

## SOMATIC STEPS - with Liz Lark

'Now we practice yoga' (Sutra 1, Pada 1, Yoga Sutras, Patanjali)

The journey of 1000 miles begins with a single step.....  
Chapter 64, TAO TE CHING, LAO TSU (Chinese proverb)

### WHAT IS SOMATICS?

*'The human being, as experienced by himself, from the inside'*

Thomas Hanna (Philosopher, 1928-1990), the 'bright star' of self sensing awareness.

A form of neuromuscular training & self care exercises through mindful movements or 'conscious vinyasa', which repattern the nervous system with gentle repetitions, to learn ways of freeing the body mind from holding patterns (samskaras).

Living Steps - Vinyasa Krama- Pawanmuktasana 'The Yogi's Limber' - Joint freeing exercises

PRACTICE : Enliven somatic vitality, awaken the spine

Pandiculation: 'stretching or stiffening of trunk & extremities, often accompanied by yawning!'

**PART ONE: CAT series** Extension/ Flexion/ Cross Core. Repeat each step 5 x slowly.

SEMI SUPINE: CULTIVATE A NEUTRAL SPINE (honour the curves)

1 Somatic cat, level front hips and navel, Inhale, lift chest, waist into spinal EXTENSION (arch)  
Exhale, release back to neutral.

2 Hands behind head. Repeat Cat 1, + on exhale, lift head, shoulders, supporting head with hands. Spinal FLEXION

3 cross core cat: Maintain right hand behind head, lower left arm alongside body, left palm down beside left hip. Inhale, arch the spine: exhale, left left foot, lift head drawing right elbow across the body towards left knee. Inhale, return to base. Repeat 5 x.

Rest, Swtich arms and repeat.

BIOFEEDBACK : assimilate .....

### (FASCIAL BACK LINE )

#### **PART TWO: Side lying (lateral) & Twist (rotation)**

1 Lie on left side, lengthen left arm to make long pillow. Right arm wraps overhead, tuck hand under left side of face to support. Inhale, lift head, creating 'C' shape spine, Exhale , return to neutral. Continue, develop: Inhale, lift top foot, shin. Exhale , lower foot & head simultaneously. Repeat 5 times.

2 Lengthen arms forwards like an arrow, in front of heart, palms touching. Inhale, sweep right hand arm overhead as if painting an arch window onto the floor, reaching to the left side, as you exhale, arrive in a twist, arms in open cross position. Turn your face towards your left hand.

Inhale, sweep left arm through sky to arrive meeting the palms together as you exhale to start position. Repeat 5 x Gently roll to opposite side to repeat sequence.

BIOFEEDBACK: pause.....

NOW TEACH EACHOTHER IN PAIRS!

INTRODUCE SENTIENT HANDS: Oxytocin Touch - Palpate: what does it mean? .....

### SOMATIC STEPS 1 HIPS WARM UP - 6 patterns of movement

**Key words:** apana : releasing, downward moving energy  
mula: substratum, anchor (tailbone)

Lying on back, tuck knees to chest in Apanasana, hands on knees, circles, oil hips.

**Flexion: postures:** Vatnyasana: hug alternate knees to chest,

**Extension :** stretch front body & thighs: Bridge flow.

**External / Internal Rotations** Semi - Supine position: Rock knees to left side, Inhale return to centre, exhale opposite side, face left. (windscreen wipers)  
+ Thread needle series

Adaptation: reclining angle (supta baddha konasana). Open & close book/ Butterfly wings.

**Abduction/ Adduction (take away, draw together).**

Lying on back, tuck knees up to chest in Apanasana, hands draw knees in circles, to oil the hips, flexion, abduction and adduction.

**PROGRESSION:** slow flow cobra

Changing Gear: Magical transitions: CROCODILE, **COBRA, CAT, CHILD**

**CREATIVE CAT!**

**All fours/ table position which incorporates movements of the hips, in somatic steps.**

**Consider thread needle additions.**

**SWIMMING CAT - VARIATIONS - FOUNDATIONS**

Prepare the shoulders to open before weight bearing in dog pose: REVERSE KAYAK CIRCLES

Cat, Plank, Dog.....EVOLVE from Quadruped to Biped! MOUNTAIN POSE

**'Stand Tall and know who you are ! That you can rise above your circumstance'.**

**(Maya Angelou)**

**HASTA VINYASAS - ARM LIMBERS**

Unlocking the arm joints frees the energy in the chest, heart & lungs (pran vayu). Expressive arms are nourishing and health giving, liberating restrictions of self expression.

These can be incorporated into many sequences, such as Warrior Poses, Mountain pose,

Kneeling hero: shoulder vinyasa to echo movement patterns of hips

(variation, salsa heart)

**COFFEE PRESS**

1 Sweep arms over head on inhale, gathering up chitta vritti (mind ripples) .Place in imaginary percolator. Stack hands into coffee press, filter through movement gesture with exhalation.

2 Return to the Coffee Press, scoop up space into the coffee pot.

**FLAMENCO WRISTS**

Rotate wrist joints, lubricate and reduce compression.Seated Somatics zig zag twist, release to floor swastikasana, to deep yin cobra

Floor somatic twist. Hip releases (no mat, slide foot on floor)

Supine: Hands cup base of neck. Inhale, press elbow into floor, exhale release. alternate, then together. adduct sh. blades - activate traps.

R knee raised , l leg straight. Maintain r foot on floor throughout. Inhale, cross r elbow to l elbow. exhale return

Change sides.

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