Lab 8 – Lesson 2 – Connecting the Head and Pelvis Part 1

Hey there, it’s Irene and welcome to this exercise. This is part one of, what I’m calling these exercises, connecting the head, your head and the pelvis, your pelvis. So, as with our past exercises, get comfortable, get comfortable on the ground, again, this is gonna be on the floor.

Again, preferably more solid surface like the carpet, or a hardwood floor with some kind of a mat and towel under you, so you have a little bit of cushioning. And also making sure that you are warm enough. All right. So just feel how you contact the floor. Just notice how you contact the floor.

How do you rest and settle into the ground right now? Where are you at, nervous system wise? Is it the beginning of the day? Is it mid-day? Is it late at night? Weekend? Weekday? How is your state? How is your level of arousal or your level of fatigue or calmness?

See where you’re at? And as you rest here, on your back, with your legs long, of course, if your legs need to be bent and standing to take pressure off of your lower back, by all means, go ahead and do that. However, the movements we’re gonna do in this, in this exercise, they may help that.

They may help ease up the tension in the pelvis and the sacrum, and the lower back, the spine. So, monitor that as you go on. As we go along here. And just tune into where your head is. And of course, we all know where our head is, but physically and sensorially, tune into it.

Maybe even bring your hands to your head and touch the skull. Feel this solidity of your head, of your skull. Notice the shape, the contours, the skin, the hair. Maybe the lack of hair, right. Everyone’s different. So notice, just with your fingers, very gently, very gently, just feeling.

And then, bring your hands down to your pelvis. And explore that area. Not manipulating and massaging and digging so much, but just gently bringing attention and a quality of listening to this part of your body. And as you do this, see if you are tensing your hands more than you have to.

Are you breathing in a way that’s a little shallow, or strained? Are you efforting to notice your pelvis? As you notice your pelvis and listen and
touch and feel, can you continue to orient to how you feel your pelvis resting against the floor. So feel the points of contacts, the pressure points.

How do you feel your head as you feel your pelvis? Can you sense the weight of your head against the floor? What else do you focus on? What else can you pay attention to? We could bring just different attention and awareness to different parts of your body, almost in an infinite way.

There’s so many joints, there’s so many points of contact, different textures. I could have you move into a slightly different position and you could feel how the system shifts and senses in a different position. And maybe actually do that. Roll-over to your side for a moment. Just roll-over whatever way you know how.

Find out if you’re holding your breath as you do a different movement right now, as you activate. If you did hold your breath, if I caught you, if I caught you holding your breath, go back to your back, and then see how can you move and roll all your body, your pelvis, your head, to be on your side.

And what side did you choose to turn towards. So many things that we can just gently put attention to that are very simple and very subtle. And while you rest on the side, and I won’t have you stay here for very long, but just feel your pelvis in this position.

Now it’s shifted. Now there’s only, there’s one side that’s got more contact, right? And the other side is on top, is in the air. How does your head rest? Do you need to have your head on your arm? Is it a bit strange to be hanging here without a pillow?

Have you curled your head in a certain way, so it can be supported by the ground? So whatever you’re doing, have your head be resting on the floor, not lifted off of the ground. Noticing your breathing, feeling the ground under you, roll back to your back, and then roll onto your other side, just the way that you do, right now.

As we work more together, you’ll learn different ways of doing this, but for this primary, primary connecting of the head with your pelvis, we’re just having fun with it, experimenting with it. Come to your other side and come to this side and feel the contact with this side on the floor.
And does the side feel different? Does it feel like a different body? Does the pelvis put pressure into the ground in a different way? Okay. Feel your head. Feel your shoulders. This could be uncomfortable for some shoulders, or it might be fine. What are you having to do to accommodate any discomforts?

Can you notice them and simply sense the discomfort, if there is, how do your legs respond to being on your side, are your knees bent, are they long? Do you need to shift your legs so that you’re a bit more secure? And then, roll back onto your back.

Roll back to your back. And then just again, rest with your legs long. Legs long, knees straight. And somewhere by your sides. And bring attention back to your head. Back to the upper portion of your body. And just do a movement. A very small movement, to lift your head as if you’re trying to see your feet.

So you’re gonna elevate your head off of the floor without the help of your hands. Let go, just once or twice, and feel the weight of your head, the weight of your skull. See just, by now you may have already done it. So just pause, pause. Don’t make this into a repetitive, rote lifting of your head over and over and over again.

Just wait for a second. Now, if you think about this, your head is obviously connected to your spine. So, there is your neck that leads into the mid back, and then eventually the lower back and then the lower back feeds into the sacrum, which is your pelvis. So really, you’ve got this long spine that connects the head and the pelvis.

So sense this head of yours, and feel again, how would you lift your head in such a way that it would be easier? What could make it lighter? What could make it less stressful? What might have to happen in the parts beneath you below the head, within the spine and within the pelvis?

So that, when you lift your head off of the floor to look towards your feet, the head becomes a little lighter. What would be the answer to that question? And you might already know the answer. Perhaps you know it and you’re doing that right now. And I’ll give you one little hint, it has to do with the pelvis, has to do with a lot of things.

But just tune back into your pelvis now. What would you have to do to roll your pelvis in such a way that you flatten your back a little bit more against
the ground. So, so often when we lie flat on our back, there's a tendency, at least, in our culture to have quite an arch, quite a bit of space beneath the lower back.

Feel right now if your lower back is a little lifted away from the ground. And I assume that it might be because this is the common trait that we have as human beings that sit up and stand up and we carry a lot of tone, a lot of excess tension in our lower spine.

Which really is our entire spine. But how could you roll? How could you move such a way, in your pelvis, that you flatten the lower back into the floor a little bit. Some may call this a pelvic tilt. Tilting the pelvis to flatten the back. It means you're gonna activate your abdominal muscles a little bit.

So feel this rolling of the pelvis. And right now, I'm having you do this with your legs long. It means that the pull of the legs isn't gonna make the movement very big. So the movement is not big. It's just like centimeters, maybe a few inches. It's not a big, grandiose movement.

It's a very subtle rocking and rolling of the pelvis. And then leave that, let that go. Let that go. Just pause and feel the body again against the ground. And now bring your hands, you're gonna interlace your fingers. So you're gonna interlace your hands. As if for, the best way to describe this is as if you're praying at a pew in a church, right?

You clasp your hands, you put your head down, forehead down on your fingers. I know not all of us might do this, but it's one of the best ways to describe it. So you're gonna clasp your hands, and you're gonna take your palms and put them behind your head.

So it's if you're doing a sit-up, a crunch. So you're gonna do that. Interlace your fingers, place them behind your head, behind your skull, and then point the elbows to the ceiling. Towards the sky, so that you are really supporting the head. And the hands are on the skull, they're not on the neck.

They're on the skull, where your hair is. Elbows point to the ceiling. And with the help of your arms, and the help of your shoulders and your hands, use this help to unweight your head. To lift your head to peer down toward your feet. Toward your belly button.

A few times. So, you're lifting the head. And then lowering it. And remember it's not about how far your go, it's about the quality of the movement. And
how you can think about this movement. Sense what you might be doing that’s making it harder. What are you doing with your throat, with your breath, your breathing?
Is it catching when you lift? Are you struggling? Is there a shaking, right? Let go of all of that strain and effort. And feel, what do you have to do to keep breathing as you lift your head just a tiny bit. But really use the arms. And is it possible to tilt your pelvis into the back or into the ground?

To tilt your pelvis so your lower back flattens. As you lift your head so they happen at the same time. There’s like a folding. A little bit of a folding. There’s this communication between your head and your pelvis, hence the title of this. Connecting the head and the pelvis.

So, the moment you feel your hands come away from the floor and your head lifts away, is the exact same moment that you tilt the pelvis and you feel your lower back flatten. And then as the head comes back, so does the pelvis, just feel how those two can connect, feel how they can talk to each other.

Easy on it, easy, easy. And then have this knowing that your spine is working. It is moving. That the spine can soften a little bit. That the long back muscles. All right, if you think, you’ve got these long back muscles down the sides of your spine. That, as you lift your head and tilt your pelvis those long back muscles are lengthening a little bit.

They’re relaxing and they’re doing that because you’re contracting the front of your body. So this is like a very intelligent abdominal crunch. You’re activating the front muscles to allow the back muscles to relax. And then let that be. Let that go. Just bring your hands back to your sides.

Let your legs be quiet. Let your pelvis just rest. And then bring your feet up to standing. So you’re gonna bend your knees, stand your feet up. Hip width apart so your knees are apart, your feet are apart from each other. And bring your hands back behind your head, interlace your fingers.

But this time, interlace your fingers so that the interlacing is not familiar to you. Which means that you’re gonna have a habitual way that you bring your hands together so feel just the natural way that you clasp your hands. Got it? So feel that and then open your hands so that then it’s in a different interlacing.
Meaning that you still would use these to pray. It’s not inverting them, it’s just moving a finger over either to the left or to the right. It means that the other thumb will be in front and the other baby finger will be behind. So, you’ve just interlaced them in a different, non-habitual interlacing.

And so, we’re creating a pattern shift here, in our movement. In our habitual movement. It will feel weird at first. If you have rings on, the rings might not mold in the right way. And then with this non-habitual interlacing of your hands, bring those hands, they’re still your hands, but it’s a different pattern in which you hold them.

Bring them behind your head, again behind the skull. Your knees again are bent, your feet are standing. You’re breathing easy. Aware of your breath, aware of the floor under you. Don’t forget to pay attention to how you touch the ground behind you. Have your elbows point to the ceiling again and with your hands standing as they are.

And your head, ready to move. Lift the head with the hands, with this different interlacing. While tilting the pelvis. While flattening the back. Now because the feet are standing and there’s a different position with your legs, it might feel different. You might not have as much space to roll to.

Cuz your back is already a bit more closer to the floor. But you do what you can. You feel how there can be a tilting of the pelvis. A curling under the tailbone. As you lift your head. As you lift your head. Your breath, notice your breath. Notice your jaw, notice your teeth, are they tight?

Can your eyes be soft? So you lift, and you don’t lift to the maximum point of effort. So don’t go to the very end point if possible, leave a little bit of space so that you know that you could actually go a little further but you actually don’t test it.

You stay within an easy range, and then you come back. So, you’re connecting again the head and the pelvis via this flexing. You’re flexing the spine a little bit. You’re using the flexor muscles, the abdominal muscles that run all along the front of you. So you’re flexing them, so that the back muscles that extend your spine can let go a little bit.

And you just repeat this a few times with incredible awareness and attention to effort. What do you have to do to keep this easy, to keep your throat free from strain, to allow the air to continually come into the chest and into the belly. Lifting the head, and lowering.
What are your feet doing? Is one foot more secure in the ground? So have a rest, keep your feet standing, bring your head down, let go of the hands. Bring the hands to the side. Just see right now how your feet stand. If you were to lift one foot into the air, not to kick it to the ceiling but to just unweight one foot, is there a preference?

Is there a way in how you rest your feet on the floor? Is one really solid and is one kinda not really there? So just see that, see by testing which leg would be easier to lift, which knee would be easier to come towards your chest.

And if you find a difference, what would have to happen for you to slightly shift the positioning or the weight of how you press against the ground. So, just see, maybe you can self-correct and find a more optimal place for your feet to be resting. Bring the hands back behind your head, this time interlace in the habitual way.

So, can you remember the habitual way? And the weird thing is, is the more you go into the nonhabitual way, the more the habitual way will seem less habitual, if that makes sense. So, go into the habitual way of interlacing your hands, your fingers, place back behind your head, elbows point to the ceiling.

And then continuing your breathing. You could even try breathing in and then on an exhale [SOUND], lift the head, tilt the pelvis, and then as you breathe in [SOUND], come back down. And then again [SOUND] out as you lift the head. And even though I’m giving you this breath coordination, try not to let it turn into just an exercise.

Still feel how you can control the breath. Feel how maybe you can do the opposite. What would happen if you lifted your head on an exhale, or sorry, on an inhale. And then lowered your head on an exhale? There’s no right or wrong way. There’s absolutely no right or wrong way.

It’s about being conscious and aware of what you do, how you do it. Can you lift the head, breath in whatever way you wish, and still feel this connection with the pelvis? Can you start to notice what your ribs are doing? Can you start to notice what your breast bone, your sternum is doing?

What are your eyes doing, can they look to see where your head is going, or do they stay plastered looking at the ceiling, or are they closed? How can
you orient to this activity, to this movement? And see what you’re doing, watch what you’re doing, while doing it, while being aware of your breathing.

Your feet on the floor, the pressure changes behind your back. Feel the grip of the hands on your head, is it really tight or can it be a little less tight? Feel the support you give your head, but not a squeezing support, that strains the hands. So how can you continually tune into the hands in the way that you tune into your breath?

Doing only what is necessary to execute this movement, to have this movement be easy. To feel this connection between the head and the pelvis via the spine, and the ribs, and the sternum. Feeling the support of your feet on the floor and then let that go. Just let the hands come down, let the legs go long.

And feel right now, feel how you press against the ground. How does your, how is the tone in the lower back? How do you feel the length of your back? Is there more of your back that you feel? What’s the quality of the head like resting against the ground?

The quality of your pelvis? Is there a tendency to wanna have your eyes open or closed right now?

What's the impulse? And then, do you remember that first sort of movement I got you to do at the beginning? Remember to lift your head without any help from the hands.

Feel what that’s like now, unweighted your head. Lift your head to look down towards your feet and see has something been learned in your system. What do you need to engage, that isn’t in the head and neck that can help the head be lighter? How can you move the spine, engage the flexors, the abdominal?

Often when we work with these muscles, so many folks will say that their head feels lighter after this. Now, that might not be the case for you or it might be. It might be, if it doesn’t feel that way, then don’t give up. It’s possible to connect to that.

It just means that there needs to be a little more refinement, a little more attention to how can hook in your head to your pelvis and feel the spine,
press back into the ground. How can the spine and the pelvis press back into the ground, so that your head can have an anchor point?

And, then leave that, just let that be. Maybe orient to touch, feel the back of your head against the ground. Roll your head very slowly a little one way, other way left, right. And, then come up to stand and feel what standing is like. Just tune in to standing, slowly come up, feel your feet under you.

Sense if there’s anything that you notice in standing that’s slightly different in where your body is positioned. Where is your posture, where do your eyes look? A common occurrence when someone does this is that they’ll find that their eyes are higher, they’re seeing higher. And the reason for that, if that is what you’re noticing, is the back muscles have been lengthened they’ve been relaxed.

Therefore when you stand up, there’s a little more juice in them to activate and then that pulls the head up a little bit on top of your spine. The flip-side would be if you have a tendency to be too erect in your spine to stand up too straight, which is also a common thing.

You might find that your head is more forward and that you’re seeing further down. So everyone’s gonna be different. So I’ll end it there, have a little walk. And connecting the head and pelvis part two will dive a little deeper into this, into these concepts. Into this capacity to flex the spine and connect the head and the pelvis via a few different movements.

So, we will see you then.