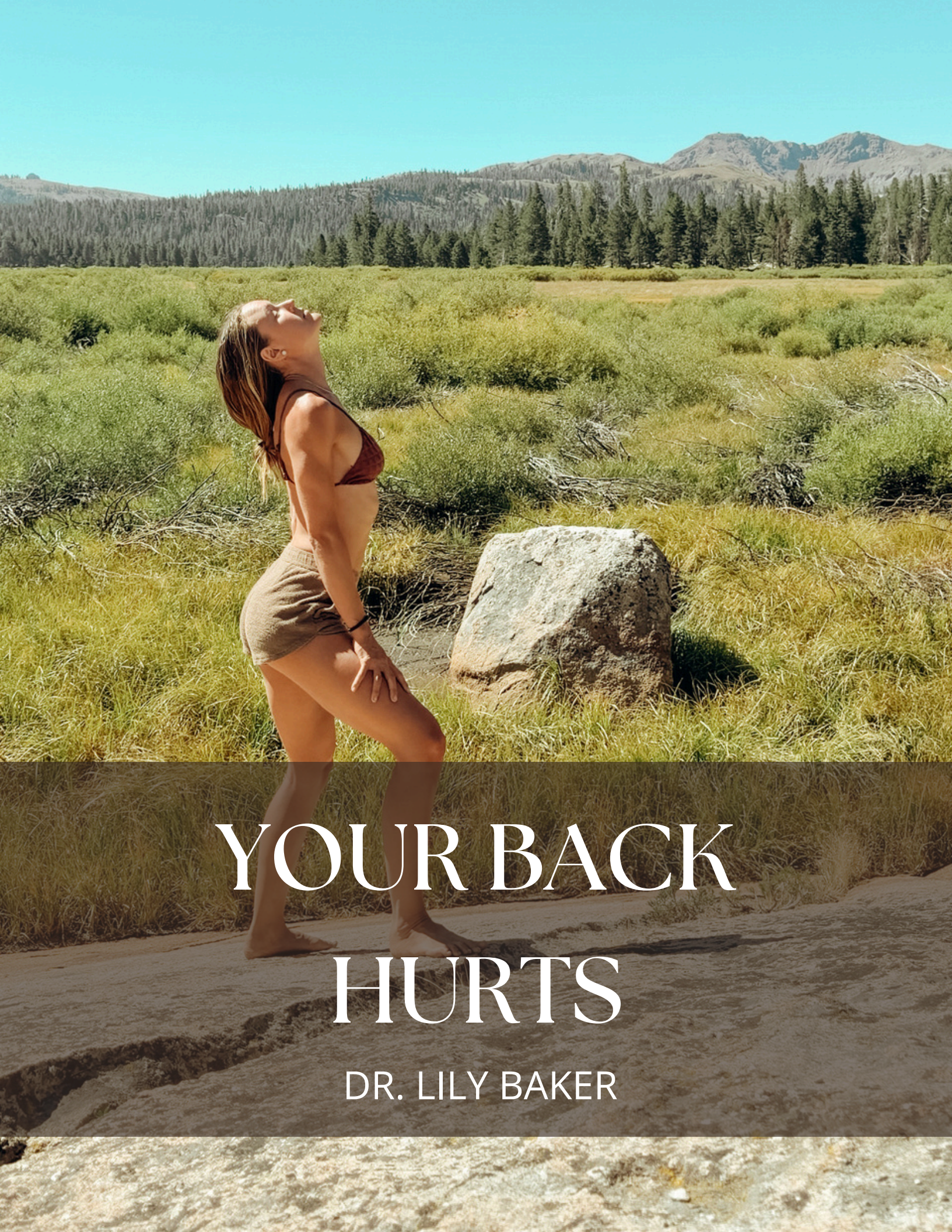




YOUR BACK HURTS

DR. LILY BAKER

DISCLAIMER

This information is based on my perspective as a Chiropractic Physician and study of natural form via Bowspring. This is not medical advice of any kind and is intended to inspire curiosity in how you choose to posture yourself.

Your health is your responsibility, please act accordingly.



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BACK PAIN & SURGERY

My first year as a Chiropractor, I was astounded by how back pain and surgery really works. If you go to a surgeon and complain enough, they will do surgery.

It has a lot less to do with what they see on imaging or the physical exams they do. It isn't like you need back surgery or you don't. What it is like it that well meaning surgeons will help you with the tool they have if you're miserable enough.

But back pain and the back issues they can see on imaging are actually miles apart. Most people have bulging discs, most people will get degenerative disease of their spine, but those changes don't correlate to back pain as consistently as you'd think. I tell you this to give you some freedom from whatever you've been told is wrong with you.

There's many theories on why so many of our backs hurt and what to do to fix it. And I studied many of them. Our home is littered with books on anatomy, how to heal spinal injuries and back pain protocols. And some of them helped temporarily, but until Bowspring, no one ever explained to me the big picture, fascial distortion that is making our backs fragile and achey.



Photo: I used to hate backbends. I avoided them because they always hurt me. Now i'm starting to be able to keep my back ribs up and thigh bones back so I feel open and invincible here, without pain.

TUNING YOUR TENSIONS

Now, I don't feel fragile and if my back starts to feel like it will start hurting, I know exactly why and what to do to help it in a few minutes. And it's because I understand my body as a web of weaving fascia, nerves, muscle and bone that are tensioned like guitar strings. And when the tension isn't right, it doesn't feel good. Which doesn't mean your guitar is fucked up beyond repair, or that it needs surgery. It means you need to be taught how to turn the tuning pegs long before we reach to dismember the guitar. Aka how to reshape your body before you reach for the surgeon's scalpel.

The reality is we live in a world full of back breaking couches, chairs, plane seats and clothing. I want to explain it to you here so you are empowered with understanding the balance of how the choices you make are affecting your back. You aren't going to completely avoid a back ache all the time (unless you sell all your furniture, never go on a plane, build your own car seat and never visit another friends house or a restaurant), but you are going to learn how to reshape yourself so it's much less severe, you are more resilient and can retune yourself easily.



**“Not tucking is
giving me comfort
and freedom in my
back.”**

– Sarah H.

LEARNING TO MOVE AT YOUR THIGHS NOT YOUR LOW BACK

Let's go back to my first year as a Chiropractor. I was working in a rural community full of blue collar workers and I swear, Wrangler jeans are the cause of so much back pain. Even if you don't wear tight jeans, this concept still applies to you, so stay with me.



Photo: me holding a pelvis model to help you understand your anatomy. White lines to the top of your thighs where you want to move from, red 'x' on low back where you want to stay soft.

When your pants are so tight around your thighs and bum, you literally cannot move from your hips (where your thigh bone attaches into your pelvis). This means the only physical way you can bend over is at your low back.

Your low back doesn't have a huge bum muscle on the back of it to support this motion. So sure it may be fine when you're a kid, but this repetitive low back bending will make your back hurt (and for many, start changing the shape of the boney holes that the nerves weave through and lead to numbness or weakness in your legs, so not cool!).

That's the first thing you need to understand – you need to move from the top of your thigh bones when you bend over, NOT your low back, as much as humanly possible (not going for 100% perfect here, you'll be amazed how much better you feel even if you move better 5% of the time... you aren't that fragile). So, first we have to make sure our pants let us do this motion, and then we have to actually do it more of the time.

HEALTHY VERSUS UNHEALTHY LOW BACK CURVE

Your anterior pelvic tilt isn't hurting you,
the way you're doing it is.

This is especially potent in Bowspring because you see teachers that look like they have a big curve in their low back, so you copy them. This is the thing I repeat most, so please hear me- if your low back hurts, you are doing it wrong! The low back curve you see me do is not happening by tightening the low back muscles compressing the discs and causing even more back pain. It is happening as a result of driving the top of my thigh bones backwards and letting the pelvis follow into an "anterior pelvic tilt." So when you reach back and feel your low back muscles (all the way down to your tailbone) they are fairly soft (not 100% soft but less than 20% of the tightness compared to when you tighten your low back to make a similar shape).

This makes a longer curve in your low back, not a short compressed one.



Photo:

Left: thigh (dotted line) sucked forward, so bum mound is more down. If you were to feel my hamstrings here, there wouldn't be any tone and it would feel soft because the thigh bone is far forward (this is why so many of us collect cellulite here).

Right: top of thighs moved backwards so bum lifts, belly gets longer and the back of the leg gets more firm.

OUR FASCIAL DISTORTION

So, when your low back curve is a result of learning to move your thigh bones, it immediately relieves the low back pain. Why? Because your low back has been warped long and stretched apart by our cultural posturing. The ligaments of the low back hate that. Imagine pulling a guy wire of a tent to tension and then yanking on it over and over. It will eventually break. Our backs are living structures, even your bones are constantly reshaping themselves, so before they break they try to adapt to this position. This only makes it worse because now you have to slowly reshape yourself back to what is factory or baby setting of the low back for relief – but your body is trying to help you!

I want you to understand this fascial tension distortion isn't just at your low back. The entire back of your body's fascial fabric has been shaped and yanked downward towards your feet. In order for this to happen, the front of your body has been pulled upwards.



Photo: Me in Chiropractic school during a modeling shoot. Look how my bum is hanging low at my sitz bones (more cellulite because of extra load back there) and my pubic bone is high making my belly short and pooched.

OUR FASCIAL DISTORTION

So, we are quite literally in this completely warped position where the glutes are down and small, the belly is short, the quads are tight, the knees and feet hurt, the upper back is tight, leading to flattened neck curves and TMJ issues (upcoming topics but this topic needs to be addressed in your body first).

I will add a note of nuance here that because we've spent so much of our life in this distorted positioning, there are stuck parts of us that will ache as we learn to open them. This is tricky and requires you to differentiate between the pain of compressing your low back or the ache of opening yourself in a new way. This requires you to slow down, get curious about yourself and look for clues instead of expecting certainty. Even surgery can't give you that certainty, only your own lived experience can.



Photo: Me in a few weeks ago out crouching in the Sierra. All the fascia on my back from my bum to my upper back has gone upwards, and the tightness in my back is completely changed. My belly is long and strong.

HEALTHY VERSUS UNHEALTHY LOW BACK CURVE: RIBS

Let's go back to the idea of a long curve in your low back. We want the low back to act like a suspension bridge or like the long strong curve of a horse's back. I gave you the understanding that moving the thigh bones back makes this curve longer from the bottom, but in order to suspend the top of the low back curve, you need to learn about the position of your back ribs.

The back of your ribcage has been matted down and short. This is a big part of why your back muscles are always tight and achey, they are compressed! So, in order to have a healthy low back curve, you need to learn to literally pull your back ribs off of each other like you're expanding them up your back toward your neck. And then hold them there while you breathe with your diaphragm! This position creates decompression and relief on your low back (more details on that in my first free pdf, 'Posture Principles' – if you don't already have it, you can find on the homepage of my website [REPATTERNco.com](https://www.repatternco.com/posture-transformation-principals) or with this link: <https://www.repatternco.com/posture-transformation-principals>)

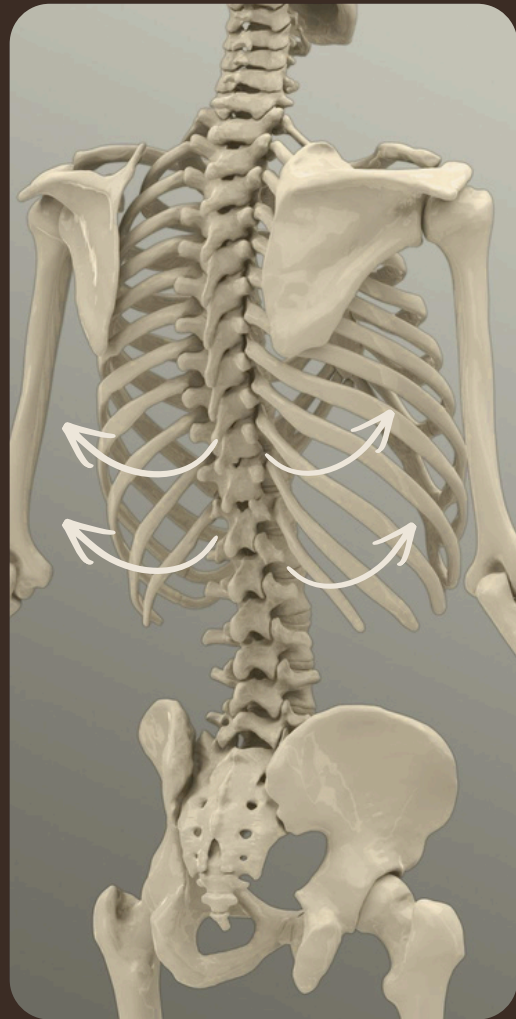


Photo: Back of the ribcage has the ability to expand wide and up your back almost like how a jelly fish expands its entire body to swim. Opening this will feel so sticky and tight at first! Enroll in REVIVAL and I'll show you how to unstick it to have more room to expand into.

BACK RIBS

Each of your ribs has the ability to move back & up in this way. And when you learn to do this, not only will any sort of flared ribs go away in an instant, but you massively deload the pelvic floor, and take a huge step toward balancing the tension on the front and back of the body. So, the thigh bones are one tuning peg on our guitar, and the back ribs are the other.



Photo: This stuff is really hard to teach because it looks very similar from the outside and feels VERY different on the inside. My thighs are back in the correct position in both photos.

Left: back ribs are matted down. You can see there's a sharper low back curve, the plane of the bottom of my ribs is tilted forward (dotted line) and the ribs are matted down (arrow).

Right: Ribcage is more level (i'm not perfect but so much better... this was my kryptonite!), and my back ribs have a full backwards curve to them making the curve at my low back longer.

APPLICATION

When you apply these principles to how you work, sit, stand and play your back starts working the way it was made to and you feel so much better!

In this month's series in REVIVAL i'll show you the moves I reach for after a long plane ride in the torture devices that are plane seats, or when I've been at a friend's house with a slumped couch or I had to lean over to filter water on a back packing trip. We don't need to be perfect all the time, but the more you can move with a soft, long curve in your low back, the better you will feel.



Photo:

Left: how most people pick things up – tucked tail, low & saggy bum, rounded low back (I honestly can't even make my back as rounded as it used to be anymore, i've reshaped myself), thighs sucked forward and weight in the heels.

Right: Weight in front of foot, thighs back, bum up, and a long curve in low back.

Changing the way you pick things up has the power to change your life.

APPLICATION: HUMANS

Now, you won't be able to (and don't want to) go very deep at first and it will feel impossible! You've never been asked to shape yourself this way, it takes time to teach your brain and tissues the correct alignment of your bones. But when you do, you get more mobility and ease very fast.

I couldn't bend over with a low back curve at all when I first started this! And I'm hypermobile and pretty bendy. But it was because I didn't have the correct alignment of my bones and my body's fabric was all warped. So be patient, continue this work and the pieces will start to come together in your understanding and in your alignment in a way that makes it possible to pick rice for 10 hours a day or for a horse to carry hundreds of pounds on its back.

Photo:

Esther Gokhale studied how these women were able to work like this for hours without back pain - and here we are in America having an "easier" life but suffering a pandemic of back pain. Look at how far back their thighs are that they can bend almost in half without rounding their low back!

I don't fully agree with the Gokhale method as the spine isn't supposed to be 'J shaped' but 'S shaped.'

However, I deeply appreciate her work & these photos changed how I understood my body.



APPLICATION: HORSES



Photo:

Top: A horse with a 'sway back' aka an unhealthy low back curve because there is no ribcage expansion or length from thighs drawing back (note the smaller bum, too).

Bottom: A horse with a healthy back curve that can hold hundreds of pounds because it is like a suspension bridge from the ribcage expansion & thighs back (note big round bum, we like this culturally for health reasons).

Of course, I do not know these horses and what they are being fed or their treatment. But from the outside, it is wild how much their posture changes how vibrant & healthy they look, even in their facial structure! Humans are the same and there will be a whole month on face shaping once you lay the foundation elsewhere.

CLOSING

“When I walk I can feel my butt and hamstrings engaging. Before working with Dr. Lily online I had literally been unable to engage my butt intentionally and trying to do so caused me dreadful backpain, despite all the pilates, yoga and other things I tried.”

– Ashley

As always, this is not medical advice. I have yet to find someone who didn't find relief from these principles and I am sad that this isn't taught to kids to avoid a life of back pain ending with painful, debilitating surgery.

But I don't know you or your body and cannot guarantee anything for you. The one rule of life I know for certain, is nothing is certain and there are always exceptions.

Be curious, take responsibility for your own health and know that if your back hurts it is asking for you to do something differently. These are the two pegs I have turned to help thousands of my clients love living in their bodies, again.



Photo:
Drawn for us by my
friend Maria Peltzer. There aren't
anatomy photos of people in open
posture which makes it harder for us to
comprehend what's possible for us
when we are open and vibrant - so we
made them ourselves.



Hi, I'm Dr. Lily.

Once I REPATTERNed myself, healed my own back pain and thousands of my patients' pain, I knew we needed a new way to workout that doesn't compromise our joints and tighten us into the body we don't want to have anymore.

Thus REVIVAL was born. The workouts I created that simultaneously heal your fascia, build muscle in the places you actually want it and fatigue you in the best way. This is how I stay strong and open and supple, so I can play hard and dream big.

I wanted you to have easy to assimilate videos that walk you step by step through how to put these principles into action. So you don't have to live in pain, anymore.

This is the future of posture and strength and healing, in one.

JOIN US AT
REPATTERNCO.com/REVIVAL

AL

Anna Logan

4 hours ago, 8:32am • general

I just wanted to say how much I am enjoying Revival!! I love how it is broken down into foundations classes and 20 min sessions really help during school holidays when the children are around! I have never worked so hard as I do trying to do bowstring especially my brain!! Thank you Lily! Can't wait to see what videos you add! X

R

Liked by Repattern Co



authentic_canine 2d • ❤️ by author

Digestion!! I've been struggling with pelvic adhesions for the last 12 years now and especially after 2 surgeries my mother was VERY adamant about me sucking in my "gut" and now I'm barely ing...

4

Reply Reply with a reel Hide



sailing.andromeda 2d • ❤️ by author

@authentic_canine yeah I've been implementing this logic and now I have healthy, easy

2

Reply Reply with a reel Hide

MF

Mara Frazier

3 days ago, 4:36am • general

My upper traps have been tense blocks of meat for years and I've had pain in my neck that attacks and lasts for months. I have gotten massages and done stretching and physical therapy but if anything they just get more that way. My husband often rubs them and it was when he went to rub them last night I realized the just wasn't as much to grab on to. After practicing the foundational movements in revival over the last week, and changing my sleeping position, my upper traps are literally smaller and softer like an ice cube that is melting. I'm astonished.

TE

Liked by Tracy Eades and 8 others

OS

Olivia Shingledecker

a day ago, 8:26am • general

I started the videos and they are HARD! like so hard! I can't quite stand to make it through a video but am working to improve tolerance. And i'm someone who is used to weight training and CF 🤔

NJ

Nicole Jenkins

2 days ago, 12:43pm • general



Oh my goodness!! Ive been slowly going through the foundations series. Repeating as needed. My 2yo joined me for video 3. Just laying next to me or on me or under me. Haha. He has diastasis recti and pectus excavatum. He has always been very guarded and has never opened his throat into guppy pose and even wont float on his back in water without immediately fighting to curl up. After I finished video 3 he was in my lap and threw himself into guppy pose and relaxed into it. He then asked to be put in the sensory swing, which he normally hates! Im stunned by the immediate mirroring. He has been sleeping in bow unprompted, too. Im so encouraged to keep going and pray my impact can be great enough that my older children also open up their posture.

MC

Liked by Mary Christie and 9 others