bent leg to straight. When you move the head/torso back down the legs bend, when you approach the elbows to knees the legs straighten.</p> <p>15 – 40 counts.</p> 	<p>Arms and hands as in #4, cradling the head.</p> <p>The head leans into the sling of the arms without straining through the neck and jaw.</p>	<p>Eyes closed.</p>	<p>Apana Vayu Samana Vayu</p>	<p>Deep Front Line Superficial Front and Back Lines Arm Lines</p>	<p>Sirsasana Cycle Sarvangasana Cycle</p>

Pose 16	Name Cobra Hood Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Note</u> Sink chi down into three main leaning points: back of skull, thoracic spine and pelvis (for beginners, the feet on the floor are the fourth leaning point).</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> No block under pelvis, knees bent, feet rooting into floor.</p> <p><u>Intermediate</u> Place block under pelvis, tilt to right lean into right hip and lengthen left hip away from ribs (10 - 15 repetitions of arms). Repeat on left side.</p> <p><u>Advanced</u> Do as above with legs up, resting on right hip, looking for the space between ribs and hip, legs at a small angle. 15 – 20 each side. Repeat on left side.</p>	<p>Dowel between hands in namaste position. Hands midpoint of dowel. Dowel parallel to floor, move back and forth, forearms parallel to floor.</p>	<p>Eyes follow pole front to back.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu Prana Vayu Udana Vayu</p>	<p>All Arm Lines Functional Lines</p>	<p>Hand balances Dwi Pada Koundinyasana</p>

Pose 16	Name Cobra Hood Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
					

Pose 17	Name Chopping Wood Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Beginners</u> No block, feet on the floor.</p> <p><u>Intermediate & Advanced</u> Use block.</p> <p><u>Intermediate</u> "Butterfly legs", find beaming heels and big toes touching.</p> <p><u>Advanced</u> Legs up into wide "V" shape (Upavistha Konasana).</p> <p>15 – 40 counts.</p>	<p>Pole between hands, make chopping wood motion with arms, moving pole from above the head to between the legs.</p> <p>Elbows have a sense of leaning toward each other to open cobra hood/turtle back.</p> <p>Feel the width of the collarbones.</p>	<p>Eyes follow the dowel.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu</p> <p>Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Arm Lines</p> <p>Lateral Lines</p> <p>Deep Front Line</p> <p>Functional Lines</p>	<p>Hand and arm balances.</p> <p>Prasarita Padottanasana Cycle</p> <p>Upavistha Konasana</p>
					

Pose 18	Name Owl Wings Pose I				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Beginners</u> No block under pelvis.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Place block under pelvis.</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Start with bent legs, feet to the floor. 10 - 15 repetitions of arms.</p> <p><u>Intermediate</u> Tilt to right leaning into right hip, lengthen left hip away from ribs. 15 - 20 repetitions of arms. Repeat on left side.</p> <p><u>Advanced</u> Do as above (Intermediate) with legs up and inner knees touching, leaning on right hip, lengthening the upper hip away. Let the lower leg separate from the knees to the feet. Bows of the feet, and magnets. 15 - 20 repetitions of arms. Repeat on left side.</p>	<p>Chin Mudra hands. Palms facing away from face. Open arms out and back up, 15 to 20 counts on right hip and same count on left (one count is when arm moves down and up).</p>	<p>Eyes follow the hands by focusing on one hand and following it down and up, then switching to the other hand and following it down and up.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Arm Lines</p>	<p>Hand and arm balances. Standing poses.</p>

Pose 18	Name Owl Wings Pose I				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
					

Pose 19	Name Owl Wings Pose II				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Beginners</u> No block under pelvis.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Place block under pelvis.</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Start with bent legs, feet to the floor. 10 - 15 repetitions of arms.</p> <p><u>Intermediate</u> Tilt to right leaning into right hip, lengthen left hip away from ribs. 15 - 20 repetitions of arms. Repeat on left side.</p> <p><u>Advanced</u> Do as above (Intermediate) with legs up and inner knees touching, leaning on right hip, lengthening the upper hip away. Let the lower leg separate, from the knees to the feet. Bows of the feet, and magnets. Repeat on left side. 15 - 20 repetitions of arms.</p>	<p>Chin Mudra hands. Open arms out and back up as above, 15 - 20 counts. Palms facing wall behind you. There is a sharpness and a resistance that comes from the outer hand to the outer elbows as they gather toward each other.</p>	<p>Eyes follow the hands, by focusing on one hand and following it down and up, then switching to the other hand and following it down and up.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Arm Lines</p>	<p>Hand and arm balances.</p>

Pose 20	Name Full Moon Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Beginners</u> No block, but can do if it feels good.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u> Block under pelvis.</p> <p>Start with knees bent, feet rooting into the floor.</p> <p><u>Advanced</u> Root the feet and lift the pelvis off the block a few inches, dropping the chi through the belly, the buttocks, the thighs.</p>	<p>Hands in Chin mudra. Arms make elliptical circle, hands touching thumb side above the face and pinky side above the belly.</p> <p>Start small and make it bigger over time.</p> <p>The tendency is to go really wide and we are not able to get to refined movement and to deeper muscles when we go too deep too fast.</p>	<p>Eyes follow the hands by focusing on left hand, following it down to where it meets the right. Switch eyes to right hand follow it up to where it meets left. Working in a circle counter-clockwise for 10 to 20 and clockwise for 10 to 20.</p>	<p>Udana Vayu Samana Vayu Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Deep Front Line Arm Lines</p>	<p>Hand and arm balances Setu Bandha</p>

Pose 21	Name Mortar and Pestle Pose I				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Pelvis on the block.</p> <p>Knees up.</p> <p>The back of the upper legs and lower legs are sealed together.</p> 	<p>Take the hands to the knees, open up the “tigers mouth” position of index finger and thumb.</p> <p>Lean the hands into the knees and knees into the hands.</p> <p>Make a circle with the knees rotating them both inwards 10 – 20 time then rotate them both outwards 10 – 20 times.</p>		<p>Samana Vayu</p> <p>Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Arm Lines</p> <p>Deep Front Line</p> <p>Functional Line</p>	<p>Hip openers</p>

Pose 22	Name Mortar and Pestle Pose II				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Lie on left side, inner feet are together and knees can be slightly apart, legs extending out like the "dying Buddha" pose (beginners knees can be together and more bent), feeling the connection and strength of the vertical line.</p> <p>Rest head into the crook of the left arm, fingers wrapping around the head to find the occiput.</p> <p>Have a sense of the left ribs lifting away from the floor without tensing or "holding".</p> <p>This one gives a deeper understanding of what is going on in the shoulder joints and you can feel the inactive zones of the musculature in the armpit.</p> <p>Switch sides.</p>	<p>Right arm floats up, hand in Chin Mudra.</p> <p>Fingertips draw small circles in the air, feeling for smoothness through the shoulder.</p> <p>Start small and grow bigger if it stays smooth.</p> <p>Feel for evenness in "reins" of fingers all the way through core of the body.</p> <p>Circle first clockwise 10 – 20 times, then switch to other direction 10 – 20 times.</p>	<p>Use inner vision to keep the circle very round.</p> <p>Eyes stay relaxed.</p>	<p>Samana Vayu</p> <p>Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Arm Lines</p> <p>Lateral Lines</p> <p>Deep Front Line</p>	<p>Vasisthasana I</p> <p>Hand and arm balances</p>

Pose 23a	Name Ekapada Sutpa Virasana				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p><u>Beginners</u> Sit on block and fold the leg under. Don't lose the bow of the Virasana ankle. You can stay in this seated position with a block under the pelvis. Hands on floor behind you.</p> <p>If you are able to lie down take short dowel between hands, leaning "eye" of the hands into pole. Elbows can be on the floor or over the head (like in photo) or somewhere in between, just make sure you keep the magnetic elbows. Head on block (or not). If lying down roll head side to side, slowly. Switch to the other leg, repeat.</p>	<p>Leaning hands, threading elbows as you lean into the eye of the hand, finding elbow magnets.</p>		<p>Udana Vayu Prana Vayu</p>	<p>Lateral Lines Spiral Lines</p>	<p>Elbow balance Backbends</p>

Pose 23b	Name Ekapada Sutpa Virasana				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Not for beginners.</p> <p>Start sitting on block, taking left knee down and bending so that the top left toes can connect into floor. Left knee can stay floating. Place hands on floor (fingers pointing to feet), bring elbows to floor and then the torso eventually. Beam the left heel.</p> <p>If you can lie down with head on block do so. Take short dowel between hands and take overhead resting fingertips on the floor. Find elbow magnets, roll head side to side.</p> <p>Switch to other side.</p>	As above.	As above.	Samana Vayu Prana Vayu	Arm Lines Deep Front Line Superficial Front Line	Elbow balance Backbends
					

Pose 23c	Name Jade Pillow				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Lie down with head on block, feet on the floor, knees bent, hip distance apart.</p> <p>Take short dowel between hands and take overhead leaning fingertips to the floor.</p> <p>Do not lose the threading of the shoulders and arms. The fingertips do not have to be on the floor if this makes you lose the threading.</p> <p>Find elbow magnets, roll head side to side.</p>	As above.	As above.	Samana Vayu Prana Vayu	Arm Lines Deep Front Line Superficial Front Line	Elbow balance Backbends

Pose 24a, b, c	Names Seed Pod, Paripurna Navasana, Ardha Navasana				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Wrapping arms around knees, feet off the floor.</p> <p><u>Beginners</u> Lift lower legs a bit and let the arms float up to knee level. Bows of the feet.</p> <p><u>Intermediate + Advanced</u></p>	Palms are facing, elbow magnets, fingertips awake.	Soft eyes.	Apana Vayu Samana Vayu Prana Vayu Udana Vayu	Arm Lines Deep Front Line Superficial Back Line	Navasana poses.

Pose 24a, b, c	Names Seed Pod, Paripurna Navasana, Ardha Navasana				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Let the legs float up higher.</p> <p><u>Advanced</u> Lower legs, telescoping them long, yawning behind the knees (hover above the floor) and simultaneously let the torso lower down a bit, finding the sacrum, letting the neck stay relaxed and long/wide. Feel the front of the body rest softly into the back slings of the torso as the arms have a gentle reach (through the index fingers primarily).</p> <p>Maintain the magnetic knees throughout.</p> <p>Do three at each position.</p> 					

Pose 24a, b, c	Names				
Seed Pod, Paripurna Navasana, Ardha Navasana					
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
					
					

Pose 25	Name Spinal Wave Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>On hands and knees, moving the knees a bit behind the hips. Feel tops of feet tugging and heels beaming. Notice the fingertips (tugging) and heels of the hands. Move pelvis back towards the heels to open the kite of the back body. As you come forward starting at the base of the spine, move each vertebra one by one into a spinal extension to the last vertebra, the skull. Then, leading with the sitting bones roll back, vertebra by vertebra to kite position (spinal flexion). Let yourself teeter-totter back and forth four or five times.</p> <p>Start with small motion, gradually enlarging, keep the belly up. Feel the spine round as you go back - exhaling, and let it arch a bit as you come forward - inhaling. A little more each time, until you are almost in Balasana as you go back, and then finding Urdhva Mukha Svanasana as you come forward. Notice how the weight comes through the hands as you come forward and how weightless the hands become as you go back. Keep the neck soft and wide and long, the shoulders relaxed.</p>	<p>The hands have their bows, feeling the “gumdrop” fingertips, the heels of the hands.</p> <p>Elbows are threaded, magnets.</p>	<p>Soft eyes.</p>	<p>Apana Vayu Samana Vayu Prana Vayu Udana Vayu</p>	<p>Arm Lines Deep Front Line Superficial Front and Back Lines Functional Lines</p>	<p>For all asanas, specifically warm-up for backbends</p>

Pose 25	Name Spinal Wave Pose				
Body	Arms	Eyes	Vayus	Anatomy Trains	Asanas
<p>Feel yourself slowly undulating along your spine.</p> 					

To end the practice come into Balasana and take five Radiant Breaths, arms and hands resting on the floor above head, index fingers and thumbs are touching to form diamond shape.

TESTIMONIALS

MICHAEL BUSHBY

The Tensegrity Repair Series has been pivotal for me, because my practice has been tuned, or the repair series showed me, like a mirror, the truth. The series gives a sense of looking through a looking glass.

It shows the truth. The truth about how external my practice was. It wasn't an internal practice to the degree that the repair series has been my guide and map into the poses. The asana practice was more like an art painting I could only observe from a distance, and it was the practice of the series that invited me inside.

The Tensegrity Series is no less powerful than the asana practice for me. This is where I do most of my gardening. I pull weeds, plant seeds, have fun with my curvy rows. It's my tool kit! My dictionary, my lexicon, my thesaurus for understanding Gioia's language, asana language.

MICHELLE SCHROEDER

It feels for me very opening, internal, slippery, deep.

My focus for this training was to go deeper and I found that since we left last June I am traveling inside to places that are deeper, like the depths of a lake. The series allows me to feel spacious within and connected, and I can *identify* with that which I am really made of, what I am.

The Tensegrity Repair Series gives me a protective barrier and keeps me grounded in my space, and I don't take on others energies. Through the series I have found deeper layers in my scoliosis, and as I work deeper, things I have held in my body have come up. Memories have been released as well.

It has been nice because I can just let stuff rise to the surface, let it pass through, release any emotion that comes up and let it all go by, and just be with that. The Tensegrity work helps keep that sense of observing the emotion and stay detached.

KAREN RIDEOUT

I love it in a way. The effect it has on me is dual. There is a physical benefit and there is a meditative, energetic side to it. Both are supportive of the asana practice.

I was away for five years with a hip injury and when I came back to The Path, Tensegrity was becoming part of the classes. I started doing the series daily for a good year, and I feel it has changed the structure of my skeleton. I was bowlegged and had about four inches between my knees. Within months, my knees came together. It feels like my feet just rotated in their sockets. My hips have stabilized and I find that the Tensegrity Series helps keep things in place in my body.

As a result, it has changed the physical experience of my asana practice. It is easier to twist deeper with a lot less effort, but part of it is knowing where to activate, i.e. through the feet, or drawing in and up through the pelvis for inversion. Confidence, equanimity are part of that change too.

What has been huge for me has been the connection through the ribcage.

One - visually I can see it in my posture; two - I feel stronger; three - in inversions I feel how the Inner Leg Line makes me feel the rebound. If I have to choose one or the other for time constraint reasons, I will do the Tensegrity Series. I feel like I haven't lost ground once I get back to the asana practice, but that is not true if I do just asana and skip the series.

The Tensegrity Series has given me deeper integrity, connections, and prevents me from injuring myself, because there is greater balance. My perspective has shifted from doing too much, pushing a bit, getting somewhere, to just keeping it together, doing it in this moment.

It is easier to find that "being present" place since the TS, and easier to stay there when doing other things such as the asana practice.

My asana practice was disjointed. One pose, then the next. Now, because I can keep my body connected I can keep my mind focused, and flow into those connections and that "centre" stays put! I am in my body with a meditative ease. My body now knows how to move, to flow through motion. I don't need to focus on finding the pose so much, as simply allowing it to come, to be in it. There is a sense of coming home. One image that I always see and associate with the Tensegrity Series is the "Weather Vane Girl" at Kits Beach. S-o-o-o thankful to have this in my life.

KIM FRANK

I do the TS because it calms my nervous system, like a meditation. I don't always sit, so this is a nice way to meditate, to settle my energies. It also brings my attention back to that place where I understand how to move with grace, effortless, without muscling. A place where it is clear that the aim is to find the matrix of that "whole body" support.

That is where I know clearly that "effortless effort, it is easy, to be in it, without pushing, or reaching to go somewhere". I really enjoy connecting to the anatomy trains. They are clear to me, the main ones especially. I have been thinking about the feet, the unraveling, and learning about how the tone of the foot connects us into our lives. This was one of the first things I became aware of when I started the Vijnana practice. It is really rich and exciting.

I love the newer back bending piece, the spinal rolls, because it is so important to find, to connect into the front body support, "up dog" etc. The softness, the focus on connecting, rather than shape, is what drew me to the practice. I come from a dance background. Contemporary dance/improvisational work, loose, spontaneous, but the foundation is very structured. Like the series. The idea of stabilizing the core and working the limbs against the core. We look for the small connections deep inside the body, versus working on the outside surface of the body.

When I start with Tensegrity my asana practice is softer, more inward, more authentic. I connect with what I need to do more directly. It takes me to a different awareness as to what my body needs to do, I am less inclined to do what "I should do". It has taught me a lot about the value of softening into connection, and my asana practice reflects that.

I love that it is evolving all the time.

BRIDGET WALSH

The Tensegrity Series has become the foundation of my yoga practice. It provides me with a daily routine that is meditative and that has prepared my body both energetically and physically for more advanced work. I only have an hour a day for yoga so I don't get to practice some of the advanced poses very often. When I do, they are not as difficult as I imagined. I believe this is due to the daily practice of the Tensegrity Series.

JOAN TYLDESLEY

The Gift of Tensegrity.

I have been practicing the Tensegrity Series both at the studio and in my home practice for about two years, averaging three to four times a week. As a result, I have experienced many benefits.

A major benefit, which occurred very early in my practice was the calming and comforting effect on the nervous system. It feels as though the lights of my nervous system have been turned down. This happens during the practice and lingers on for a time afterwards. There is also a flush of confidence that often flows through me during and after the practice of Tensegrity. I feel a little bit empowered, because I am more in touch with being calm, there is a sense of equanimity in me.

I am also aware that there have been changes, some of them quite subtle in my everyday physical movements. When I walk my legs are closer together with less side-to-side sway in my hips. Similarly, my legs are closer together when I swim creating a more efficient kick during the crawl stroke. Smaller movements such as reaching and bending are done with more ease. I can see why the Tensegrity Series is referred to as a "repair series", which seems to have happened without me even realizing that anything needed "repairing"!

The main benefit that I have seen in my yoga practice is a stronger connection to the deep front line. For instance, during crescent lunge I used to turn my foot inward for strength and balance. I can now keep my foot straight and I am less wobbly rising up into the full extent of

the pose. This is also true in Tadasana and Uttanasana where I feel more grounded and quieter. Inversions are done with less strain and I can hold the poses in a steadier manner.

A major benefit is this equanimity, and it comes within a few minutes of starting the practice, and it lingers after I finish, if I let it. Life intrudes, or, I let it. I spend too much time being too tense, and this work acts as a gateway into spending more time being the way I'd like to be, which is — an empowered person. The more of us know about this work, the better.

Overall, I believe the Tensegrity Series has contributed to a calmer nervous system and a greater body-felt sense. This in turn has resulted in movements, which have become more fluid, more efficient and more intuitive. I feel like I am better coordinated.

LISA MONTESI

I started the series around 2007-2008, not sure which year, but it was a session led by Mark Finch and Swan. It was the first time I found strength coming from the inside of me, when up to then I had always used my exterior strength. Feeling this strength from the inside made my practice much more effortless, springy, s-o-o-o light. I feel tons of support without engaging all these MUSCLES.

It is amazing how fast it works, how effective it is. For example, I had never connected to the Big Toe Line, yet as soon as I did, I found the centre, amazing! You don't need to be a sophisticated yogi to do this.

I don't have symmetrical architecture physically, but the series allows me to find equilibrium. My body just gets it. This work transfers seamlessly into the body, and it feeds directly into the asana practice. It is working from the inside out. Vijnana Yoga and the Tensegrity Series make a perfect marriage. Sometimes I find it tedious and noticing when I get bored has become part of the practice.

LYNETTE STOCKNER

Tensegrity offers a touchstone from which movement, thoughts and actions are all supported. It is an investment in the body which allows it to find its natural balance. In turn, this balance becomes energy flowing into our sense of self, relationships, and a sense of being connected to something greater. The way we might see a beautiful flower and know that only "God" could have created something so amazing. We were born like that "amazing" flower, but all our conditioning undoes our natural physiological balance as we start leaning left and right and bending to life's challenges. We start to respond to life from the periphery instead of the seed.

It is a deep, intelligent practice that resets the very connections that we lose to unconscious patterns of stress, fatigue, overworking, injuries, aging, etc.

BRIEGE FARRELLY

I have been doing Tensegrity on average twice a week for the past year. The changes in my body as a result are tangible. I have suffered from arthritis and feel pain in my joints regularly. In this last year the pain has diminished sometimes for weeks. I feel a sense of freedom as I move. My yoga practice has deepened as a result because the Tensegrity Series has awakened in me a deeper relationship with the subtleties of the energy body and the tissues sliding upon each other. Because of this healing and continued growth in my practice of self-discovery through Yoga, I am inspired to implement the Tensegrity Series into my practice daily. I am working with this at the moment, growing the days I do it to four or five days a week.

I'm so grateful to Gioia for creating this healing model for us all. My body and mind are slowly integrating and finding a flow and freedom that I only dreamed about having.

CHRIS CLANCY

I lie on my back
offering my weight
to the earth

limbs floating
in a sea of prana

breath lengthening
radiating
ebbing
flowing

a rising tide
spills over the boundaries
of flesh and skin
taking awareness
to the space
beyond limited self

rooting
sinking chi
offering weight to the earth
lets her support me
helps me learn to receive

connecting
tips, magnets to core
reveals sacred centre
opens me
to grace

the door is opened
to subtler and subtler
sensations
to the web of life
layers of
skin, fascia, muscle, bone
organs, vessels, nerves
rivers of energy
consciousness
space

can I
soften, surrender
fully?
allow eyes
to sink back
into soft wide baskets?
give up
holding?
clinging?

wandering mind?

you
take me inwards
into pure sensation
invite me
to listen
to presence myself
to the silence that holds
all this

you
reveal my asymmetries
and beckon exploration
refine
realign
and take me towards
balance

you invite me
to recognize
awareness itself
boundless
limitless
stillness and flow
calling me home
to
Self

SARAH MANWARING JONES

The Tensegrity Series feels like a long walk in the forest.
like going out for a wander with no where to go.
The rhythm, the pulse, the energy of nature pulsing through layers of tissue.
Eyes looking out, observing & looking inward simultaneously.
Inner worlds and outer worlds become one, integration begins.
i think this is yoga?

There is no destination.
Everywhere I turn there is life, embodied life.
The practice is letting the journey unfold, letting the walk unfold
letting the walk unfold
again and again and again
arriving in the mystery of this inner playground
free to be me.

Here is an article Sarah Manwaring Jones has written on the subject of Tensegrity.

Tensegrity in the Human Form: Creating Ease In Your Yoga Practice

Tensegrity is a term that was first described by Buckminster Fuller as an architectural term. It is defined as a balance of discontinuous compression elements, which are connected by continuous tension forces, which allow any system to exist in balance. Expressed in a living form, Dr. Stephen Levine defined it, biotensegrity. In our case, as human beings, the fascial matrix and muscles form the system of tension and the bones float within the matrix creating relationships of discontinuous compression that connect through the whole system.

"A model based on Fuller's Tensegrity...may also be utilized to demonstrate the structural integration of the body. All our previous concepts of biomechanics of the body will have to be reassessed in relation to this model and our therapeutic approaches to the musculo-skeletal system will have to be revised." ~Stephen Levine

I read that Dr. Ida Rolf used to say to her students that it's not the bones which hold the muscles or the muscles which hold the bones but rather that the bones should float inside the flesh. I like this. Essentially, our bones are floating in our tissues. None of our bones actually touch one another.

A single breath creates dynamic relationships in 136 joints in the human body. When balanced, in relationship to gravity, movement transfers through our living systems evenly and there is no single place in the body, which needs to single-handedly support us. Try this. Stand on your two feet and close your eyes. Visualize this idea: none of your bones actually touch...your bones are swimming around inside the tension of your connective tissue matrix. What effect does this have on the way you feel inside the ocean of your body?

This model of the human body differs from Newton's model of the skeleton and joints like a frame, from which the soft tissues are suspended. We move, flow and breathe unlike mechanical structures, like a house, with right angles and parallel lines.

Examples of Tensegrity in Nature:

1. DNA Helix structure.
2. Old growth tree blowing in the wind.
3. Bicycle wheel with spokes.
4. Balloon.
5. Single Cell in the human body.

SKYELAR NAPIER

I've been practicing yoga for about 15 years, starting with Ashtanga, then after a series of injuries, evolving into a more moderate vinyasa flow style yoga. Having been a professional dancer, I took to the asana practice with relative ease, however I also brought with me structural weaknesses from my dance career that resurfaced time and again. This was especially problematic when I began teaching yoga, and demonstrating more and more challenging poses without being properly warmed up. Adding to this were some serious repercussions from injuries sustained while mountain biking (my second major passion). As a result, I was spending more and more time and more and more money visiting my physiotherapist just so I could keep doing the things I loved to do.

I gave up teaching a couple of years ago and started a new career which has afforded me more opportunity to focus once again on developing my own asana practice. I had been studying Vijnana yoga with Chris Clancy and a couple of other teachers over the years and slowly incorporating the tensegrity concepts into my practice. In the past year I also began to include Gioia Irwins' Tensegrity Repair Series to my regular practice which I do about three times a week. The difference to my life has been quite remarkable.

What has been most noticeable to me is the lack of physical problems either re-occurring or occurring at all. I still mountain bike several times a week and still continue to practice yoga, but I have been injury-free this entire year. My only contact with my physio is through LinkedIn! I am also able to enjoy all the more challenging postures that I have often had to omit from my practice due to a propensity to re-injure weak areas (such as back bend, shoulder stands and head stands). The only thing that has changed is the regular incorporation of the Tensegrity Repair Series into my practice. Thank you Gioia Irwin and Chris Clancy for giving me a fully functioning body again.

NEVAH (WENDY) EYTON

As both a biodynamic craniosacral therapist & restorative yoga teacher - slowing down through nervous system regulation and the return to living from a place of right effort – is at the core of my work. Through that intention, I have typically been drawn to the more subtle, passive realms of practice (meditation, restorative yoga and therapeutic practices) to bring balance to the overload of stimulation, tension and stress that most of us accumulate.

The Tensegrity Series (in conjunction with the Vijnana practice) has, however, initiated me into a deeply connected, intuitive active practice that instills similar qualities within. Steady, present, calm and restoring. The awakening of intelligent and integrated movement that becomes embodied through this series, is guiding me into active practice from that place of right effort and system regulation. Which from my experience is through:

- Bilateral movement - balancing hemispheres of brain/body (calming, regulating, integrating)
- Liberation of the fluid body through the tissue fields (releasing tension patterns),
- Initiation of movement through myofascial lines and domes (function, intelligence)
- Emphasis on the optical nerve function and cranial bone space (internal space, function)
- Release of the diaphragm and ribcage (resolution, respiration, organ health)

All aspects of this dynamic series support my capacity to intuitively enter both active and passive practice. Returning to right effort.

Nevah (Wendy) Eyton RCST®, E-RYT 500, BCST
Restorative Yoga Teacher & Biodynamic Craniosacral Therapist
