

BODY ALIGNMENT - Not just getting your “body bits” in balance

Body alignment is not just a physical thing to do with posture, physiology and getting your “body bits” in balance. It has a two-way connection to your emotional state, confidence level and internal equilibrium. Changing one aspect alters another.

Off-loading and on-loading – physically and emotionally

At a physical level, consider how you “on-load”, “off-load” and carry things. Follow the basic guidelines for back care. Bend your knees and not your back. Hold objects close to you. Get help if you need it. Carry out movement rhythmically, rather than in a jerky manner. Try not to twist while lifting and use devices, levers or gadgets that may assist you to pick up, put down or carry things.

Emotionally and responsibility-wise, what loads are you carrying? Toss some of those jobs or roles that you no longer want or enjoy, or that no longer serve you or others. Find alternative ways to get certain things done. Delegate some tasks. When you “off-load” some responsibilities, your physical body may also benefit. Consider too how you emotionally off-load. Do you do it in a quick flight of fancy or do you keep your emotions stored within? However you off-load emotionally (or not), your body may manifest accordingly with diarrhoea, constipation, heavy or light periods, acne, dry skin, “angry” irritable health conditions, growths, abscesses, ulcers or even a heart attack.

Balancing the load at a physiological level

You should not only try for work-life balance in its traditional sense of taking time for both work and leisure and activity and rest, but you should aim for balance at a physiological level too. Think about a mother who is always holding her baby on the same hip, the shopping bag or golf bag being held over the same arm or a patient lying in bed on the same side all day, every day.

Stand or sit as you normally would. Take notice of where and how your body is out of alignment. Are your shoulders forward? How far apart are your feet? Are they unnaturally close or too far apart? Does your head or neck poke out? Is one hip higher than the other? Do you always cross your legs in the same way? Do you favour one side of your body? What is the impact of this imbalance or mal-alignment? What can you do differently to align your body better? Start consciously using both sides of your body and altering your position and “load” in its broadest sense regularly.

Change your state by changing your physiology - a two way effect

If you sit in the same position in the same chair every day, lie in bed for days on end or get laid-up with a health complaint, things starting ceasing to move and you can get stuck - literally and figuratively, physically and emotionally.

When you stop moving, you may also get stuck in your mood, your attitude and your actions. Do something different. Alternate your physical position and your emotional and attitudinal position is likely to change too. Stuck with no ideas at work? Go for a quick walk around the office. Feel yourself falling into a depressed lump whilst watching TV? Get up

and turn it off. Lying in bed all morning feeling depressed with the curtains pulled? Walk to the letterbox in the sun. Change your state by changing your physiology.

Conversely when your mood and attitude changes, you may find yourself being able to move more comfortably or with less pain, you may feel more motivated to exercise and take a long walk with the dog along the beach or go dancing with some friends. Position, movement and mood go hand in hand.

Change your physiology and change your “air” of confidence

Through choices around how you hold yourself, sit, dance, breathe and move, you can convey a totally different “air” about yourself. When you want to feel confident and courageous or less stressed or anxious, use your body to support you to express yourself and your desired state. Putting your shoulders back, chest out, head up, back straight, taking a deep breath and walking with a confident wider stride all go a long way in expressing yourself in a completely different way than if you were cowering, breathing in a shallow fashion and “tip-toeing through the tulips” so to speak. This goes for facial gestures as well. Try smiling and that will certainly lift your spirits and “air of confidence”.

Change paces, Change places

If you want some energy, take on an energetic stance and pace. Try walking more quickly with a bounce in your step. Conversely if you are always dashing from one thing to the next, consciously slow down your pace. Notice the difference. How does a simple change in pace impact you?

Movement and improvement of body functions

The longer you stay immobile or “lacking in exercise”, the stiffer you get, the less motivated you feel, your body functions slow down and a cycle is set up. Even when you are sick in bed, it is good to change position, get up and have a shower if that is possible and have some form of exercise, whether that is passive muscle stretching, arm waving, sit-ups or side bends. Do something to keep you moving as movement makes improvement in the sense of digestion, elimination, muscle tone, general body functions and brain function.

Alignment in the broader scheme of life

What is out of whack in your life at present? Do you have an imbalance of:

- activity and rest?
- work and home-life?
- creativity versus practical and logical tasks?
- time alone and time spent socially with others?
- giving and receiving?

What could you load up more of in your life – in terms of activities and people that fill your soul?

What would you like to off-load out of your life?

How are you going to bring your life back into alignment?