

REVIEW of LONGEVITY WORKSHOP

SATURDAY February 10th, 2018

10 – 1.30 PM

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We are living longer. There are now over 12,000 centenarians. The oldest woman was 122. The Oldest man 119. Evidence-based studies indicate that longevity is based on two major factors, genetics and lifestyle choices.

Aging is a natural part of life, but there is a fine line between getting old and aging gracefully. The average life expectancy in the UK is approaching 80 years. While that might seem like a reasonable lifespan, chronic illness is on the rise. In fact, many people aged 50 and over suffer from at least one chronic condition and some people, towards the end of their lives, live with several chronic conditions. An extended lifespan does not necessarily equal a long healthy life. There are some illnesses that are unavoidable. But genetics accounts for only around a quarter of age related illness. In fact, studies have shown that lifestyle choices have a far more significant impact than hereditary factors on our life expectancy. This is empowering as it means that the choices that we make directly influence the aging process. Being aware and developing your connection with yourself will contribute towards your understanding of the choices you will make to maintain your wellbeing and have a healthy long life.

The workshop took place at St Anthony of Padua Church Hall in Headington Oxford. It was a grim, wet and chilly day but the hall was warm and freshly painted. The floors have just been sanded and varnished. Ben helped me set up and we took some promotion photos of the hall and the guests as they arrived. There were 30 people on the register, but flue had wiped out a few and 25 people came in total. A substantial number of enthusiastic students.

I do a lot of research and keep my information up-to-date. I try and give as much practical advice as possible. Some people have asked for a copy of the lesson plan to help remind them.

I have truncated and refined the original plan and added some stick men figures. I hope the information here is helpful, but there is nothing that replaces disciplined and ongoing practice.

{please read about information & statistics at the end of the review}.

We began at 10.00 am with a bit of basic anatomy, looking mainly at the different sections of the spine and pelvis and some useful anatomical terms, e.g. 'posterior & anterior tilt, flexion & extension....'



1st Practice ~ Semi-Supine Body Scan

Self-Awareness of **STRESS*1** physically, mentally, emotionally, energetically, & spiritually. Awareness of the internal structure of **FASCIA*2**

2nd Practice ~ De-Stress. Deep Breathing

Activating the relaxation response. Parasympathetic Nervous System.

Left hand on heart. Clavicular Breathing. Feel Movement

Right hands on belly. Diaphragmatic Breathing. Feel Movement

Bring attention to the heart space. **Breathe around the heart**

Immune System function. Thymus Gland

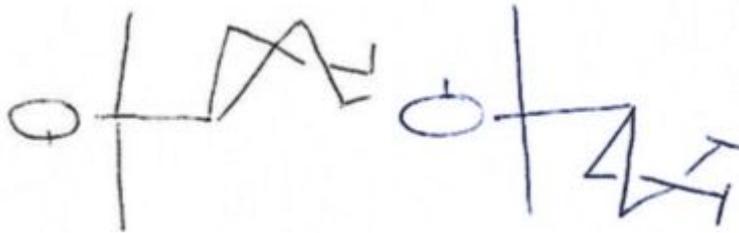
Entrainment - the synchronization of organisms to an external rhythm. Focus on extended exhalation to reduce heart rate.

Avoid hyperventilation. The ancient Yogic Gurus believed that each of us is given a certain number of breaths when we are born. Use these breaths with awareness. Lengthen these breaths to increase your longevity. Pranayama

3rd Practice ~ Gentle Supine Limber

Sacro-illiac joint rocking

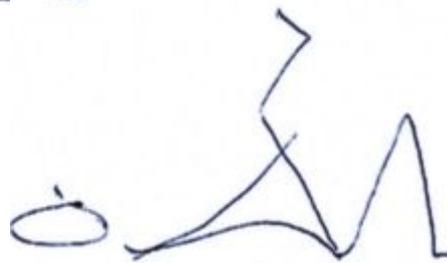
Iliotibial Band Twist



Feet Limber



Hamstrings Limber



Hip Limber



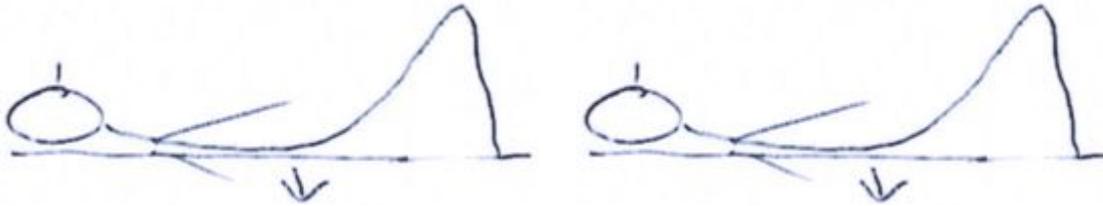
Psoas Stretch

Hip Limber

4th Practice ~ Core Awareness

Pelvic Floor

Transverses Abdominal (Trans Abs).



Rectus Abdominal (RA)



Obliques



Counter Poses

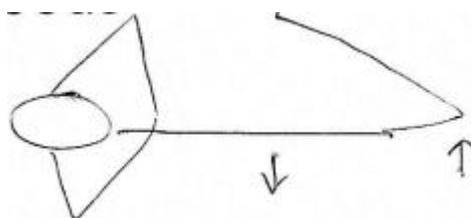
Bridge



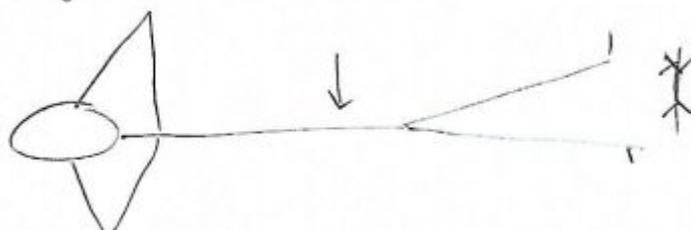
Twists

5th Practice ~ Psoas*3

Prone



Buttock Strengthening



Back Bend

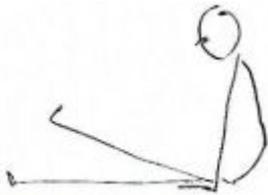


Core Lift



6th Practice ~ Knees Feet

Seated Leg lifts for knees. Internal / external hip rotation



Interlace fingers and toes / Ankle Crank

Sitting on heels



Vrajasana Foot massage & Thigh stretch



6th Practice ~ Get up & down from floor

Getting up from the floor = 5 points no hands or knees

Getting down to the floor = 5 points no hands or knees

Longevity age – young if you don't lose points, old if you do.

Losing the ability to get up from the floor = loss of independence in later life.

7th Practice ~ Posture

Forward Head Posture – (FHP)

Lean Back against gravity

Shoulder Blades in / down / back

Chest moves forward of head

Core

Posterior or Anterior Pelvic tilt

Hyper mobile knees

Supination & Pronation of Feet

Center of heel grounding.



8th Practice ~ Correct Lifting Technique

Look at way of avoiding stress on the spine by correct lifting techniques. IE not lifting and twisting. Pulling weight in towards your center. Using quads and core. Stand in front of load as you lift and lower, bend knees, use back muscles. Do not allow spine to become a heavy lever.

9th Practice ~ On Chairs

Neck

[Correct Alignment of Head](#)

Hard palate over top of atlas (roof over spine) /

Chest forward of head / hyoid moves back lengthen behind ears.

[Do all movements with jaw opening and closing and tongue extended and curled back. Use Eye Movements to go further.](#)

[Flexion & Extension / Rotation / Lateral Flexion & Diagonals / Pivoting](#)

Hands & Wrists

Circumduction / Flexion & Extension / Pronation & Supination /Saddle Joints of Fingers & Thumbs / Gripping / Releasing Carpel Tunnel

9th Practice ~ Balance

Vestibular Reflex - Spotting

Walking from the back of the mat. Heel / Toe

Stretch Top of Foot Massage Ankle Strength

Hip Extension & Flexion / Circumduction / Adduction & Abduction /

Internal & External Rotation

10th Practice ~ Shoulders Arms

Arms by the sides. Squeeze against the armpits. Neck remains in good alignment throughout.

Normal thumbs face forward when arms are by the sides

Elevate / Retract / Extend Shoulder High / Protract Wrap / Triceps Extend Back

Elbows Bent in same range

Repeat External Rotation palms facing forward when arms are by the sides

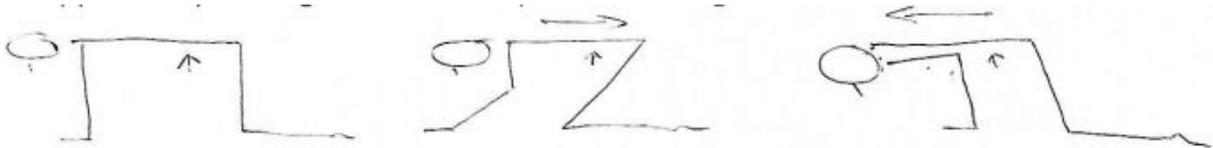
Then Elbows bent in same range

Repeat Internal Rotation back of hands face forward when arms are by the sides

Then Elbows bent in same range

11th Practice ~ Weight Bearing

Exercises to build bone density to mitigate osteoporosis and maintain upper body strength to aid independent living.



12th Practice ~ Yoga Nidra & Sancalpa*4

Deep Relaxation – Hypnosis – Channeling – Manifestation – Programming the Sub-Conscious. Set goals and intentions for a life well lived.



13th Practice ~ Gratitude Meditation

To support our intentions. Gratitude the [secret of abundance](#)

14th Practice ~ Chant AUM*5

To release endorphins.

*1 Stress

Many of us live with a chronic low level of stress. Stress creates a vicious cycle in way we deal with stress: drinking, worrying, stressing about our stress. The fight or flight response plays havoc with your immune system. The continuous boost of adrenaline and cortisol fatigues the adrenal glands causing chronic stress and ends up causing exhaustion that is difficult to alleviate.

Chronic stress has been linked to a plethora of diseases, the main one being **heart disease**. Others include:

- AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES
- ARTHRITIS
- JOINT PAIN
- SUSCEPTIBILITY TO INFECTIONS
- GUM DISEASE
- IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME
- PEPTIC ULCERS
- WEIGHT GAIN
- DIABETES
- SLEEP DISTURBANCES
- SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION
- DEPRESSION,
- MEMORY LOSS
- SKIN DISORDERS
- UNEXPLAINED HAIR LOSS
- SUBSTANCE ABUSE

***2 Fascia**

The body is one organism and the various parts are interconnected with collagen fibres called fascia. There is a network of collagen that wraps around and spreads through and connects everything. It can form different structures like strings, springs, wires, struts, elastic sheets, sacs, insulation (fat) etc. Your connective tissue builds all these structures that hold us together. The fascia is full of nerve bundles that inform the body as to what and where it is. We call this **proprioception**. *Our fascial system is a major organ of proprioception. The health of our fascia is directly connected to how developed our ability is to feel our internal structure. One of the main ways that fascia stays healthy is by experiencing varied (as opposed to repetitive) movements. If we load our fascial tissues the same way all the time like running, biking, too many chaturangas, or sitting at a computer for eight hours every day, they will grow weaker and more prone to injury. If we instead feed our fascia a wide array of movements—from non-repetitive yoga, therapeutic exercise, walking on varied terrains, climbing, to regular bodywork and massage—our fascia will respond by adapting to this diversity of movement input and it will grow supple and more resilient.*

Movement variability and high-quality proprioception are some of the most powerful tools we can utilize when it comes to aging gracefully in our bodies.

***3 PSOAS**

Chronic contraction of the psoas, whether from stress or repetitive activity, limits range of movement in the hip sockets, with the frequent result of strain in the lumbar spine and the knees. When tension in the psoas is asymmetrical, that is, one side is more contracted than the other, the resulting tilt of the pelvis effectively shortens one leg relative to the other and causes compensation up the spine into the neck as the head tries to stay level. Tension also shortens the trunk and reduces room for the viscera, so the organs don't work as efficiently. On top of that, when the pelvis, spine, and legs are misaligned, the weight of the torso is no longer carried easily through the bones, stability is compromised, and the psoas ends up trying to stabilize the pelvis rather than moving freely in its hip-flexing function. For healthy psoas, the weight is borne through the bones, and walking is initiated at the solar plexus instead of the knee or hip joint.

***4 KOSHAS**

Koshas – In the Yogic System we have 5 layers – we will look at these layers and acknowledge where we may be holding stress

The Deepest Layer = Anandamaya Kosha

Spiritual Level

Spiritual Stress is related to negative attitudes, or belief systems that cause us to be stuck in a state of discomfort. Instead of Attitudes that create Stress we could cultivate new and different beliefs and attitudes for example:

Cultivating Qualities of:

- FORGIVENESS – letting go of grudges
- SELF-ESTEEM – Letting go of Shame
- COMPASSION – animosity, meanness, indifference
- RESPECT - contempt
- CONTENTMENT – disappointment, dissatisfaction and regret.
- LOVE – rather than hate.
- ABUNDANCE – neediness and scarcity
- TRUSTING – doubting

- Aligning ourselves with our highest potential to eradicate negative behavioural patterns and seek to improve ourselves. Genuinely cherishing, valuing and holding oneself in self-esteem.

Manamaya Kosha

The 2nd Layer is the Mental & Emotional Level

Mental Stress is related the way that we think.

In general terms Anxiety is often based on fear of the future. Our thoughts might be very fast and scattered.

Depression is often based on the past. Thoughts are slow and repetitive.

Cultivating mindfulness and being in the moment can help to manage anxiety and depression.

Emotional Stress is about the way we feel. Emotions happen more quickly than thoughts. Being able to give your feelings a name like Anger, frustration, delight, peaceful, disappointment etc., helps us to understand our feelings. Emotional intelligence is about responding rather than reacting to our emotional triggers. The term *reserve capacity* refers to the individual's resources for responding effectively to challenging conditions.

Some things in life are beyond our control and just being in the world is stressful. We have little control over what life throws at us but we always have a choice as to how we deal with it.

Jnanamaya Kosha

The Intellectual Level.

Intellectual Stress is not cultivating our skills and talents. We must find ways to fit our hobbies into our lives, improving our knowledge, learning new things. Keep practicing our gifts and talents. Training. By doing so we may be able to avoid some of the degenerative brain diseases.

Pranamaya Kosha

The Energetic Level

Stress accumulates in the organs of the body. Heart, lungs, stomach, liver, kidneys, intestines, bowel, bladder, sex organs, brain.

Anamaya Kosha

The Physical Level.

Physical tension is held in the joints and muscles, the fascia and organs of the body. Some of this stress may be a manifestation on the Spiritual, Mental, Emotional, Intellectual stress that we carry. It may be about bad posture, bad diet, or previous injury & illness.

***5 AUM**

AUM benefits of vibration

Yogic Chanting and "Om"ing. Chanting is a beneficial means of maintaining health and well-being.

Research shows that chanting can

- stabilize heart rate,
- lower blood pressure,
- improve circulation,
- produce endorphins and
- aid the process of metabolism.
- Chanting can also help the mind focus,
- which alleviates stress levels
- deep mental clarity
- promote a sense of connectedness with a higher power.