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About



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Spring Newsletter 2020

Welcome to the Spring newsletter, warmer weather and perfumed blossoms. Hopefully the burst in floral colours found in gardens within your 5km radius helps us look forward to better days ahead. I hope you have all been keeping well and taking opportunities to stay strong and active.

Although the studio in Kew is closed, I wish to take this opportunity to remind you that we are still working. We see some of you weekly using our Telehealth online services, while others communicate with us as required. If you need advice, home exercises or just want to say hello, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Some exciting news. I am updating the website to provide you with additional resources with current 'science-based' information. I will notify you when the changes are live. Stay tuned.

Many have asked me questions in the class environment which are difficult to answer in a few sentences. So I hope this information complements the good work you do both in the studio and online. If there is a specific question that you would like me to address, then please let me know.

The first 'blog' article explores our understanding of posture. I hope you enjoy it.

Please take care and hope to catch up with each of you soon.

Keep safe,

Filippa Minnelli

Posture - yesterday, today and in the future

'Posture today will improve as we unlock and unravel what you did yesterday' - Filippa Minnelli

Asked to demonstrate optimal postural alignment, generally spines lengthen and shoulders draw back. The general public are aware that posture is vital for good health, but what is not well understood is how to physically realign ourselves, towards our optimal posture. Considerably less is understood about the muscular system required to support this alignment.

Poor posture is often associated with slouching. It is referred to as, 'bad posture' and sitting upright as 'good posture'. However the answer is not simply an option between two choices. For most of us there is a vast range of postural orientations that we move through in one single day. Where does 'bad posture' end and 'good posture' begin?

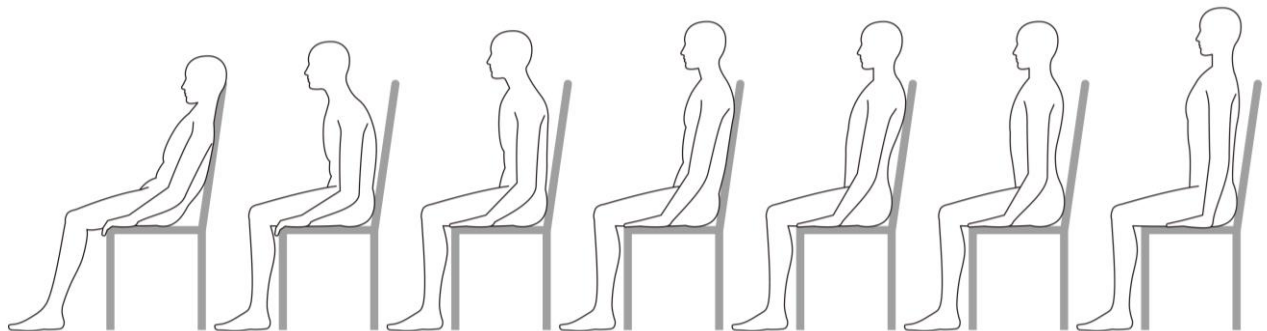


Image 1 - We move through various postures during the day. Where does 'bad posture' end and 'good posture' begin?

We also have to consider our postural adaptations over time. Long term postural change occurs due to many reasons: stresses, injury, bad habits, scar tissue, pain avoidance, lack of awareness, pregnancy, repetitive movements, illness, disease, psychological, emotional issues and many others. The accumulation of your historical events have left a physical imprint, and without you realising each event has likely modified your

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posture. For example, a persistent sore knee taught you to place your weight on the opposing leg. This movement adaptation has not only changed the way you walk, but the muscles you use. Muscles also adapt in time, changing their base length. This change gradually tugs at your spine pulling it into different orientations, away from optimal alignment. It's only when we address your postural history that we can work to improve your daily postures. Posture today will improve as we unlock and unravel what you did yesterday.



Image 2 - Long term postural change occurs due to many reasons: stresses, injury, bad habits, scar tissue, pain avoidance, lack of awareness, pregnancy, repetitive movements, illness, disease, psychological, emotional issues and many other factors.

We often associate posture as a stationary position. Optimal posture is not fixed but rather needs to travel with you. It needs to be considered in standing, sitting and moving. This postural awareness needs to be the central focus to all your functional activities. Task specific training may include swimming if you're an athlete, or pruning if you're a gardener, for others it may include hours of sitting. We must consider task specific activities and train posture for that activity. Swimming is a wonderful cardiovascular exercise but it won't teach you the skill set required for

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sitting, standing, walking and running. Each functional activity must be trained including the transitioning of good postural form.



Image 3 - Caveman - 'Hunting and gathering never trained me for work conditions like this'.

Postural change occurs through gentle movement, guiding the body back towards 'home'. Home is how I describe ideal postural position. It's textbook 'ideal' posture, the goal that promises optimal musculoskeletal health. It's the position you start in, perform various supported movements and then the position you return to.

The truth is that the journey home can be long and for some no longer possible due to other reasons such as joint restrictions. However in time with dedication, persistence, repetition, education, self-awareness, and oh and a really good Pilates Instructor, the body will find a new agreeable optimal position it can call home.

Take home points:

- The postures you hold today are impacted by the postural changes that have occurred over time.
- Posture retraining should include your functional activities.
- 'Ideal' posture may no longer be possible however we can work towards achieving your best posture.