

YOGA / PILATES FUSION

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Poor posture in seated, results in TYPICALLY **shortened hip flexor, hamstring, abdominals, pecs, anterior deltoid and suboccipital muscles**. There will also be *lengthened low back, rear deltoid and mid-trapezius muscles*. With the vertebral column out of it's correctly stacked position, the vertebral discs are subjected to increased compressional forces as they bulge out the back of the joint spaces. These postures are well rehearsed in classrooms, in front of the t.v. or computer at home, as well as in the car to go between these and other locations.

Our bodies need a balance of muscular strength and flexibility at all joints to optimize postural habits and lessen the risk of injury.

As joint Range of Motion  joint stability 

Strengthening:

While traditional weight machines are efficient at increasing muscular strength of most of the superficial muscles, they often miss some of the smaller, deeper stabilizing muscles of the joints. Thus, a cycle is created, training strong muscles to become stronger, and neglected muscles become weaker, which creates joints that appear strong but are actually unstable.

Movement skills in simplistic, 1 joint, motor patterns lack transfer of learning value. Strength exercises that require full body control have more functional value. ('our body is intended to move as a dynamic, complex whole piece, not as fragmented segments'). Both Pilates and Yoga incorporate the whole body without the need for any equipment to train all of the muscles of the body in strength, endurance, balance, coordination and flexibility.

Stretching:

Often the first component of fitness to be sacrificed whenever time is short.

2 types of stretching

Passive flexibility:

Most common method used by exercisers. Using an outside force such as your hands, a strap, wall, or gravity to encourage the joint into a stretch on a relaxed joint. Ie. Bending forward over “split, straight” legs

Active flexibility:

Using the muscles on one side of a joint to pull the muscles on the opposing side into a stretch position. Ie. 1 leg circle or scapular retraction and horizontal shoulder abduction after working at the computer too long – chest and shoulder stretch.

Active Range of Motion vs. Passive Range of motion

“The greater the difference between the active and passive ranges of motion in a joint, the greater the likelihood of an injury (Iashvili, 1983). Further research by Iashvili (1983) verified that active flexibility has a higher correlation to sports performance level than does passive mobility. He also found that active range of motion was only 61-73% of passive range of motion when only passive stretching techniques were employed. However, when both strength and combined active techniques were used, the correlation of active to passive increased to 91%.

FUSION TRAINING – A non-purist blend of yoga and pilates movement for full body strength, balance, co-ordination, flexibility and core functional training. Both yoga and pilates have a combination of active and passive forms of stretching within their exercises.

YOGA- a series of asanas or postures (not just standing up)

Yoga exercises promote flexibility and strength of the body, as well as attention of the mind and the breath. Many of the YOGA poses are difficult for those who have strong, inflexible muscles or conversely, weak, but flexible muscles. There is a brilliantly logical balance or symmetry of strength and range of motion at each joint, that is needed to enable some of the postures to be held comfortably. Perhaps that is why some people perceive yoga to be so challenging, those that have practiced it, and have gained the balance of strength and range are not working as hard, as those who do not yet have it.

Other Yoga benefits:

Beyond musculoskeletal symmetry, yoga is also intended to “bring balance to the nervous and adrenal systems.” Through strong muscular contraction and deep breathing white blood cells are circulated through the body for detoxification and rejuvenation.

It stretches not just muscles, but also nerves, arteries, veins and lymphatic vessels which promotes supple and resilient cardiovascular and immune systems that are better able to relay liquid information (nerves), nourishment (arteries) or detoxification (veins and lymphatic system)

The deep breathing actually exercises the pulmonary function, which can lead to improved overall breathing capacity, which studies have shown can reduce the use of medicine use in asthmatic patients.

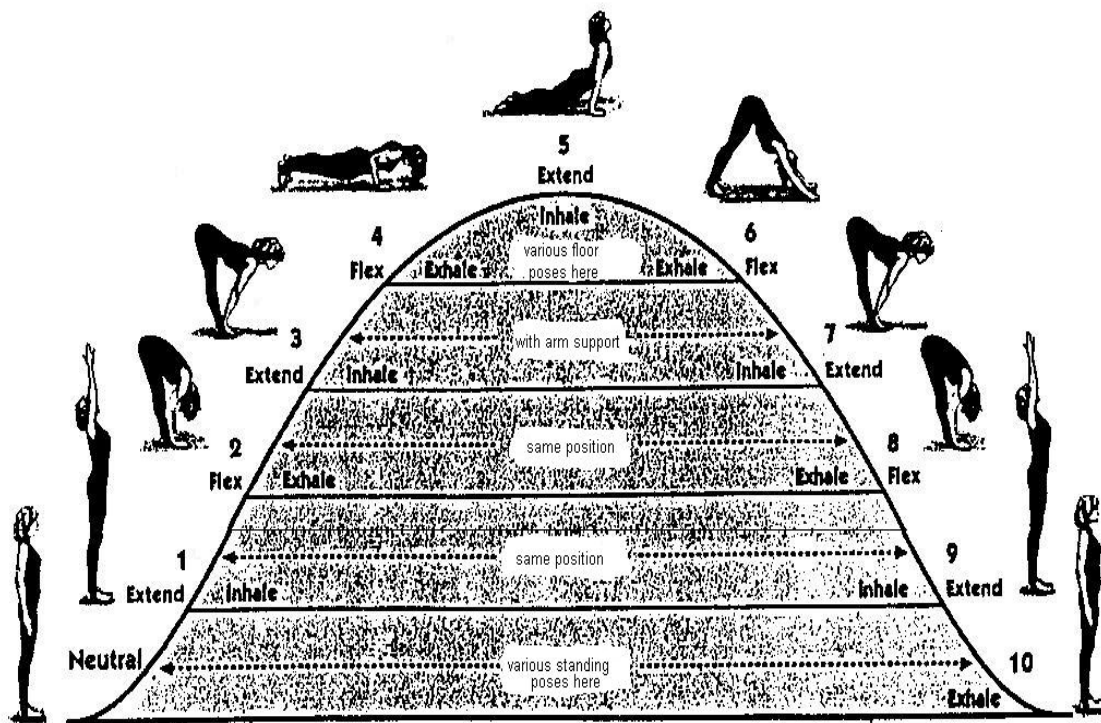
Traditionally yoga is also known to stimulate the glands and organs of the body. The postures are unique in the way body parts are pressed against each other or the floor, stimulating a massaging affect which results in increased circulation causing greater detoxification, rejuvenation and tension release in the glands and organs.

Pilates

The goal of Pilates is to move or hold the body's spinal position with control via the abdominal musculature. This method of exercise requires no equipment, but instead uses the limbs, body position (gravity) or the direction of breath to vary the level of challenge for each exercise. Like yoga, pilates exercises are performed in many positions; on your back, on your stomach, on your side, sitting, and on all four. Many of the exercises in pilates require strength of 1 muscle group to move or hold the body, while a lengthening or stretching of a different muscle group is happening simultaneously. Sometimes the stretch will be passive, but most often it is active, maximizing the flexibility training potential.

The Workout

Using the Sun Salutation series and some very basic yoga and pilates exercises, we can create a workout that can be oriented towards relaxation and flexibility, or as a challenging muscular strength and balance workout.



STRUCTURE OF MODULES A & B

Sun Salutation:

Standing in mountain pose (at the front of your mat)

#2 Forward bend

#3 Supported extension (#3 and #7) eyes on toes

#4 Fingers to floor, walk the feet back to plank position (baby steps/giant lunge) for push ups

#5 Shown as upward dog, sphinx (on elbows ribs still contacting floor) would be gentler, less risky

***While on floor transition to do a variety of pilates or floor yoga poses. ie. incline pose, shoulder bridge, seated twist, push ups, 4 point arabesque, child's pose, obliques, etc.

#6 - Make your way back to 4 point position for downward facing dog

***Walk your feet to your hands (baby steps or giant lunge)

#7 - try powerful pose (Queen's chair) to transition to standing

#8 - Standing forward bend (eliminated if you do #7 as listed above)

#10 - Once in the standing position use a variety of yoga poses here (pilates doesn't really have any except for push up, which you will use in the sun salutation series) ie tree, T-pose or dancer's pose, you could also add in some fitness type movements here like squats, side stepping pliets, lunges

PROJECTS OR ASSIGNMENTS:

SELF DISCOVERY OF WORKING MUSCLES DURING SKILL

Dynamic postures ie. Move slowly through spike approach

CANDID SIDE PROFILE PHOTO OF SELF or family member

Ask a family member or friend to take a photo of you when you aren't expecting it, from a side view, and analyze your own posture. (ie. On the phone, waiting for the bus)

FROM YOUR FAVORITE SPORT OR ACTIVITY

Describe some postural cues your coach has given and what its purpose is.

USE THE SUN SALUTATION SERIES AS YOUR WARM UP OR COOL DOWN STRETCHES IN CLASS

Encourage students to use the series as study breaks, or relaxation poses before bed time.

References:

Dias, Susie. 1995, 8th edition 2004. East to West Yoga Certification Manual

McMillan, Sherri. 2004. Partner Stretching workshop, CanFitPro conference.