



木 火 土 金 水
Harmony · Balance · Wellbeing

ChiBall®



Teacher Training Manual



ChiBall[®]

Teacher Training

MODULE 4



木火土金水
Harmony · Balance · Wellbeing



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Teacher Training Welcome Message

ChiBall is a mind body exercise programme which uniquely blends the theory of vibrational healing (colour therapy and aromatherapy) with the philosophy of traditional Chinese medicine. ChiBall uses a combination of six ancient and modern exercise practises as a framework through which we can bring harmony, balance and wellbeing to our lives.

The Tao Te Ching, an ancient Chinese text of 81 short poems written by the sage Lao Tzu forms the basis of the Tao and provides the foundations of modern Chinese philosophy as well as that of ChiBall. One of the three great religions in China, Taoism is based on the concept of the Tao or the Way, as the universal power through which all life flows. From this teaching comes the principles of balance through yin and yang, Chi (or life force), the meridian system and the five elements. The Tao has the ability to transform lives, build communities and create empires. It provides a means for seeing where you are now, what you would like to change and transform, and what steps you can take to reach a state of contentment and wellbeing where the mind, body and spirit are united.

ChiBall integrates six movement modalities which gives it several layers of depth. With study and practise you will discover that within the apparent complexity there is simplicity and peace. Stepping out of our comfort zones and challenging ourselves to learn new concepts and skills is an exciting and creative opportunity. The ChiBall Education Programme provides a variety of learning experiences and training materials - online, in private and through practical training workshop experiences - so that you are fully supported along your journey of developing skills and mastery in each modality. Commitment to yourself in this learning process is a vital ingredient to becoming an accomplished, knowledgeable and skilful ambassador for the most unique holistic exercise method in the world today. The common thread in all of ChiBall is a focus on *yourself* throughout.

Our values are based on the five elements and so reflect the values evoked in the Tao. As an organisation, and as a practise, ChiBall is founded upon:-

Innovation (Wood Element) – Innovation is the discovery of new ways to create value and benefit for our customers and colleagues. Innovation is the life-blood of our organization, and is a continuous and organic process.

Passion (Fire Element) – We include our hearts in our work and in our actions instead of just using our heads. Passion is what helps create rich experiences and meaningful connections between people which transcends any marketing, advertising or public relations efforts.

Authenticity (Earth Element) – Authenticity is present when we behave in ways that are sincere and true to our commitments and intentions. As leaders, we must cultivate trust, build on strengths, and increase commitment to shared goals through genuine dialogue with all key stakeholders.

Respect (Metal Element) - Respect is treating others as you would like to be treated; being considerate of people's feelings; recognizing the value and achievements of people, property, the environment, the company, the brand and valuing yourself as a real ChiBall contributor.

Simplicity (Water Element) – Simplicity includes being clear and responsible in our actions and communications. Simplicity is about having an uncomplicated approach in what we do and services we provide. The value of simplicity allows us to appreciate the things and people that make a huge difference in our lives.

The ChiBall Education Programme is a progressive one—the Practical Intensive Teacher Training extends and applies the concepts and knowledge learnt during the Distance Learning Modules. The movements taught during this training are foundational to each of the six disciplines, some of which are found in the generic ChiBall Class.

After you have completed your Practical Intensive course, you will have 12 weeks to practice the movement sequence of the generic ChiBall Class after which you can submit your DVD for assessment to become a ChiBall Teacher. You may submit a DVD of your class for assessment even if you do not wish to be assessed as a Certified Teacher. After passing the DVD assessment you may go on to do the Seasonal



Workshops. These courses deepen your knowledge of the seasonal aspects of ChiBall, and teach additional moves and sequences specifically created for each Seasonal ChiBall Class.

The purpose of ChiBall is to create a platform for self-discovery. Our philosophy at ChiBall is that exploration of the self, through dedicated and disciplined practice, cultivates a state of inner strength, peace and wellbeing, enabling a harmonious and balanced life. The goal of all ChiBall Teachers is to provide knowledge, experience and support to their students or participants so that they may be inspired to deepen their own unique journeys towards wellness and health.

We hope you enjoy your Journey!

Maria-Ann Camilleri
CEO



Course Objectives

ChiBall can be explained in an hour, understood in a week, learnt in a few months, but will provide a lifetime of discovery. Having studied the Distance learning Modules of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Musicality and Movement and Colour and Aromatherapy, the Teacher Training course provides an opportunity to apply this basic grounding to the movement disciplines of ChiBall. Starting with a revision and recap of the Distance Learning Modules, the training course focuses on each specific modality:

- ChiBall Tai Chi-Qi Gong
- ChiBall Dance
- ChiBall Yoga
- ChiBall Pilates
- ChiBall Release
- ChiBall Relaxation and Meditation.

The individual modalities are combined into a one hour generic, balanced class pre choreographed to a Royalty Free music CD which is delivered and practised each day, usually first thing. Students are encouraged to present elements of the daily ChiBall class during the course so that by the last day of training they feel confident to deliver a complete ChiBall Class.

Those students that feel confident may opt to be assessed at this point, and may therefore go on to teach classes immediately after completing the course.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module you will be able to:

1. Understand the framework of the specific modalities that relate to ChiBall
2. Provide ChiBall Class participants with knowledge and understanding of the use of movement techniques and the integration of the TCM philosophies, colour and aroma as they relate to ChiBall
3. Lead a generic ChiBall class and understand how to get the best out of the exercise program
4. Explain each of the key principles of the various modalities and lead a class that integrates exceptional technical and philosophical know-how



Health Precautions

In the case of any serious health problems, a doctor should be consulted as to whether or not it is appropriate to participate in regular exercise this includes people over 35 years old who have been physically inactive. Many doctors today are aware of the value of low impact mindful exercise and frequently recommend it for people suffering the effects of depression, stress and tension or for those recovering from serious injury such as broken or severely strained limbs.

There are however, some temporary and permanent health conditions which make it sensible to avoid some exercises:

- **Damaged Limbs**
In the case of deformed or damaged limbs, straining to attain a posture should be avoided at all times. The body will open and yield when it is ready to.
- **High Blood Pressure; Heart Conditions; Weak Eye Capillaries; Detached Retina**
Avoid all inverted (upside down) exercises.
- **Hearing Weakness**
Balancing poses may be affected. Using a wall or chair for support helps gain confidence. Back bends are best practised with guidance and modifications, using bolsters, chairs, blocks.
- **Varicose Veins**
Avoid holding cross legged positions or poses which involve sitting on the feet, as they restrict blood flow through the veins. Include stretching and relaxing leg movements which promote circulation.
- **Hernias**
All back bending poses should be avoided or taken to a very slight stretch only.
- **Menstruation**
During heavy flow, avoid inverted postures such as headstands and shoulderstands. Breathing exercises which incorporate stomach contractions or uplifts should also be avoided. The plough and the shoulderstand can actually bring relief to painful menstrual periods for advanced practitioners of Yoga only.
- **Pregnancy**
Relaxation and meditation can be practised all the way through pregnancy. As for menstruation, inverted exercises should be avoided and overhead arm movements kept brief.
- **Dizziness**
Stop, lie down and relax for as long as necessary whenever dizziness or discomfort is experienced.

If in doubt, seek advice from a qualified Medical Practitioner

ChiBall Tai Chi-Qi Gong



The Wood Element

- Rising Yang -

Characteristics of the Wood Element

Energetic

rising - awakening - new growth - new developments - renewal

Physical

flexibility of joints, muscle, ligaments - muscular strength and control - adaptability - eyesight

Emotional

frustration - impatience - anger - aggression - control - rigid attitudes

Mind

flexibility in our thinking - ability to make plans and decisions - develop new ideas - be organised



The Wood Element - Tai Chi- Qi Gong

Tai Chi-Qi Gong is an integration of Qi Gong and Tai Chi based exercises that are focused primarily on cultivating a healthy body and mind. Qi Gong is said to be the art of cultivating energy and Tai Chi is the art of managing it. ChiBall incorporates the essence of both Tai Chi and Qi Gong and aims to honour the ancestral path of both disciplines by incorporating the same foundations for movement and practise.

Qi Gong

Qi Gong literally means “energy exercises” or “energy cultivation through exercise” and is often referred to as “the healing art of Qi Gong”. Healing Qi Gong practise is a combination of movement, meditation, breathing, and discipline to foster a healthy mind, body and spirit. The purpose of Qi Gong is to reinforce physical power and through dedicated practise endeavours to establish harmony between heaven, earth and humanity. Within the philosophy of Qi Gong is the concept of the Three Treasures – Energy, Essence and Spirit. Energy is chi (Qi) – the universal life force, essence is the existence of all that is, and spirit encompasses mind and awareness. The traditional Chinese masters created a five step strategy to strengthen and regulate the Three Treasures and promote optimal health and longevity called the “Five Regulations”.

1. Regulate the Body

The body is regulated through achieving a deep state of physical relaxation and performing a series of movements that relax, stretch, strengthen and energise, stimulate circulation, open the energy channels (meridians) and massage internal organs.

2. Regulate the Breath

The breath provides the bridge between your physical self, your nervous system and your consciousness or ‘mind’. The synchronisation of the body and breath during movement facilitates the flow of energy (chi) throughout the body and internal organs. The long, slow, soft and smooth Qi Gong breathing promotes softening, relaxing and the ability to go deeper into the movement

3. Regulate the Mind

When the mind is still and calm we can feel and direct qi with intent. This is achieved by fully engaging, focusing on form, posture, movement, breathing, rhythm and allowing no opportunity for distraction from the practise.

4. Regulate the Chi

Having achieved the first three regulations the body, breath and mind, a calm, peaceful, empty and light state is attained and the ability to sense and lead Chi to physical blockages or stagnation’s intensifies. In this state we become the commander and director of our lives, and energy flows easily and effortlessly.

5. Regulate the Spirit

The fifth element of Qi Gong training is called ‘Tiao Shen’. It is the ultimate goal and gateway to enlightenment, all knowing awareness, becoming one with the Tao and returning to the source.



Tai Chi

Within the ChiBall programme, TaiChi Qi Gong represents the wood element, the Springtime of year; a time of rising, awakening energy. The corresponding partner organs are the liver and gallbladder. The emotional and physical theme is patience, humour and flexibility.

Tai Chi, as it is practiced in the west today, incorporates a number of so-called forms (sometimes also called 'sets') which consist of a sequence of movements. Many of these movements originate from the martial arts which were based on the natural movements of animals and birds. These movements are performed slowly, softly and gracefully with smooth and even transitions between them.

Tai Chi practise in most of the Western world today is used as meditative exercise for the body for stress relief, and to balance and calm the mind and body.

One of the avowed aims of Tai Chi is to cultivate the circulation of 'chi' within the body and to foster a calm and tranquil mind by focusing on the precise execution of each exercise. Optimal balance, alignment, refined motor control, rhythm of movement, the origin of movement from the body's centre focuses the mind and gradually leads the practitioner into a moving meditative and almost trance state. Physically the practice of Tai Chi can correct poor postural alignment, movement patterns, improve mobility, flexibility, agility and strength.

ChiBall Tai Chi-Qi Gong

The purpose of ChiBall Tai Chi-Qi Gong at the beginning of every ChiBall class is to establish posture, ground and centre the body, calm the mind, awaken and stimulate chi and to bring a flow and relaxation through movements. The foundation ChiBall Tai Chi exercises have been inspired by movements from the Tai Chi 24 yang form and the Qi Gong 'Eight Precious Exercises'.

The ancient wisdom of Tai Chi and Qi Gong teaches us about yin and yang in action and how depleted chi can be replenished within the body. We also learn to appreciate that the slower we move the more we feel and the more we learn about ourselves.

Tai Chi and Qi Gong represents the Wood Element in ChiBall.

The Essence of Qi Gong

Qi Gong (Chi Kung) brings a more in-depth focus on the meridian system and the inner organs. In order to add depth to your teaching practise, consider the following:

- Knowledge of all the inner organs and where they are in the body. Use breathing and visualisation to send energy to each organ.
- Knowledge of all the meridians and their pathways through the body. Use breathing and movement to tone and stretch each meridian
- Become intimately acquainted with the breath. Expand the breath within each movement, improving lung capacity and concentration. Keep the breath long, slow, soft and smooth.

Breathing for Qi Gong practise

During physical exercise it is most common to synchronise the breathing with movement of the body. In Qi Gong practise breathing is also synchronised with the movement of energy. This is achieved through single minded concentration of the mind on breath and movement which is essential so that both aspects remain flowing and connected. As soon as the mind is distracted by internal chatter, the breath falters, scattering and dissipating the energy.

Visualisation and mindful intention during practise of energy being drawn in and along the meridians or internal organs is said to have a resounding affect on healing inner organs, moving stagnant chi and generally rejuvenating the body's internal chi. Being able to recall clear images of how inner organs look and where they are housed inside the body increases the intensity and ability to heal internal disharmonies.

Basic Stance

- The foundation for all Qi Gong practise incorporates two positions called "Wu Chi Stance" and "Horse Riding Stance". Wu Chi Stance is the foundation for all Qi Gong exercises.
- In Wu Chi the feet are placed shoulder width apart to create a firm and stable framework for the exercises. Horse Riding Stance is a deeper squatting position with the feet wider than shoulder width.
- For easy adjustment and balance during practise, it is important to lower the pelvic centre and extend the dantien downward towards the earth by slightly bending the knees as if sitting on a bar stool that has been placed about 5cms (2") below the buttocks.
- The spine is elongated by extending the tail bone down towards the earth at a 30 degree angle and the occipital protuberance skull bone extending upwards at a 30 degree angle to the sky or heavens. The crown of the head is in alignment with the navel and the midpoint on the ground between the feet. The posture is vertically aligned between the crown of head baihui, pelvis, huiyin, and front of the ankle (jeixi) feet.
- The crown of the head extends up and away from the ground and navel. The head is considered to represent 'heaven' and the pelvis and feet the 'earth'.
- The Wu Chi promotes energy flow between these two points. Wu Chi is considered to be a most important and essential posture in the practise of Qi Gong and all Chinese martial arts.

Posture

The main components of posture for the practise of Qi Gong exercises are:

Feet

The feet are shoulder width apart and in classical training, are parallel. Correct alignment of the feet is considered to be essential for successful execution of postures whether practicing Tai Chi, Qi Gong or Yoga. Too much time spent in fashionable shoes (including athletic training shoes) can weaken foot musculature. Strong feet keep us firmly connected to the ground. The saying "they have both feet firmly planted into the ground" describes someone who is self directed, determined and a good perspective on life. A sense of groundedness or connection with the earth according to Yoga and Qi Gong philosophy, keeps the mind and emotions calm and stable. Once we lose the firm, stable foundation of our feet we begin losing strength and independence in life. Weakness in the feet causes weaknesses in the ankles, shins, knees, hips, pelvis, lower, mid then upper spine, neck and head. According to these philosophies, agility and energy into our more senior years is reliant on strong, flexible feet.

Knees

When practising Qi Gong exercises for the first time, it is important not to bend the knees too deeply, particularly if there is a history of knee problems. In classical Qi Gong the toes are usually parallel. To reduce discomfort in the knees, turn the toes out slightly and press the knees (without force) towards the little toe side of the feet. This recruits strength and energy from the thigh muscles to support the knees and promotes overall stability of the upper leg.

Pelvis & Spine

The pelvis is relaxed as if suspended between two poles - the hip joints. A slight of the tail bone downward and bending of the knees, transfers the body weight onto the thighs which frees the lower back and hips. The spine then feels light, secure and supported in the Wu Chi stance.

Abdomen

Abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing is practised in both Tai Chi and Qi Gong. The abdomen swells or distends during inhalation and flattens or is compressed during exhalation. Good abdominal tone is essential for healthy diaphragmatic action when expelling air and gases from the body via the lungs. Strengthening the abdominal muscles greatly enhances our breathing.

Chest & Shoulders

Concentration on the heart area allows the chest to open and expand naturally. Visualising the heart lifting during practise draws the thoracic spine (middle back area) into the centre of the body, frees the diaphragm for breathing and contributes to overall awareness of spinal alignment. When attention is placed on lifting the heart area, the shoulders will usually relax and find their natural alignment. However slightly rounding the shoulders (without collapsing or hollowing the chest) broadens and softens the middle of the back, reducing the risk of tension being held there.



Head, Neck & Chin

The head is balanced and held as if being lifted away from the shoulders. A neck which is long with the chin drawn in very slightly, aids neck alignment and ensures softness and relaxation of the throat muscles. Tension in the neck or throat impedes energy flow to the head, therefore being mindful of how the head is being held when changing direction is of the utmost importance during Qi Gong. Checking the position of the chin throughout practise promotes continued alignment of the cervical spine. The chin should be slightly tucked in so that the area below the occipital bone (rear base of skull) remains open and free.

Arms, Elbows & Hands

Opening or hollowing the armpits opens the heart channel. The inner elbow joint should be turned in towards the body, with the palms relaxed, hollowed, facing backwards, fingers slightly curled. The Lao-gung points in the centre of the palms are considered to be the most powerful points in the body from which energy can be transmitted. Keeping all the joints of the body soft allows chi to travel unimpeded along the meridian channels.

Face

Eyes

The gaze from the eyes is soft. Focus on a point on the horizon or on the ground about six feet ahead (two metres) and allow everything around that point to go slightly out of focus. Relax all the tiny little muscles behind the eyes and allow the eyeballs to drop deeper into the eye socket.

Mouth

Relax the jaw and the root of the tongue, and allow the throat to soften. The teeth may touch, but be aware of clamping or clenching of the jaw.

Tongue

Placing the tip of the tongue on the roof of the mouth just behind the top teeth creates a closed circuit of energy by connecting the two central channels in the body - the governing and conception vessels. When practising Tai Chi, Qi Gong it is important to keep the tongue gently connected to the roof of the mouth so that internal chi can be concentrated and then transported throughout the internal body.

Awareness of Chi


As chi energy is increased and begins to move through the systems, various sensations are experienced, from tingling, trembling, sweating, heat or cold. These sensations can occur in the extremities, abdomen, spine or the body as a whole. These physical experiences can be a combination of muscular responses to the exercises as well as indications of chi opening up the energy system to move freely throughout the meridian system and inner organs. As the body is nourished with breathing, movement, and internal chi, circulation of both blood and chi improves, aiding elimination of toxic substances and bacteria which can cause degeneration and disease in the body. Burping, coughing and flatulence during practise are indications of internal imbalances in the stomach, liver and digestive systems. With regular practise the system becomes healthier and these symptoms begin to subside. As with any other exercise discipline, warming up and cooling down exercises prevent muscle soreness. Gentle moving stretches before and after practise, prepares and then settles the body and chi.

Additional Notes

When practising TaiChi Qi Gong, movements always start to the left. The directional aspects within the practice presupposes the practitioner starts facing South, therefore the movements start to the east following the rising of the sun.

Qi Gong Exercises

Opening position (Wu Chi)


Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Qi Gong Exercise
<p>All Yin (front) and Yang (back) Meridians and organs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms the basis of all movements 	

Teaching Opening Position

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart
- Arms hang down
- Palms face the thighs
- Relax to whole body
- Knees slightly bent
- Clear the mind
- Ball in the R hand

Remain in this position for several minutes.


Press the Sky/Push the Earth

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Qi Gong Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Heart • Stomach • Spleen Organs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an uplifting effect on the stomach and spleen organs. • Balances and co-ordinates chi in stomach, spleen, liver, gallbladder. • Stimulates peristalsis in digestive system. • Balances yin/yang energies. 	

Teaching Press the Sky/Push the Earth

- Stand in Wu Chi stance, your feet shoulder width apart.
- Place the Chiball just above the naval with right hand resting on top and left hand underneath the ball
- Inhale to prepare
- Exhale: rotate the ball so that your hands are either side of it and continue to raise the ball in your left hand up towards the sky whilst pressing the right palm downwards towards the earth. Keep a soft gaze to the horizon
- Inhale! lower the ball down towards your naval as you bring your right hand up to hold underneath the ball
- Repeat on the other side

Pulling the Bow

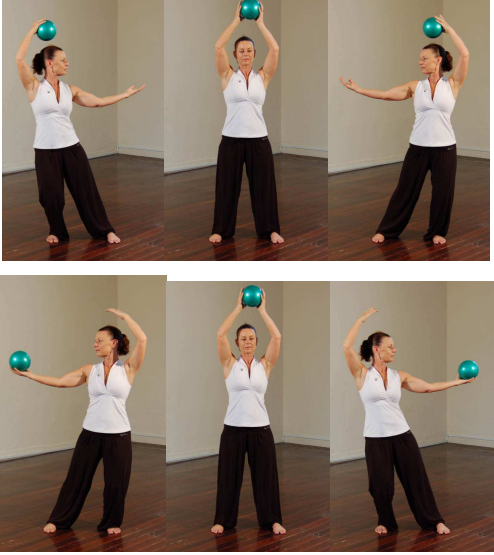
Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Qi Gong Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pericardium • Lungs • Large Intestine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves circulation in the head and neck. • Improves posture and balance. • Expands chest and improves breathing. 	

Teaching Pulling the Bow

- Step out Wide into horse stance with the ChiBall at the lower dantien
- Inhale: draw the ChiBall up towards the chest
- Exhale: circle the ChiBall to the left side in both hands allowing your gaze to follow the ball
- Inhale: leave the ChiBall in the left hand and pull the right hand back as if pulling a bow
- Exhale: bring both hands back down to the lower dantien allowing your gaze to return to the horizon
- Repeat on the other side

Alternative hand can be used: ChiBall in the right hand, extending fingers of left hand


Dancing Over the Rainbow

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Qui Gong Exercise
Gallbladder, Heart, Small Intestine, Pericardium, Triple Heater, Lung, Large Intestine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotes circulation of Chi in all six arm meridians • dissipates tension in upper back and neck • relieves headaches • nourishes the shen • improves concentration • stimulates and nourishes the brain and relieves constriction and tension in stomach organ. 	

Teaching "Dancing Over Rainbow"

- Inhale, raise the body and raise the arms above the head palms facing each other. Hold them slightly wider than shoulder width, elbows relaxed.
 - Transfer the body weight into the right leg, and bend the knee – keep the left knee slightly bent and slightly turn out the left foot.
 - Open the left arm out to the left side palm up and turn the head to look at the palm of the left hand.
 - Curve the right arm over head, the right palm facing the crown of the head.
- Exhale, return to the centre both arms over head.
 - Transfer the body weight into the left leg, and bend the knee – keep the right knee slightly bent and slightly turn out the right foot.
 - Open the right arm out to the right side, palm up and turn the head to look at the palm of the right hand.
 - Curve the left arm over head, the left palm facing the crown of the head.
- The ball can be in either hand and changes when it moves overhead.
- Repeat 6 – 12 times

Energy Punch

Meridian/Organs Activated	BENEFITS	CHIBALL QI GONG EXERCISE
<p style="text-align: center;">Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stimulates the central nervous system • increases breathing capacity and overall vitality • promotes circulation of blood and Chi • stimulates, energises and eliminates toxins from the liver 	

Teaching Energy Punch

- Begin in Wu Chi stance or Horse Riding stance with toes turned out slightly.
- Squat quite deeply with spine straight and pelvis tilted slightly forward.
- Clench your hands to make an open fist as if holding a small bird.
- Place the ChiBall in the left hand, bend the elbows and pull them back to rest each side of the waist.
- INHALE: - without moving. Glare forwards with the eyes wide open with angry intention.
- EXHALE: Punch the left fist/ChiBall forward in a screwing action with palm facing down and make a loud "HOO" sound (*optional, but recommended*).
- INHALE: Draw left fist back into the body and pass the ChiBall across to the right hand.
- EXHALE: Punch the right fist/ChiBall forward in a screwing action with palm facing down and make a loud "HOO" sound.



The Essence of Tai Chi

The healing art of Qi Gong is best learned first before commencing a serious practise of Tai Chi. Qi Gong teaches the foundations of standing, breathing, mindfulness and the concept of Chi. Although Tai Chi uses a similar model to Qi Gong, the motivation in the Western world is on learning the set of movements. Often the essential foundation for correct stance and posture, chi, yin and yang are overlooked or just not taught. Hence the recommendation to have a sound Qi Gong practise before embarking on other traditional martial art based disciplines.

There are five ways of moving chi in exercise

Up & Down

Movements which lift and movements which descend.

Forward & Retreating

Moving the body forward from one foot to the other on the exhalation using the inhalation whilst retreating.

Sideways

Moving or travelling laterally.

Away from the axis

Arm and leg movements which extend outwards away from the mid line of the body.

Towards the axis

Arm and leg movements which pull inward or move towards the mid line of the body.

Principles of Tai Chi Practice

Chi

Mindfully feel the body draw Chi (energy) into the dantien through:

- The soles of the feet.
- Palms of the hands.
- Crown of the head.

Mindfully feel the body being charged with Chi by focusing on key areas:

- Warm hands, feet and face.
- Tingling fingers.
- Warmth in the hands and feet and general warmth throughout the body. When the core body temperature has risen this is evidence that Chi is circulating throughout the body.
- Stance, Posture & Form

Ground the body with visualizations:

- Feel the whole foot spread across the floor.
- Imagine roots growing out of the soles of the feet into the ground.
- Keep the knees soft. Chi cannot travel through locked joints.

The spine is straight

- The shoulders remain over the pelvis or dantien.
- The pelvis and dantien are centred between the heel and the centre of the foot.
- Move the dantien in the required direction and the body follows in one complete unit.
- Chi travels along the spine effortlessly when it is straight. Chi becomes stuck when the shoulders are collapsed and the spine is rounded.

Keep a 60/40 pressure when transferring weight from one leg to the other:

- As you lean across from one foot to the other make sure the weight bearing leg is carrying 60% of the body weight and the unloading leg retains 40% of the body weight.
- The legs will be working hard effortlessly.
- You will remain centred.



Make all movements as relaxed as you possibly can:

The mind cannot wander if you keep your attention on the body.

Every time you move bring your attention to a certain body part and one by one mindfully release tension from that area

- feet
- knees
- buttocks
- lower back
- ribs
- arms
- shoulders
- neck

Final tips for correct practise

- In Tai Chi we always correct from the feet upwards
- Maintain your "Tai Chi square" foot placement when turning and stepping. This means at all times keeping the feet hip width apart allowing the toes of the back foot to turn out at 45 degrees.
- Move from the navel when you change direction.
- Avoid crossing the mid-line of the body when extending your arm.
- Synchronize the knees/elbows, ankles/wrists when moving.
- Let the breath dictate the movement.


Principles of Tai Chi Breathing

The breathing comes from the dantien. Begin by placing both hands just below the navel with the fingers pointing towards the mid line of the body and finger-tips touching:

- Breathe in and feel the abdomen swell and the hands move apart.
- Breathe out and feel the abdomen shrink and hands move towards each other.
- Feel the back expand into the kidney area. Then feel the ribcage expand sideways. Finally feel the whole torso expanding and contracting like a large cylinder.
- Try to make the exhalation slightly longer than the inhalation to avoid hyperventilation (Please note: hyperventilation is common when breathing exercises are first introduced. It is important to fully exhale and allow the inhalation be a natural response rather than a grabbing one)
- Tai Chi movement should follow the breath. The breath should never chase the movement. The breath is primary, the movement secondary. Breathing in and out through the nose cleanses and rejuvenates the brain and is used as the standard method when performing the slow movements.. Breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth cleanses the blood and releases toxins from the internal organs and is sometimes used in faster and more fighting forms.

Tai Chi Exercises


Wave Arms

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Tai Chi Exercise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Yin (front) and Yang (back) meridians and organs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balances yin and yang energies Brings harmony to the emotions and clarity to the mind Calms and regulates the breath Good for developing synchronization of the movement and breath Relaxes arms, shoulders and entire body Builds strength in thighs, knees, ankles Improves circulation and stimulates entire body Excellent for alleviating arthritis Sedates rising liver chi 	

Teaching Wave Arms:

- Inhale: float the arms upwards in front of the body leading with the back of the hands with palms down as if tracing the shape of a very large ChiBall. Draw the shoulder blades down to bring the hands slightly in towards the chest as you straighten the knees.
- Exhale: lower the arms down in front as you bend the knees
- Alternate the ChiBall between left and right hand by passing the ball behind the back

Butterfly Arms

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Tai Chi Exercise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lungs • Large Intestine • Pericardium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently stimulates breathing and relaxes neck, shoulders and upper back. 	

Teaching Butterfly:

- Stand in wu chi stance with the ChiBall at the lower dantien.
- Inhale: take the ChiBall in your left hand and float arms out to the side keeping your wrists and elbows soft. As you raise the arms make sure the tips of the shoulders stay down and that the elbows remain below the shoulders.
- Exhale: soften the elbows and float the arms down swapping the chiball into the other hand
- Repeat on the other side

Circle the Sun

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Tai Chi Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gallbladder Heart Small Intestine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands and stretches waist and ribcage. Releases stiffness and tension from shoulders and upper back. Diaphragm is stretched and exercised which helps improve breathing. 	

Teaching Circle the Sun:

- Stand in wu chi stance and hold the ChiBall in both hands just below the heart area.
- Inhale: place the ChiBall in the left hand and circle the arm across the body towards the right shoulder, rotating the palm upwards above and behind the head.
- Exhale: complete the circle and finish at the lower dantien
- The opposite hand without the ball presses the earth and stabilizes the movement



Push the Wind

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Tai Chi Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gallbladder Large Intestine Small Intestine Tripple Heater Organs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liver Stomach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Releases tension in the upper back and shoulders. Stimulates spinal nerves, strengthens spinal muscles. Increases blood flow to the brain. Massages liver and stomach and aids digestion. Boosts the immune system 	

Teaching Push the Wind

- Stand in wu chi stance with the ChiBall at the chest. Inhale to prepare
- Exhale: with the ChiBall in the left hand bring the ChiBall to the left shoulder and extend the arm forward keeping the elbow soft and the shoulder back. At the same time pressing the right palm down towards the floor keeping soft at the elbow
- Inhale: rotate the left palm upwards to draw the ChiBall back at the same time bringing the right hand back into place on the top of the ball


Circle the Moon

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Tai Chi Exercise	
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallbladder • Heart • Small Intestine • Lung • Large Intestine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens and expands chest and improves breathing. • Releases stiffness and tension in the shoulders, upper back, ribcage, waist. 		

Teaching Circle the Moon

- Stand in wu chi stance with and hold the ChiBall in both hands at the lower dantien.
- Inhale: place the ChiBall in the left hand with the palm upwards keeping the elbow soft, draw the ChiBall around behind the back allowing your hips to follow the movement of the ChiBall
- Exhale: as the ChiBall comes round to your right shoulder as you rotate the left palm downwards to complete the circle bringing the ChiBall down to the lower dantien
- Repeat circling out to the right side.
- This exercise gives a deep massage to the hips and lower back

Scoop the Chi

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Tai Chi Exercise
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple Heater • Pericardium • Heart • Lung <p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes circulation and effortless flow of breath with movement. 	

Teaching Scoop the Chi

- Begin with your feet together, ChiBall held at navel area.
- Inhale: place ball in right hand and open right arm and right leg with foot flexed to your imaginary right hand corner.
- Exhale: lunge forward and reach for the ChiBall in front of you, keeping the left foot firmly planted into the ground.
- Inhale: lunge back onto the left leg and draw a circle with the ChiBall in your right hand towards an imaginary corner behind you.
- Exhale: lunge forward again and reach for the ChiBall in front of you.
- Inhale: lunge back onto the left leg and draw a circle with the ChiBall in your left hand towards the opposite imaginary corner behind you.
- Exhale: lunge forward and extend the arms out to the front.
- Inhale: transfer your weight back onto the left leg.
- Exhale: face the front, bringing the feet together.



Further Reading and Reference

TAI CHI

The Inner Structure of Tai Chi
by MANTAK CHIA & JUAN LI – Healing Tao Books

Principles of Tai Chi
PAUL BRECHER – Thorsons

QI GONG

Mastering Miracles
DR HONG LIU – Warner Books

The Art of Qi Gong
by Wong Kiew Kit – Element Books

The Way of Qi Gong
KENNETH S. COHEN – Bantam Books

Qi Gong – Harnessing the Power of the Universe
DANIEL REID – Simon & Schuster

EASTERN PHILOSOPHY

The Lao Tzu's TAO TE CHING
Edited by Timothy Freke - Piatkus

The Lao Tzu's TAO TE CHING
Translated by JOHN C.H. Wu – Shambhala

The Lao Tzu's TAO TE CHING
Translated by DC Lau – Penguin Classics

ChiBall Dance & Yoga



The Fire Element - Radiant Yang -

Characteristics of the Fire Element

Energetic

Outward - active - dispersing - energising - uplifting

Physical

restless hands - stuttering - high blood pressure - physical burn out - circulatory system

Emotional

concentration - self-awareness - passion - joy - good spirits - laughter - good sense of humour

Mind

insomnia - peace - contentment - mental fatigue - happiness - communicative



The Fire Element Part 1 – ChiBall Dance

Introduction

Dance within the ChiBall programme represents the FIRE Element, the High summer time of year and the dispersing energy of the season. The corresponding partner organs are Heart and Small Intestine and their secondary partners, Pericardium and Triple Heater. The emotional and physical theme is 'Love and Joy, protection and our ability to ride the highs and lows of life'.

Dance is a universal language. Dance is a way for life to express itself through the body. Every culture around the world has its own distinctive music, rhythms and dance to naturally inspire us as human beings to move in harmony with each other, the world around us and within us, give thanks to our deities, and celebrate the miracle of life itself. Dance is the most natural way for us to unleash suppressed emotions, release tension, rejuvenate and liberate the body, mind and emotions.

The purpose of ChiBall Dance is to invigorate and to set free the mind, body and spirit by combining energetic, dynamic, continuous movement patterns with slow, gentle, fluid ones. The purpose of the seasonal dance sequences is to detoxify, increase circulation and oxygen supply to the muscles, the brain and other internal systems; stimulate the metabolism, promote mobility, agility and flexibility and most important of all, to liberate chi.

ChiBall Dance is based on the principles of Classical Ballet, Contemporary Dance, Modern Jazz and "Exercise to Music".

Classical Ballet

Classical Ballet is the most formal of dance styles and uses a set vocabulary of dance steps and adheres to traditional ballet technique. Classical ballet is best known for its unique features and techniques, such as pointe work, turn-out of legs and feet. Training emphasises beautiful line and high extensions and its graceful, flowing, precise movements and delicate qualities makes it a distinctive form of dance.

ChiBall Dance uses in an informal way, the principles of posture, alignment, centre, balance and graceful movement.

The Nine Principles of Classical Dance that are reflected in ChiBall Dance are:

- Firmness in the legs and feet
- Posture
- Placement of feet, legs, hips, shoulders, arms and head
- Alignment
- Balance
- Extension
- Graceful execution
- Flexibility
- Strength

Contemporary Dance

Contemporary dance was developed in the early 20th century as a reaction against the rigid techniques of classical ballet. The emphasis instead became ease of movement using the body's natural lines and energy, and allowing a greater range and fluidity of movement than the classical ballet technique.

Contemporary dance is characterised by its versatility. Contemporary can be danced to any style of music, no music or soundscapes. It can be united with other dance forms to create new styles of movement. Contemporary seeks to work with the natural alignment of the body, and is therefore safe and accessible for beginners. At the same time, the ease of movement promoted by contemporary dance technique allows experienced dancers to push new boundaries of body movement.

The Contemporary dance principles are:

- Gravity
- Breath
- Emotion
- Contraction and Release
- Fall and recovery
- Suspension and collapse
- Balance and off-balance
- Tension and relaxation
- Opposition and attraction
- Centring and Alignment

Jazz Dance

Jazz dance is an umbrella term that can refer to several related dance styles. All of them are connected via common roots, namely tap, ballet, jazz music, and African-American rhythms and dance.

Jazz dance has an emotional quality and allows the participant to express their feelings. The soul must be infused in the dance otherwise the technique, skill and mastery demonstrated becomes meaningless. The ultimate expressions within Jazz Dance are being sensitive, fully expressed and in tune with one's body and the music.

Emphasis is placed on the concept of isolation technique which is a feature common to all the different and personal characteristics of jazz dance.

The Jazz Dance Principles are:

- Isolation of body parts
- Tension and relaxation
- Pelvic placement and action
- Flexion, extension, rotation
- Co-ordination
- Spontaneity
- Rhythm

Exercise to Music

Unless the fitness instructor is an ex-dancer or has a background in dance, the key principles of dance are rarely taught or incorporated in *Exercise to Music* training. The foundation of the fitness industry training is predominantly born out of sport fitness or exercise science. A vocabulary of standard steps, moves and exercises that are designed to warm up the body, challenge the cardiovascular system and promote strength and flexibility of the musculoskeletal systems. cursory attention is given to posture and body awareness as far as the key principles in Dance are concerned.



Exercise to Music Principles are:

- Methods of Choreography (i.e. layering, add on, linking, building)
- Style of class (aerobic dance, low or high impact, step)
- Rhythm & Musical phrasing
- Cueing & Communication
- Exercise physiology
- Entertainment value!

ChiBall Dance

ChiBall Dance has 9 principles. They provide a foundation for teaching the principles of harmony, balance and wellbeing through dance. Movement quality is everything. Using the foundation of dance and modern exercise we provide a framework through which we can build a unique experience for all who may or may not have experience in dance and movement.

Mastering the ChiBall Dance component of the Method, which includes intimate knowledge of the structure of music, the principles of dance and choreography, inspirational and graceful execution and sound teaching skills are essential ingredients for teaching success.

The ChiBall Dance Principles are:

- Composure (Posture, Centering, Alignment)
- Balance
- Spatial Awareness
- Smooth Transitions (Fluidity & Grace)
- Isolation (Initiation)
- Repetition (Co-ordination)
- Rhythm & Musicality
- Breath & Intention
- Expression & Emotion

Dance is a visual and physical art. Each of these principles is explored further during the dance section of the course.



Essential ChiBall Dance Teaching Skills

Musical Phrasing, Pre-Cueing & Communication

Internal cues for listening and observing the body's responses. Teaching cues: informative, descriptive, explanatory, inspirational and encouraging.

Pre-cueing is when a verbal or visual cue is given a least 8 - 16 counts ahead of a change of direction, move or tempo. Just calling out the moves and expecting the participants to follow the leader style will result in the sequences lacking fluidity and your students or class participants being in a constant state of anticipation. Pre-cueing ensures smooth transitions so that the participant can successfully execute the moves as instructed and provides a structure upon which they can relax and enjoy the liberating feeling of their bodies in motion.

The theory of basic moves & foot patterns

All of the ChiBall Dance moves are made up of very basic foot patterns as taught in the Musicality and Movement module. These basic foot patterns are called 'base moves'. It is important to know, when teaching the ChiBall Dance component, the foundation of each one of the moves. Poor organisation of the moves causes confusion and frustration for the participant. Using the basic foot patterns first before embarking on the ChiBall Dance move makes each movement easy to follow, because there are smooth and logical transitions and foot patterns.

As introduced in the Musicality and Movement Module, the ChiBall Dance moves evolve out of the four very simple foundations of movement:

- Walking/Marching
- Step Touch (closing feet together)
- Step Tap (feet remain apart)
- Neutral Stance (standing with feet together or apart)

Layering and Building

The ChiBall Base moves can evolve into more complex moves by starting with the base moves and layering and building on them.

For example:

The 4 count walking pattern is used for The Breeze

3 walks and 1 tap is used for Around the World


The step touch is used for rainbow

Step tap is used for The Wave

Step touch followed by 2 walks is used for The Swallow

Neutral stance is used for Horizon

ChiBall Dance Moves Around the World

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Pericardium • Lung 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expands chest and improves breathing. • Promotes agility and flexibility of the hips, knees and ankles. 	

Teaching Around the World:


- Stand with feet together with the ChiBall held at waist level.
- Inhale: extend the right arm and leg and step out to the side. Continue breathing in as you bring your feet together and pass the ChiBall behind your back to the left hand.
- Exhale: as you step onto your right leg again, extending the left arm and leg to the side and bring the feet together again.
- Repeat 4 to 8 times each side, making the circles small and then much wider around the body each time. Explore the space around your body

TEACHING POINTS:

- This movement can be layered on to by doing a double step to the right with round the world arms and a double step to the left with round the world arms
- This can then progress into a gapevine with round the world arms

BASE MOVES: 3 walks, 1 tap or double step touch

The Wave

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Pericardium • Lung 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releases tension and stiffness in shoulders, upper back and ribcage. • Circulation increases to muscles in the arms and legs, as heart rate increases and body temperature rises. 	


Teaching The Wave:

- Stand in wide Wu Chi position and place the ChiBall in the left hand.
- Inhale: wave your arm across the body.
- Exhale:

Be adventurous use different shapes and lines each time as you explore the space around you. Allow the body to respond naturally, and intuitively to each sweeping movement your arm chooses to make.

BASE MOVE: wide neutral stance

Rainbow

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallbladder • Heart • Small Intestine • Lung 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilises upper back muscles and shoulders. • Stretches waist and ribcage, • Stimulates circulation of blood and chi. 	

Teaching Rainbow:


- Begin with your feet together with the ChiBall held in both hands on the left side of your body
- Inhale: slowly step out sideways to the right, tracing an imaginary shape of a rainbow over your head with the ChiBall in your right hand.
- Exhale: bring your feet together, catching the ChiBall with your left hand on the other side of your body.
- Repeat 8-16 times side to side.

TEACHING POINTS:

- Express the yin/yang energies by making the Rainbow very slow and then fast; small and then very wide and expansive

BASE MOVE: step touch

The Horizon

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lung Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulates & strengthens the lung & heart. • Lengthens and softens the breath. • Relieves tension and stiffness in shoulders, neck & upper back. • Beneficial for sufferers of depression and melancholy 	

Teaching The Horizon

- Begin with feet together and ChiBall held at the heart centre.
- Inhale: extend arms forward and directly out to the side just below shoulder height*, opening the chest area. (*raising the hands/arms higher than shoulder height creates tension in the shoulders, neck and upper back)
- Exhale: bring the arms back to the heart centre
- Repeat 8-16 times


Visualisation

Imagine that you are looking out to sea and you are extending your hand towards the setting sun and then along the horizon.

NOTE: This movement of the arms is also used in The Swallow and The Mistral.

BASE MOVE: neutral stance

Sunrise/Sunset

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple Heater • Pericardium • Lung • Bladder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves flexibility in ankles and hips. • Strengthens and tones thigh, buttock, postural back muscles. • Stretches entire spine and body musculature • Beneficial for heart, diaphragm • Improves circulation to abdominal area • Helps digestive problems • Stimulates lungs • Relieves back ache and neck problems 	

Teaching Sunset & Sunrise

SUNSET

- Begin with both feet together, ChiBall held at the heart centre.
- Inhale: slowly step the right foot out to the side, extending right arm and ChiBall with leg
- Exhale: cross the left foot behind the right, squatting down into a deep curtsy (Bring the feet together instead as shown above if you have knee problems.)

SUNRISE


- Begin either with feet remaining together or with your left foot tucked behind with ChiBall held at the heart centre.
- Inhale: push the ChiBall towards the ceiling, stretching and extending the whole body.
- Exhale: squat down into a deep curtsy. If you have knee problems avoid bending deeply and use options the parallel squat option shown above.
- Repeat slowly 4 to 8 times taking a full breath in as you extend up and out as you squat

PROGRESSION:

- Step out to the side, then squat deeply. Keep the head and heart up and the upper back extended (counts = 1/2/3/4)
- Push the ChiBall straight up and then squat deeply again (counts = 5/6/7/8)

BASE MOVE: neutral stance

The Swallow

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach • Spleen • Lung Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releases pent up energy and frustration and overall physical stress and tension. • Promotes expression of joy, enthusiasm and confidence as heart and chest area is expanded and stretched. 	

Teaching The Swallow:

- Begin with feet together with ChiBall held at waist level.
- Inhale: step forward onto your right leg, and with the ChiBall in your right hand sweep the arms forward and out to the side in a generous, expansive motion as if you are attempting to fly like a swallow (Horizon arms). Make sure you bend deeply onto the right leg and extend the left leg away from the body behind you. Elevate the heart area and lengthen the front of the body.
- Exhale: take two steps backwards and bring the feet under the hips.
- Inhale: step onto your left leg, extending the right leg behind you.
- Exhale: take two steps backwards and bring the feet under the hips.
- Repeat 8-16 times on each leg


TEACHING POINTS:

Simplify 'The Swallow' by stepping forward and keeping the rear foot in contact with the floor for greater stability.

Just step forward each time, with rear leg lifted off the floor or not, without using the 2 step transition. Bringing the feet parallel underneath the hips each time instead.

BASE MOVE: step, tap, 2 walks.

Pendulum


Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lung Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Stomach • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulates & strengthens the lung & heart. • regulates the breath. • Relieves shoulder tension. • Strengthens and tones leg muscles. • Promotes circulation of blood and chi. 	

Teaching The Pendulum

- Begin with feet together with ChiBall held at the heart centre.
- Inhale: step out to the side onto your right leg, and with the ChiBall in your right hand (Horizon arms). Make sure you bend deeply onto the right leg and extend the left leg away from the body to the opposite side. Elevate the heart area and lengthen the front of the body and both sides of the body.
- Exhale: take two steps to the left side.
- Inhale: step onto your left leg, and with the ChiBall in your left hand, extending the right leg out to the side.
- Exhale: take two steps to the right.
- Inhale: step, lift, sink and extend.
- Repeat 8 to 16 times on each leg.

BASE MOVE: step, tap, 2 walks.

Half Moon/Full Moon

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Intestine • Large Intestine • Lung • Triple Heater <p>Organs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Stomach • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings flexibility and tone to the hips, waist, middle and lower back muscles. • Relieves lower back pain. • Stimulates liver organ when twisting across to the right and stomach/spleen organs when twisting left. • Twisting the waist helps balance the yin and yang energies and calms the heart. • Fully stretches the waist, entire spinal muscles, diaphragm and balances the skeletal system. • Breathing in and raising the arms overhead increases lung volume. • Breathing out, expels waste energy, relieving lethargy and fatigue 	

Teaching Half Moon & Full Moon:

HALF MOON


- Begin with ChiBall held in front of body and feet wide apart.
- Inhale: Upper body-scoop the ChiBall down and across to the right side of the body as if imitating swinging a golf club. Continue breathing in as you scoop across to the left side. Lower body – step tap right, step tap left.
- Exhale: scoop to the right and left.
- Repeat two swings to breathe in and two swings to breathe out eight times.

FULL MOON

- Begin with ChiBall held in front of body and feet wide apart, the ChiBall in both hands.
- Inhale: scoop the ChiBall across to the right, pass the ChiBall over head.
- Exhale: continue tracing in the air a large, spacious circle to bring the ChiBall over the body to the left side.
- Repeat 4 times circling up and over to the right side and then 4 to the left.
- Add single or double step touch.

BASE MOVES: step, tap; step touch; neutral stance

The Breeze

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lung • Heart • Small Intestine Organs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Heart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps release anger and restores balance to the heart. • Relieves tension. • Improves and regulates breathing. • Balances yin/yang energies. 	

Teaching the Breeze:


- Begin with the feet together with the ChiBall in the right hand. Begin with the right foot, marching/walking softly.
- Inhale, Exhale: slowly synchronize the breathing with the marching/walking: 1,2: exhale; 3,4: inhale.
- Exhale: allow the right foot to step forward and the right shoulder and ChiBall to also swing forward. (count = 1,2)
- Inhale: bring the right foot back and back and open the shoulder allowing the ChiBall to swing back. The action of the ChiBall is similar to a 'figure 8 shape. (count = 3,4)
- Repeat 8 - 16 times before repeating on the left foot.

TEACHING POINTS:

- Allow the shoulder to fully relax and rotate.
- Keep the feet soft. (avoid stomping)
- Keep the knees soft .(avoid stiffening)
- Feel an easy swinging movement within the hips and pelvis.

BASE MOVE: walking to a 4 count.

The Storm

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Heart • Small Intestine • Stomach <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tones thighs & buttocks. • Releases stiffness and tension in neck, shoulders, ribcage and lower back muscles. • Massages internal organs. 	

Teaching The Storm


- Begin with your feet together with the ChiBall in your right hand.
- Inhale, Exhale: drop your right arm and shoulder forward and allow a slight twisting in the waist.
- Inhale: step the right foot out to the side as you scoop the ChiBall overhead and out to the right side of the body.
- Repeat 4 - 8 times on each side.

TEACHING POINTS:

- Keep the motion fluid, soft and springy to protect the knees.

BASE MOVE: walking to a 4 count or squatting.

Sirocco

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple Heater <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Stomach • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stirs and generates Chi. • Relieves stiffness and tension in the shoulders and upper back. • Strengthens and tones leg muscles. • Grounds and roots the body. • Promotes circulation. • Massages internal organs. 	

Teaching Sirocco


- Begin with the feet together with the ChiBall held in front of the Dan Tien. Begin with the right foot, marching/walking softly.
- Inhale, Exhale: slowly synchronize the breathing with the marching/walking: 1,2: exhale; 3,4: inhale.
- Step forward and open up the foot pattern so that it begins to resemble a wide 'v' shape on the 1/2, count. Step backward and bring the feet back together on the 3/4, count.
- Exhale: circle the ChiBall away from the body towards the right side of the body as the feet open out into the 'v' shape (squatting down towards the earth with the legs) (count = 1/2).
- Inhale: step backwards and bring the ChiBall back towards the chest (count = 3/4).
- Repeat 8-16 times before repeating with the left foot and circling to the left.

TEACHING POINTS:

- To express the yin/yang energies round the back slightly as you step forward and then extending the back away from the ball as you step backward.

BASE MOVE: 4 count walking.

Thunderbolt

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Dance Exercise
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Spleen • Stomach <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Stomach • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulates all meridian points in the feet. • Energises the central nervous system. • Strengthens the skeletal system. • Improves the circulation. • Has an uplifting effect on the stomach and spleen organs. • Balances and coordinates chi in stomach, spleen, liver, gallbladder. • Stimulates peristalsis in digestive system. • Balances yin/yang energies. 	

Teaching The Thunderbolt:

- Begin with the feet together and the ChiBall held just below the heart centre
- Inhale, Exhale: begin with the right foot and take two steps forward
- Inhale: take two steps backwards and rise up onto your toes and at the same time extend the ChiBall up above the right shoulder and push downwards with the left hand, palm flexed.
- Repeat 8 - 16 times before changing to the other side with the left foot/left arm leading

BASE MOVE: 4 count walking



The Fire Element Part 2 – ChiBall Yoga

Introduction

Yoga within the ChiBall programme represents the FIRE Element, the High Summer time of year and the dispersing energy of the season. The corresponding partner organs are Heart and Small Intestine and their secondary partners, Pericardium and Triple Heater. The emotional and physical theme is "Love, and joy, protection, and our ability to ride the highs and lows of life".

The Yoga postures follow ChiBall Dance. The increased core temperature and circulation to the muscles and tendons prepares the body and mind well for the practise of traditional yoga postures. This second part of the fire element begins with strong standing wide legged and closed poses to promote physical stamina, strength, and flexibility, and mentally for self-awareness, concentration, determination and to restore our natural sense of well-being.

Physical Exercise

As we execute each yoga posture (asana), the body fire is stimulated. This internal heat frees stiffness and tension from the muscles, unlocks the joints allowing the prana or chi (life force) to flow freely within us and relieves nervous tension and emotional stress. The sweat or perspiration produced during practise cleanses the blood, muscles, tissues, and the internal organs and improves circulation. Without exercise the metabolic fire becomes depleted and low.

Breathing

When the inhalation and exhalation are balanced subtle channels for the mind and senses are opened. Air taken through the nose has an immediate effect upon the brain and lungs. Breath taken through the mouth subtly triggers the adrenal glands (as it emulates the same action as breath taken through the mouth in fright or fear) and can increase internal toxins that clog the body and suppress the internal digestive fire. Deep nasal breathing increases our energy, promotes circulation, clears the mind and detoxifies the body.

Meditation

Holding the mind in a state of concentrated awareness cultivates the soul's natural fire of wisdom, peace and contentment.

Overall, Yoga is practiced to train the body and the mind to be in complete harmony. The postures or "asanas" are designed to align the skin, flesh, and muscular structure with the skeleton as well as penetrate every single cell, tissue and muscle to release stiffness and tension and bring the whole body alive. They stimulate and re-energise, releasing blocked energy and emotions. The nerves that feed our muscles and vital organs are also stimulated, resulting in naturally toned and healthy muscles of the back, waist, abdominals, legs and buttocks.

The practise of ChiBall Yoga is an opportunity to learn from ourselves about ourselves. Each posture will challenge us and provide invaluable opportunities for observing our body and mind and its willingness to remain centred when challenged, to breathe and let go where we carry tension and to remind us how to 'just be' in the entire experience. When we transform the physical our lives too can change.

An Introduction to Yoga

Sanskrit is one of the oldest languages in the world and is sometimes known as the mother of all languages. Yoga is a Sanskrit word which means to yoke, unite or join together. Yoga is an ancient science which seeks to bring balance to the body, mind and spirit. The journey into yoga is seeking to perfect the physical, mental and emotional aspects of health to bring about self-development and self-awareness

History

Yoga was developed in India thousands of years ago through many different forms of spiritual practice. It is thought to have developed from the Aryan traditions which pre-date 3000 BC. Its place of origin is thought to be the Indus Valley in Northern India.

In the second century BC a man called Patanjali provided the first written and comprehensive explanation of Yoga practices. Patanjali divided Yoga into eight limbs or stages and these are widely accepted today as the definitive frame of reference for the theory and practice of yoga.

The first four stages (or limbs) are considered external and the second four stages (or limbs) are considered to be deep internal practices and observations:

1. **Yamas – Moderation**

In Yoga, observance of the abstinences, or yamas, helps attain a healthy mind and body.

2. **Niyamas - Behaviour (Personal Observance)**

Such as contentment, discipline and study are seen as helping you to live a pure life. The Yamas and Niyamas provide guidelines for all aspects of conduct in life and help you to participate in Yoga in a genuine manner, rather than being ego driven. For example, non-violence is one of the Yamas and refers not just to physical violence but also violent or hurtful thoughts about yourself and others

3. **Asanas - Postures**

This is what most people recognise as Yoga. It is the most visible aspect of Yoga practice. Practising the postures involves the breath and focusing the mind. While regular practice of the postures has many excellent physical benefits on its own, it is the mind and body working together that is the ultimate aim. Yoga then becomes energising and relaxing at the same time. You will feel changes and life become softer and easier.

4. **Pranayama - Control of Breath (Breathing Exercises)**

Prana means breath, life, energy, strength. Ayama means length, expansion, stretching or restraint. Pranayama means the extension and control of breath. Our breath keeps us alive. We can all survive long periods without food, water or sleep, but when the breath stops, life ceases. By learning to breathe deeply and smoothly we calm our nervous system, increase the amount of oxygen in the blood stream which provides nutrients to cells and organs and relaxes our muscles thereby reducing tension and stress throughout the day.

5. **Pratyahara - Control of the Senses (Mental Exercises)**

With regular practice of Yoga the distractions all around us can be reduced so that we can turn inwards and focus on what we are doing and be entirely in the magic of the here and now.

6. **Dharana - Concentration (Mental Exercise)**

This is the practice of totally engrossing yourself in whatever task you are doing. Our emotions and life situations are the product of our thoughts and by learning to control and direct our thoughts we can achieve great peace of mind and purpose.

7. **Dyanana - Meditation (Spiritual Exercise)**

An electric light bulb will glow and illuminate when there is not interruption to the current of electricity. When our flow of concentration is uninterrupted the body, breath, senses, mind and ego all integrate and the feeling is sheer bliss. Meditation is the art of not doing, of letting go. Being able to retreat to a quiet place deep inside ourselves, that remains peaceful and undisturbed no matter what is happening in the world around us, is the ultimate goal of all spiritual practices.

8. **Samadhi - Self-Realisation**

This is the ultimate aim of Yoga and is a state of going beyond consciousness. Very few people achieve this state which is described as unutterable happiness.

Although the final four stages (or limbs) require deep personal commitment and disciplined practise, you will find posture practise, combined with breathing and concentration support the journey towards internal awareness and a state of bliss.

Benefits of Yoga Postures

Standing Postures

- Build strength, endurance and flexibility throughout the entire body.
- Provide a firm base of support for the spine.
- Increase mobility of feet, hips, torso, spine, abdomen, chest, shoulders, arms and neck.

Forward Bends

- Stretches and lengthens the entire backside of the body.
- Improves circulation and releases tension through the feet, legs, back and neck.
- Increases spaces between vertebrae in the spine, thereby nourishing and freeing the nerves for the whole body which have their origin in the spine.
- Abdominal organs receive a deep massage.

Backward Bends

- Opens the whole front side of the body - chest, abdominal organs and pelvic region.
- Opens the heart chakra (Anahata) which we often close down due to past hurts or lack of love. Also opens the sex chakra (Svadhishthana) in the pelvic region which many of us close down and withdraw consciousness from. Opening these areas releases blocks which promotes energy and vitality.
- Keeps the spine supple and strong.

Inversions (Shoulderstand, Headstand)

- Revitalises all of the body systems.
- Increases blood supply to the brain improving thinking, activating the pineal and pituitary glands endocrine system which control the chemical balance of the body.
- Improves lymphatic drainage, digestion and elimination.

Twists

- Releases tension.
- Strengthens the deep spinal muscles closest to the vertebrae.
- Activates kidneys and abdominal organs.
- Relieves backache, headaches, stiffness in the neck and shoulders.



How to Practice Traditional Yoga

Each pose and practise should be approached as a journey of discovery. Being able to contort the body into pretzel like positions is only gymnastics. It is essential that Yoga is practised with the right intention - to focus your body, mind and yourself. There is an organised sequence to yoga postures which ensures that the body moves easily from one to the next which sustains balance in energy.

The Breath

The breathing used in Yoga is called *Ujjayi* breathing. The *Ujjayi* breath is co-ordinated with every movement from posture to posture and within each posture. The breath provides a focus for the mind, releases tension and promotes depth and a natural non-invasive yielding within each pose. The breath is the tuning fork for the body. Instead of muscle exertion to push the body the breath guides the movement. At all times the breath is primary, the posture secondary. If the breath is laboured then the body is struggling. Releasing or modifying the posture until the breath is once again long, slow, soft and smooth will bring greater results than pushing and forcing under stress and strain. Slower means faster in Yoga.

The Importance of Sequence (Vinyasa)

The sequence of Yoga postures is important due to the affect the postures have on all of the body systems, especially the nervous system. A sequence is a step by step progression from one stage to another as reflected in nature. A plant grows up out of the earth whilst its roots sink deeper into the earth in perfect symbiosis with time, weather and seasons. Yoga postures develop with time and help to teach us to move with the ebb and flow of life rather than resist against it. Any sequence in a Yoga class needs to bring this balance between active and passive. For each yoga pose there is a counter pose to bring balance within the body and the internal organs.

For all postures, begin on the right side and then repeat on the left for the same length of time.

ChiBall Yoga Poses


Mountain Pose (Tadasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple Heater • Heart <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Stomach • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes a firm postural base and builds awareness. • Establishes correct alignment for all poses. • Correct alignment allows 'space' for inner organs, aiding digestion. • Frees the diaphragm and improves breathing. 	

Teaching Mountain Pose

- Feet are parallel - inner edges of each foot pointing straight ahead.
- Spread the toes evenly.
- Bend the knees very slightly and lift the knee caps upwards - drawing up the muscles of the thighs - as if sucking them onto the thigh bones. Avoid locking the knees. Push the legs downwards through the feet rather than backwards through the knees. Let the soles of the feet melt down into the floor. Rock forward and backward gently to feel the strain we place on the body by leaning too far forward or hinging backwards. Allow the body to slowly come to rest on the centre point - weight equally distributed between toes, heels and just in front of the ankles.
- Draw up the inner ankles - lifting the arches of the feet.
- Gently draw the navel towards the spine allowing the tailbone to point straight downward towards the heels and allow the pubic bone to lift very slightly without tensing the buttocks.
- Allow the spine to elongate and the top of the neck and crown of the head to extend upwards.
- The gaze is soft and steady on one fixed point on the horizon.

Warrior Pose II (Virabhadrasana II)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Pericardium • Stomach • Spleen • Large Intestine • Lung • Kidney <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches and opens the hip joints, pelvic floor and inner thigh muscles. • Strengthens all leg muscles, buttocks, arches of the foot. • Increases elasticity and strength of spine and back muscles. • Strengthens the abdominal, shoulder and arm muscles. • Strengthens intention and determination. 	

Warrior 2 Pose (Virabhadrasana II)

Teaching Warrior 2 Pose

- Stand in mountain pose with feet together at the top of the mat, with the ball between the palms at the centre of your chest.
- Inhale: place the ball in your left hand and cross your arms in front of your chest. Exhale: while stepping or jumping out to the right to face the side of the mat, toes pointing forwards feet about 4 to 4.5 feet apart, extending the arms out to the sides palms down and at shoulder height.
- Inhale: turn the left toes in to 45 degrees, feeling inward rotation right up into the left hip.
- Exhale: while keeping the legs engaged and bend your right knee to 90 degrees, so that the right thigh remains parallel to the floor. The knee is in line with the second toe, with the arch of the foot slightly lifted to stop it rolling in. Square your hips to the side of the mat
- Keep the wrists in alignment to the ankles, and draw the shoulders and back of the body downwards and the navel back towards the spine. Lengthen the finger tips away from the centre of the chest
- Keeping the back of the neck long and turn to gaze at the middle finger of the right hand.
- To keep crown of the head lifting and the spine upright, and long, push slightly back into the ball. Encourage the left hip to open backwards even more, to keep the shoulders and hips squared to the frontal plane
- Hold the asana (posture) for 3 to 5 smooth and steady breaths as you feel the strength in your body building.
- With each exhalation drop the hips a little lower while lifting in the pelvic floor. With each inhalation let chest float away from the hips.
- Now straighten the right leg and turn the toes to the face forwards and place the ChiBall in the right hand.
- Repeat on the other side, by rotating the right foot in 45 degrees and the left out 90 degrees and bending the left knee.
- To come out of the posture inhale to straighten the left leg and turn the feet to face forward. Jump or step in, to the draw the ball back to the centre of the chest. Now turn to face the top of the mat into the neutral position looking to your nose, or continue into another posture.

Placement of ChiBall

- Placed in the back hand it encourages the correct alignment of the spine so that the student does not lean over the bent leg.
- If shoulders are lifted, encourage them to press down slightly on the ball to draw the shoulders down away from the ears, and use it balance the levels and angles of both arms.



Modifications:

- For weakness, tiredness or in pregnancy place a chair, stool or fitness ball under the hips if needed.


Reverse Warrior is a counter pose

- Alter the angle of the torso by placing the ball in the back hand, and resting it on the side of the back leg which allows the front arm to lift. Rotating the palm up feeling an internal stretch from the bent front knee to the raised hand. The gaze is following the raised hand.
- Hold this asana for 3 to 5 breath long smooth full breathes. Slide the ball down towards the back knee a little more on every exhalation. On the inhalations, feel an opening in the opposite side, allowing the space between the ribcage and hips to increase and the organs to breath.

Placement of ChiBall

- The ball can also be placed in the front hand, as if lifting it up to the sky, this will help to increase a sense of opening and release under the ribs, whilst at the same time freeing up the ribcage.

Triangle Pose (Trikonasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Lung 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves postural alignment. • Stretches hips, back and legs. • Strengthens necks muscles and ankle joints. • Improves lateral stretch of spine. • Stretches and stimulates spinal nerves. • Improves digestion. 	

Teaching Trikonasana


Stand in mountain pose with ChiBall at the heart. Step your feet out 3'6" wide with toes facing forward and parallel. Turn right foot out 90 degrees and left foot in 20 degrees. The heel of the right foot should be in line with the arch of the left foot.

- Inhale: extent arms to shoulder height with the ChiBall in the left hand. Turn to look at the right hand and lengthen.
- Exhale: float the right arm down towards the shin drawing the left hip and shoulder back with gaze to the horizon or looking up to the Chiball
- Inhale: turn gaze downward and float up.
- Exhale: bring the ChiBall to the heart turning the feet to face forward.
- Repeat on the other side.

Modifications:

- Bend the right knee and place the right hand on right thigh.
- For shoulder issues draw the ChiBall in the left hand behind the back
- For high blood pressure or head and neck issues, let the gaze be down towards the right leg.

Warrior Pose I (Virabhadrasana I)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Heart • Stomach • Spleen <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens chest, increases lung capacity and improves deep breathing. • Develops physical stamina throughout body. • Increases energy and stimulates central nervous system. • Strengthens leg muscles, back, and arms. • Relieves stiffness in shoulders, neck and back. 	

Warrior 1 Pose (Virabhadrasana 1)

Teaching Warrior 1 Pose

- Stand in mountain pose with feet together at the top of the mat, with the ball between the palms at the centre of the chest.
- Inhale, squeezing the ball slightly and sinking the weight down through your right leg. Step back a comfortable stride about 4.5 feet on the left leg.
- Turn the heel of your left foot in slightly so the foot faces out at a slight angle. Keep your hips in alignment to the front by drawing the right hip back and left hip forwards.
- Keeping the legs engaged, bend your right knee to 90 degrees so that the right thigh remains parallel to the floor. The knee is in line with the second toe, with the arch of the foot slightly lifted to stop it rolling in.
- Exhale and extend the torso forwards over the bent knee pushing the ChiBall forwards and straightening your arms.
- As you inhale lift the torso upwards to bring the arms and ChiBall over your head, keeping the front leg bent. The gaze follows the ball.
- Stretch the tail bone down to the floor as you lift the pelvic floor.
- Feel base of the breast bone lift, by drawing the shoulder blades down the back. Let the shoulders slide down away from the ears. (See ChiBall placements below)
- Hold the asana (posture) for 3 to 5 smooth and steady breaths as you feel the strength in your body building.
- With each exhalation drop your hips a little lower, and with each inhalation lift your chest a little higher.
- Keep the left heel on the ground and press through the outer edge of the foot, this will help to move the left hip forward to keep the pelvis parallel to the front.
- To come out of the posture inhale to bring the ChiBall down to the centre of the chest, squeezing it slightly and sinking the weight into the right leg to step the left leg lightly up to the top of the mat. Straighten both legs and come into the neutral position, looking to your nose.
- Repeat the posture stepping back on the right leg.




Placement of ChiBall

- For those with high blood pressure or shoulder injuries keep the ball at the centre of the chest between the palms encouraging them to lift the chest and push into the ball.

Modifications:

- For weakness, tiredness or in pregnancy place a chair, stool or fitness ball can be placed under the hips, if needed.
- For knee injuries keep the knees less than 90 degrees and do not allow the knee to turn inwards
- For those with neck injury keep the gaze forwards, rather than up at the ball.

Pyramid Pose (Parsvottanasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	BENEFITS	ChiBall YOGA POSE
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney • Bladder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent leg back and shoulder stretch • increases flexibility of hips, spine, shoulders and legs • strengthens legs • tones abdominal organs • develops balance and stamina • improves circulation throughout body and head 	

Pyramid Pose (Parsvottanasana)

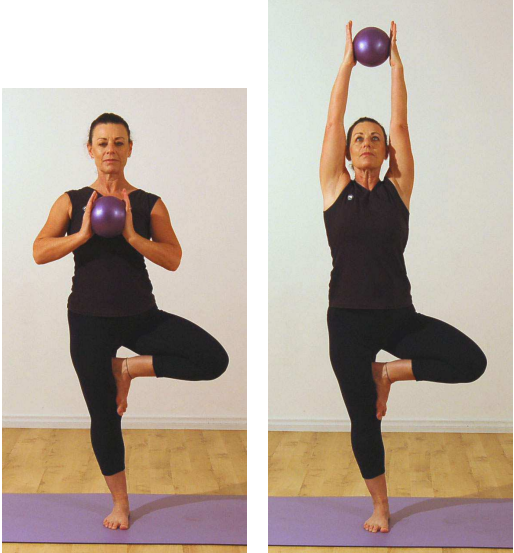
Teaching Pyramid Pose

- Stand in mountain pose with feet together at the top of the mat, with the ball between the palms at the centre of the chest.
- Inhale, squeezing the ball slightly and sinking the weight down through the right leg. Step back about 3.5 feet on the left leg.
- Turn the heel of your left foot in slightly so the foot faces out at a slight angle of 45 degrees. Keep your hips in alignment to the front by drawing the right hip back and left hip forwards.
- Exhale and settle into the legs keeping the front knee straight, but not locked, pulling the thigh muscle into the bone. Press firmly into the left heel and little toe side of the foot.
- On the next Inhale draw the ChiBall behind you, rotating both arms up into the shoulder joint as you draw them out and back. Hold it in both hands in the lower mid or upper back with fingers pointing up or down (the hand position depends upon flexibility).
- Exhale to extend the tail bone down to maintain a length in the spine and engage the leg muscles evenly.
- Inhale and lift your chest up from behind your heart
- Exhale and begin to fold forwards, take your time as you maintain the length in the spine until the spine is parallel to the floor. **Stay here in cases of rounded back, low or high blood pressure, or in pregnancy.** Feel the crown of the head lengthen away from the tail bone, and keep the neck long and light.

Or for the **more advanced option**; continue your exhalation and extend your torso over the front leg and bring your chin to the top of your shin and stay in this pose. Create as much space in the lower spine as you can by relaxing your neck and extending through the crown of your head whilst stretching your tail bone to the sky.

- Direct the breath in to the back of the ribcage and engage the pelvic floor and abdomen. Continue moving the right hip back so you feel the right hip and hamstring lengthening.
- To come out of the posture press down firmly through both feet and extend up through the crown of the head. Press the ribcage and chest forward as you inhale and lift your body upright.
- Repeat on the left side by stepping back on the right foot.

Tree Pose (Vrksanana)

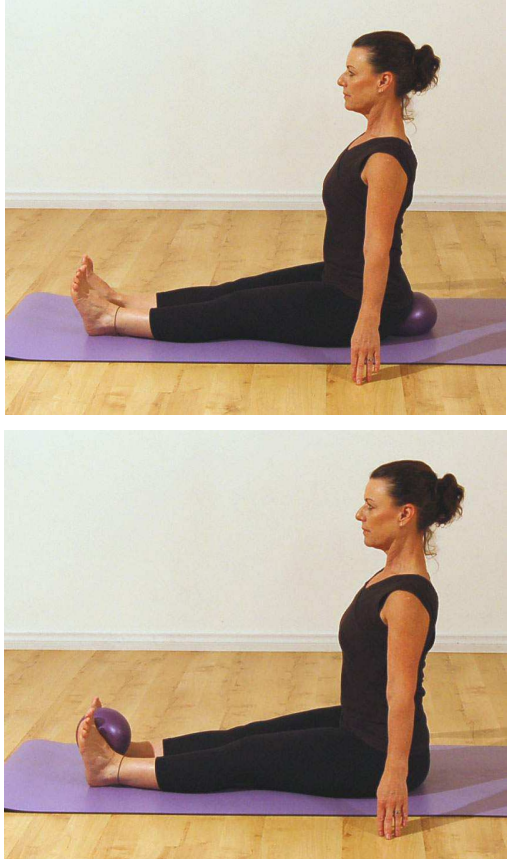
Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Triple Heater Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves concentration, balance, confidence and poise. • Strengthens joints and muscles of legs and feet. • Increases flexibility in ankles, knees, and hips. • Opens chest and relieves shoulder and upper back tension. 	

Teaching Tree Pose

- Stand in Mountain Pose with the feet together - arms relaxed by the sides of the body.
- Peel the right foot off the floor and hold the balance with the right foot just off the floor.
- Rotate the right hip and knee outwards and exhaling draw the right foot up placing the sole of the foot as high as possible on the inner left thigh (use the right hand to help if necessary).
- Press the sole of the right foot into the thigh into the foot until they 'glue' together.
- Release the right hand and allow the arms to relax by the sides of the body.
- Draw in the navel to the spine, lengthen the tailbone down.
- Pull through the left thigh and the centre of the body, lifting the chest.
- Spread the toes and press evenly through the left foot.
- Gaze softly at one unmoving point ahead.
- Rotate the shoulders and palms outward and inhaling, float the arms straight up overhead and bring the palms together against the ChiBall.
- Draw the left thigh muscle upwards and lengthen the neck, making the head weightless and soft.
- Keep lifting the ribcage away from the waist, stretching up through the core of the body to the Fingertips.
- Draw the right knee out to the side, by lengthening the right inner thigh and opening the right hip
- Draw the coccyx straight down towards the left heel.
- Roll the shoulder blades down the back and open the fronts of the shoulders (if the arms won't go directly overhead, stretch out through them in the direction they are pointing.).
- Breathe smoothly and deeply.
- Exhale to lower the legs and arms simultaneously back to Mountain pose.
- Repeat all the above for the left leg.

This pose can be executed before or immediately after the open and closed standing postures.

Staff Pose (Dandasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Intestine • Bladder <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings relief to gastric complaints. • Tones kidneys. • Trains lower back strength for forward bends. • Straightens spine. • Releases lower back tension. • Encourages full deep breathing. 	

Staff Pose (Dandasana)

Teaching Staff Pose

- Sit on the floor with the legs stretched out & the feet flexed.
- Lean forward and draw the flesh of each buttock back and out to the side using the hands so that you are sitting on top of the sitting bones.
- Keep the thighs, knees, ankles and feet together.
- Place the hands on the floor beside the hips with the fingers pointing forward.
- Draw the thighs up towards the hips and gently press the backs of the knees towards the floor, extending the legs out through the heels.
- Ground the sit bones into the floor, lengthen the spine lifting out of the waist and out through the crown of the head up towards the sky.
- Relax the shoulders, draw the shoulder blades further down the back and open the chest
- Allow your gaze to be soft.
- Breathe evenly. As you inhale notice your chest & rib cage expanding, as you exhale notice your ribs and chest contracting.

Placement of ChiBall:

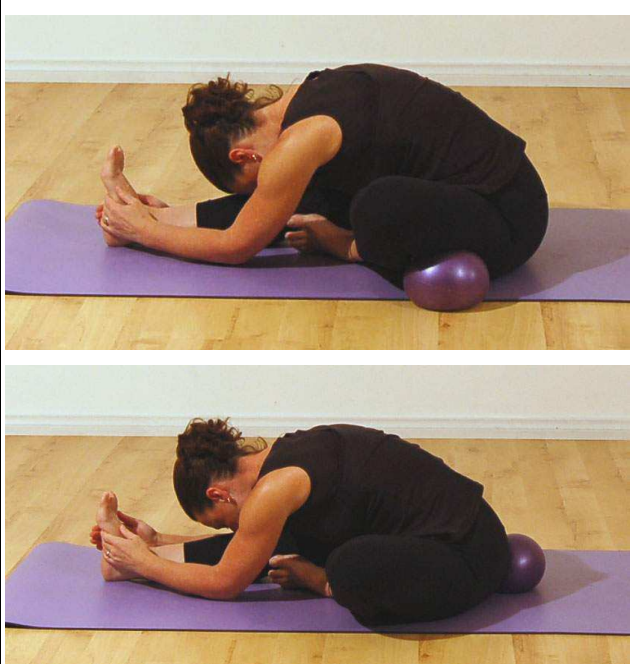
To assist with lengthening the spine, sit on top of a fully inflated ChiBall and then roll half way off. This will ease pressure in the hamstrings and support the pelvis so that the posture can be maintained.

To assist lengthening the legs, place the ChiBall in between the feet.

Contraindications:

Anyone with a lower back injury or slipped disc should be cautious in this pose. It can be carried out against a wall with a rolled up blanket placed behind the knees to support them.

Head to Knee Pose (Janu Sirsasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bladder Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Large Intestine • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens and elongates spine. • Excellent leg stretch. • Relieves lower back tension. • Opens hips, knees, ankles. • Stimulates and improves circulation through spine, torso, abdominal organs. • Improves digestion and elimination. • Calms and settles the mind 	

Head to Knee Pose (Janu Sirsasana)

Teaching Head to Knee Pose


- Sit in Staff Pose (Dandasana)
- Bend the right knee and place the sole of the right foot against the inner side of the left thigh
- Relax the right knee down towards the floor
- Draw the front of the left thigh up towards the left hip and flex the left foot lengthening out of the left heel keeping the leg 'alive'.
- Maintain equal amounts of weight through both sit bones, aligning the pelvis
- Inhale: lengthen the spine, relax the shoulders & raise the arms out to the sides & up towards the sky with the palms facing inwards.
- Exhale: hinge forward from the hips, lengthening out through the crown of the head bringing the abdomen and rib cage towards the left leg. Keep the back of the left leg in to the floor.
- Direct the breath in to the back of the ribcage.
- Inhale: engage the bhandas (pelvic floor and abdomen), extend the arms forwards & upwards as you lift up out of the pose.
- Exhale: bring the hands together and draw them down to rest at your chest in prayer position.
- Repeat with the left side.

Placement of ChiBall:

To assist with lengthening the spine, sit on top of a fully inflated ChiBall and then roll half way off. This will ease pressure in the hamstrings and support the pelvis so that the posture can be maintained.

If tension is experienced in the groin of the bent leg, place the ChiBall underneath the ankle, knee or mid thigh. This will allow for relaxation in the groin rather than tension which impedes hip mobility.

Sage Twist (Marichyanasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Stomach • Spleen • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens back. • Rotates spine fully. • Relieves backache caused by muscular tension. • Stretches hips. • Massages liver, spleen, intestines. • Frees chest and promotes elasticity in shoulders. 	

Sage Twist (Marichyanasana)

Teaching Sage Twist


- Sit in Staff Pose
- Cross the legs with feet under the knees. Avoid tucking legs too closely into the body.
- Ground the sit bones into the floor and lengthen the spine lifting up and out through the crown of the head up towards the sky.
- Inhale: lift the arms out to the sides and up towards the sky with the palms facing inwards and the shoulders relaxed.
- Exhale: rotate towards the right knee and place the left arm on the right knee with the palm turned upwards. Place the heel of the right hand close to the buttocks and look over the right shoulder.
- Aim to keep the chest and the shoulders open and relaxed.
- Inhale to lengthen the spine further and exhale to rotate a little further if it feels right to do so.
- When you are ready to release the pose, exhale: and return to the centre ready to repeat the pose to the left side.

Placement of ChiBall:

To assist with lengthening the spine, sit on top of a fully inflated ChiBall and then roll half way off. This will support the pelvis so that the posture can be maintained.

To assist with lengthening the spine if assistance is not required to sit up straight, hold the ChiBall in the right hand Inhale: raise the arms out to the sides and up towards the sky. Exhale: rotate towards the right knee and place the left arm on the right knee with the palm turned upwards. Place the ChiBall at arms length behind the buttocks and press the heel of the right hand into the ChiBall lengthening the spine

Plank Pose

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bladder • Gallbladder • Stomach • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens the whole body: arms, shoulders, chest, back, abdominals and legs 	

Teaching Plank Pose


- Begin on all fours, spread the palms and fingers to establish a good base for the upper body
- Inhale, Exhale and gently draw the navel back
- Hold compression and continue breathing, expanding the ribcage
- Inhale, exhale – extend the right foot back, and then left foot
- Keep head, back and buttocks in a straight line
- Push down into the hands and draw the elbows into the body



Modifications

- On knees – instead of extending the legs fully, stay on your knees

Lowering to ChiBall & Push-up

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bladder • Gallbladder • Stomach • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens the whole body: arms shoulders, chest, back, abdominals and legs 	

Teaching Push-up

- Begin on all fours, spread the palms and fingers to establish a good base for the upper body
- Inhale, Exhale and compress the abdomen towards the spine
- Hold compression and continue breathing, expanding the ribcage
- Inhale, exhale – extend the right foot back, and then left foot
- Keep head, back and buttocks in a straight line
- Push down into the hands and draw the elbows into the body
- Bend the elbows and lower the chest to the ball, avoiding collapsing in the lower back
- Push and straighten the elbows to lift chest up and away from the ball,

Modifications



- Narrow push-up – hands underneath the shoulders, lower chest to the ball, keeping the elbows close to body




- Wide push-up - have hands wider (off the side of the mat), lower while bending the elbows outwards to the side of the body (activates lung meridian), until they reach 90degrees



- On knees – instead of extend legs back fully, stay on your knees


Cobra Pose (Bhuhangasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach • Spleen Organs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lung • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent chest opener • Increased flexibility of spine, arms and back • Breaks down tension in back, arms, shoulder and neck • Stimulates thyroid, kidneys and adrenals • Improves digestion, elimination, reproduction, lungs capacity. 	

Teaching Cobra Pose

- Lie facedown on the floor, with the ChiBall beneath the sternum; elbows underneath the arm pits
- Draw the lower (transverse) abdominals inwards and completely relax the buttock muscles
- Have the feet hip-distance apart, press the feet into the floor and draw the front thighs towards the hips to lift the kneecaps
- Inhale: lift the chest and extend the sternum forward, and the same time attempt to push the ChiBall outwards
- Exhale: press down into the elbow, drawing the shoulder blades down and back, and further extending the chest forward
- Continue for 5 breaths: inhale, lift; exhale, extend forward
- Inhale lift, exhale slide the hands down beside the body and fold the body over the ChiBall
- Remain breathing in relaxed folded position for five breaths

Child's Pose

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Pericardium • Lung 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle stretch for the hips, thighs and ankles • Relieving stress • Relieving back and neck pain • Can help relieve insomnia 	

Teaching Child's Pose:

- From Downward Facing Dog, drop the knees to the floor
- Spread the knees as wide as the mat, keeping the big toes touching
- Bring the belly to rest between the thighs and forehead to the floor

There are two possible arm variations


1. Either stretch the arms in front of you with the palms towards the floor
2. Bring the arms back alongside the thighs with the palms facing upwards

Contraindications:

Do not perform Child's Pose if:

- Suffering from diarrhoea
- Suffering from knee injury
- Pregnant

Corpse Pose (Savasana)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple Heater • Stomach • Spleen Organs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Heart • Lung • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows time for the body to integrate what has been experienced, challenged and learned through the postures. • Encourages relaxation in the muscles. • Nourishes the nervous system, internal organs and calms the mind. 	

Teaching Savasana

Relaxation is often thought of as only affecting the physical body. The flow of energy (Prana or chi) is profoundly affected which has mental and spiritual benefits. At the end of every asana practise it is very important to integrate the mind body balance the asana practise has been working to achieve. It also allows the body and mind time to integrate what has been learnt and experienced during the asana practise, retaining the relaxation in the muscles, the nourishment of the nervous system and internal organs and the calmness and clarity of the mind. Savasana develops self awareness, integrates the mind-body-spirit, promotes the experience of peace and a deep sense of well-being.

- Sit on the floor with the legs bent, hands resting behind the buttocks.
- Lie back on the elbows and tuck the tailbone down towards the feet while rotating the hips towards the face.
- Roll down from this position to lengthen the lower, middle and upper back to the floor.
- The chin is drawn slightly down towards the chest and the back of the head is placed softly on the floor.
- Extend the arms away from the sides of the body, elbows soft and palms up.
- With gentle pressure on the elbows, draw the shoulder blades down the back.
- Let the feet turn out, the legs hip distance apart, the knees soft.
- Close the eyes and feel the body is comfortable and give yourself permission to relax, deeply and completely.
- Melt the body into the floor, releasing every physical and mental tension.
- Allow the mind to scan the body and release any area of tension that it may find.
- Feel stillness and peace penetrate every part of your being.
- Allow the breath to softly and smoothly release and relax you, creating perfect balance and alignment throughout the body.
- Release the hands and feet, soften the jaw and release the mouth, the heart floats up and eyes soften behind the eye lids.
- The mind opens wide, spacious and free.
- Feel the body like a soft wave of energy on the floor, infinite, without limit.
- The ears relax into listening and everything is left just as it is.



Further Reading and Reference

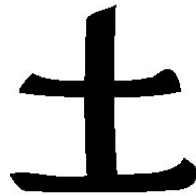
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ExTension	Sam Dworkis

ChiBall Pilates



The Earth Element - Descending Yang -

Characteristics of the Earth Element

Energetic

grounded - balanced - centred - stability

Physical

immune system (spleen) - muscle tone (the flesh) - nourishment – digestion
core strength and stability

Emotional

feeling loved - fulfilment - centeredness - contentment - confidence

Mind

thought - concentration - absorption - mental confusion



The Earth Element and ChiBall Pilates

Pilates within the ChiBall programme represents the EARTH element, the Autumn time of year and the time of descending energy. The corresponding organs partner organs are the spleen and the stomach. The emotional and physical theme is centeredness and stability and the feeling of fulfilment and contentment.

History & Philosophy

Joseph Pilates (1881 – 1967) was born in Germany. He was a sickly child and in order to strengthen his body he trained early in many different disciplines including yoga, gymnastics, meditation and martial arts. During the first World War he was interned in England and here he developed a series of bed based exercises using ropes and pulleys as resistance, assisting injured soldiers in their rehabilitation. He also developed floor based exercises. After the war he moved to America and set up a studio in New York for dancers, keeping them strong and less injury prone.

Joseph Pilates believed that movement originated from the abdominal area and that this was the place to start each exercise in order to maintain correct skeletal alignment and muscle activation. Today we call this core stabilization. Pilates states that a healthy balanced body should be like an orchestra, as it moves it uses multiple muscle groups simultaneously in perfect harmony. Pilates focuses on three primary control centres; the lower and deep abdominal muscles, the mid-back, then the arms and legs. When we allow the large outer layers to become stronger than the deeper stabilising muscles we risk musculoskeletal imbalances and injury. It is important that we place as much concentration and training on our deeper, smaller internal muscles to achieve full potential for physical strength and muscular power.

The Pilates exercise movements focus on eccentric contraction of the muscles which elongates rather than shortening, bulking or hardening muscles, as in weight training regimes. Pilates is excellent for developing good abdominal stabilisation, improving posture and body awareness as well as correcting long term muscle imbalances. Once the torso is stabilised, movement of the arms and legs becomes easier and more efficient.

High-speed sports and fitness regimes recruit predominantly fast twitch muscle fibres. Failing to balance the high speed training with slow controlled muscle conditioning will undoubtedly result in an imbalance. Dancers and gymnasts particularly have a high level of slow twitch fibres owing to the inner strength required for feats of impressive balance and control.

Today Pilates programs have become popular all round the world and it is practiced one-to-one with physiotherapists, personal trainers and pilates practitioners, in small groups and in class format in gyms and privately. It is used for rehabilitation purposes, for athletes and dancers to improve their performance or as an exercise session to improve health and well being and prevent injury. It can be equipment based as is often the case in pilates studios using apparatus such as the reformer bed. Or it can be mat based as in health clubs – in this type of class small apparatus is often used such as the swiss ball, therabands, the magic circle and Chiballs.

Traditional Pilates Principles

Contemporary Pilates involves more preliminary pelvis and shoulder girdle exercises than were present in Joseph Pilate's original work. The anatomically based concepts of 'neutral' spine and pelvis have been incorporated in recent years to help restore the natural curves of the **spine** – a departure from the traditional technique and other forms of fitness that incorporates a pelvic tilt to flattening of the lower back and cervical spine.

Principles of Pilates

- Breathing – a lateral form of breathing whilst maintaining slight abdominal activation.
- Concentration – applied to movement assists technique and control
- Centering – all exercises teach switching on the core before any limb movement
- Alignment – correct alignment of all joints before movement with particular attention to the pelvis, ribcage, scapula and spine
- Control and Precision – to apply the correct muscle activation and joint placement to each move
- Isolation – training muscles in isolation before using them in movement patterns

Breathing for Pilates

Pilates breathing should be felt in the front, side and back of the ribcage and the thoracic back muscles. However, for the average person thoracic breathing is almost impossible to achieve in the early stages of Pilates training because their own breathing patterns are no longer relaxed and natural. The most important breath to teach early students of Pilates first of all is full Diaphragmatic Breathing (see Breathing, Deep Relaxation, Meditation section). Only when all the muscles associated with breathing are relaxed can thoracic breathing be successfully executed.

- Co-ordinating the breathing throughout all the exercises is essential.
- Correct breathing assists when the body is being physically challenged.
- The breath can assist or challenge the movement.

Thoracic Breathing

Thoracic Breathing is when the lower abdomen (navel to pubis) is held flat and firm while the whole ribcage - front, side and back expands with the least amount of movement occurring in the upper chest and shoulders. Using the floor when lying supine is one method for building awareness of the ribcage as it expands and presses backwards into the floor.

Once thoracic breathing is mastered the following sequence concentrates the mind and allows the exercises to be executed precisely and accurately.

Pilates breathing is executed in three phases:

Preparation: Inhale, lengthen the neck, exhale:

Phase 1: soften the throat

Phase 2: slide the shoulder blades down the back and feel the ribs funnel downwards towards the hips

Phase 3: engage the transverse abdominus and the pelvic floor

The movement is executed on the third phase of breathing when the core is stable. Initially, the combination of lateral thoracic breathing, sustaining an engaged core and neutral spine can be challenging. Practising thoracic breathing with a towel or dynaband around the ribcage can be valuable time spent in addition to the Pilates sessions.

NB: negative emotions affect our breathing patterns and alter our postural state. Sometimes reconnecting with our natural breathing pattern can release long and deeply stored negative emotions. Not only is retraining the breath essential for full effectiveness of the Pilates exercises, it also helps integrate long forgotten and hidden aspects of ourselves.



Pelvic alignment

When lying supine the pelvis ideally should sit in a neutral position, with a natural lordotic curve of the lumbar spine present. Neutral means the hip bones (the anterior superior iliac spine - ASIS) and the pubic bone (symphysis pubis) are parallel to the floor and level with one another forming the shape of a triangle. If the pubic bone is higher than the ASIS the pelvis is in a posterior tilt. If the pubic bone is lower than the ASIS then the pelvis is in an anterior tilt.

Imprinting the pelvis refers to the normal lordotic curve being lengthened towards flexion of the lumbar spine. This is also towards a posterior tilt of the pelvis but not so great that the tail bone comes away from the floor or the lumbar spine presses into the floor.

Ribcage placement

When lying supine - To maintain good alignment of the ribcage we need to have good awareness. The ribs are ingeniously arranged to allow the movement required for breathing whilst also providing protection for the heart and lungs. When lying supine it is important not to allow the ribs to pop up during inhalation or when elevating the arms but to allow them to freely move laterally during the inhalation and to relax down during the exhalation. Maintaining a connection with the breath can really help in keeping the ribcage correctly placed.

Scapula placement

The shoulder blades (scapula) should lie flat against the ribcage but because they have no direct bony connection to the rib cage they can freely move upward-downward-outward- inward and rotate. The muscles that attach to the scapula are key players in shoulder stabilisation.

These muscles include:-

- Lower and mid fibres of the trapezius.
- Rhomboids Major and Minor.
- Serratus Anterior.
- Pectoralis Minor.
- Latissimus Dorsi.
- Teres Major.
- Pectoralis Major.

During arm movements, stabilisation of the scapula needs particular attention so they can move freely over the ribcage without 'winging' out. Gently slide the shoulder blades down towards the buttocks without force and avoid squeezing the shoulder blades towards the spine.

Head & cervical spine alignment

When lying supine it is important for the head to sit correctly on the floor and for a natural lordosis to be present in the cervical area of the spine. It is often necessary for a folded towel to be placed under the head in order for this to be achieved. To avoid neck strain particular care needs to be taken when lifting the head off the floor. Prior to lifting the head and upper body the chin first needs to be tucked down fractionally towards the chest lengthening the back of the neck taking the position out of neutral into slight flexion. By doing this you engage the deep neck flexors. The cervical spine should be a gentle continuation of the thoracic spinal curve whether it be in flexion or extension.



Additional Teaching Points for ChiBall Pilates

Principles of breaking down exercises

- Lowest common denominator principle(i.e. what is the most basic form of this exercise).
- Principles of initiation of movement in relation to the full exercise.
- Overall purpose of the exercise.

Modifications for injuries and postural problems

- Assessing and diagnosing postural deviation.
- Ability to strengthen the body while still avoiding fragile areas.
- Support for neck and lower back.

Progressive exercise planning (or the 3 stages of learning)

- 'Portioning it out'. Avoid overwhelming participants with too much detail and activity.
- Know that it takes time to digest and absorb new exercises and their principles.
- Know when participants are ready for new information or exercises to be added.

Clarity & objectivity within each exercise

- Goals and purpose of exercise.
- Positive affirmations and non-judgmental assessing of exercise execution.

Effective imagery and visualisation

- Find and explore mental images which work best for you and your participants.
- Ask whether the visualisation effectively enhances exercise execution.

Positive mental attitude

- How to measure progress, improvements
- Be mindful of negative competitiveness within your participants:

Vocabulary and terminology

- Good knowledge of anatomical terms which can be offered in day to day language for easy understanding.
- Monitor your choice of vocabulary and the effect it has on the exercise and your participants' progress and performance.

The effectiveness of touch

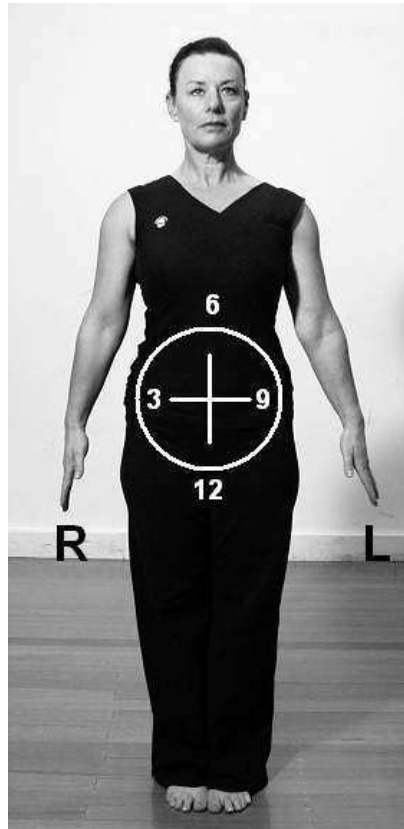
- Mind body connection through touch.
- Ask permission to touch a participant. Not everyone likes to be touched.
- Understand the various levels and qualities of touch. Be assertive and confident when adjusting and directing exercises and know what and why you need to anatomically adjust within an exercise.
- Respect personal space and know when it is appropriate to touch and when to allow participants time and space to absorb the experience.

The Pelvic Clock

Lying supine imagine the face of a clock lying on top of the pelvis:

- The pubic bone is 12 o'clock.
- The right hip bone is 3 o'clock.
- The top of the abdominals/base of the ribs is 6 o'clock.
- Left hip bone is 9 o'clock.


The pelvic clock can be used in all positions to build awareness of neutral pelvis, stability or lack of it when lying supine, on the side, prone or kneeling on all fours.



This image can also be reversed by placing “12 o'clock” at the navel instead. Use the version you are most familiar with.

ChiBall Pilates Exercises


Neutral Pelvis

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Pilates Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach • Spleen Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces disc pressure, stress on spinal muscles and ligament. • Ensures good energy levels. • Reduces risk of injury during every day activities. 	

Teaching Neutral Pelvis

- Find your natural spinal alignment which has a subtle inward curve in the lower back, outward curve at the thoracic spine, and inward curve at the neck otherwise called the 'S' curve by rocking the pelvis back (tucking) and forth (arching). This curve provides a natural springiness to the spine which absorbs impact.
- Find neutral pelvis by becoming aware of the triangular shape from the two hips bones to pubic bone. Keep this triangular shape parallel to the floor.
- Now feel for the natural curve of the lower back and neck.
- Lengthen the neck and slide the shoulders along the floor towards the hips.
- Relax the buttocks.
- The feet are parallel and in alignment with the hip bones.

Scapula Awareness & Shoulder Release

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Pilates Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bladder Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Releases tension in trapezius muscles which effect mid/upper back, shoulder and neck muscles. Mobilises and stabilises shoulder girdle. 	

Teaching Scapula Awareness & Shoulder Release

- Lie down on your back, neutral pelvis, with knees bent, and feet hip width apart, parallel and flat and a comfortable distance from your buttocks
- Place your arms beside your body with the ChiBall underneath your right hand.
- Inhale to prepare Exhale: engage the transverse abdominus and gently push the ChiBall towards your right foot. Become aware of the action and feeling of the shoulder joint, and shoulder blade sliding along the floor towards the hips.
- Inhale: release.
- Repeat 6 – 8 times.
- Repeat on the other side.

Part 2:


- Inhale: lengthen your neck, exhale: engage the transverse abdominus and gently push the ChiBall towards your right foot.
- Inhale: Keep the shoulder blade stable against the mat and lift the ChiBall above the shoulder.
- Exhale: lower arm to side.
- Inhale: release to start position.



Part 3

- Inhale: lengthen your neck, exhale: engage the transverse abdominus and gently push the ChiBall towards your right foot.
- Inhale: Keep the shoulder blade stable against the mat and lift the ChiBall above the shoulder, then overhead towards the floor.
- Exhale: lower arm to side.
- Inhale: release to start position.

Pelvic Tilt


Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Yoga Pose
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bladder Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Intestine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releases stiffness and tension in the pelvis and lower spine. • Establishes awareness of pelvis mobility and neutral spine. 	

Teaching Pelvic Tilt

- Lie down on your back, neutral pelvis, with knees bent, and feet hip width apart, parallel and flat and a comfortable distance from your buttocks
- Raise your pelvis and place the ChiBall at the base of your spine- just below the low back and top of the sacrum
- Place your arms beside your body, palms down or raise them above your head
- Inhale to prepare. Exhale engage the transverse abdominus and push gently with the feet to drop the waist towards the floor, flattening the back against the ChiBall, pushing the pubic bone up
- Inhale to arch your back over the ChiBall

NOTE: Be careful not to over exaggerate this movement. A gentle tilt back and forth over the ChiBall is all that is required to awaken pelvic movement.

Foot Paddle (Knee Float)

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Pilates Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach • Spleen • Bladder Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Intestine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tones buttocks, back of legs (hamstrings). • Strengthens whole spinal column and postural support muscle. • Abdominal strength is used to stabilise the pelvis and spine. • Good exercise for sway back postures. 	

Teaching Foot Paddle / Knee Float

- Lie on your back with the ChiBall positioned underneath your pelvis – at the base of the spine (not in the lower back).
- Make sure your hips and pelvis are in neutral. Keep your hands by your side. Keep your shoulders moving down towards your waist, keep the base of the ribcage moving down towards your waist.

Foot paddle A: (fundamental)

- Inhale: lengthen your neck, slide the shoulders along the floor towards the hips.
- Exhale: connect the abdominal core muscles and lift your right heel off the floor,
- Inhale: lower the foot back to the floor.
- Repeat with the left foot.
- Repeat 8 times each side.

Foot paddle B: (intermediate)


- Inhale: to lengthen your neck, slide the shoulders along the floor towards the hips.
- Exhale: connect the abdominal core muscles and lift your right foot just off the floor.
- Inhale: lower the foot back to the floor.
- Repeat with the left foot.
- Repeat 8 times each side.

Foot paddle C*: (advanced)

- Inhale: to lengthen your neck, slide the shoulders along the floor towards the hips.
- Exhale: connect the abdominal core muscles and lift your right foot and float the knee above the hip.
- Inhale: lower the foot back to the floor.
- Exhale to repeat with the left foot.
- Repeat 8 times each side.

*When floating the knee, check for neck and shoulder tension. If the neck flexors are switching on, the student is not yet ready for this stage of the exercise. Return to A & B until there is complete control, ease and effortlessness in the movement.

Shoulder Bridge

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Pilates Exercise
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Stomach • Spleen <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tones buttocks, back of legs (hamstrings), inner thighs. • Strengthens whole spinal column and core postural support muscles. • Abdominal strength is used to stabilise the pelvis and spine. • Especially good for sway-back, flat-back and lordotic postures. 	

Teaching Shoulder Bridge


Part A:

- Lie on your back with the ChiBall positioned underneath your pelvis at the sacrum (not in the lower back). The pelvis starts in a neutral position. Keep the hands by your side and slide the shoulder blades and the ribcage down towards the hips. Drop the chin slightly to lengthen the neck.
- Inhale to prepare. Exhale, draw the navel towards the spine and tilt the pelvis keeping contact with the ChiBall. Do not squeeze the buttocks.
- Inhale to return the pelvis to neutral. Exhale to tilt the pelvis again.
- Repeat this 8 - 10 times.

Part B:

- Inhale to prepare. Exhale, draw the navel towards the spine and tilt the pelvis, continue to tilt the pelvis and lift the tail bone away from the ChiBall. Peel the spine off the floor vertebra by vertebra with segmental control. Only go as high as comfortable, making sure that the connection between the ribs and the hips stays the same.
- Inhale: hold the position.
- Exhale: soften the breastbone and start coming back down vertebra by vertebra, until the pelvis returns to anterior tilt on the ChiBall and finishes in neutral.
- Repeat 6 - 8 times.

Side Lying


Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Pilates Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallbladder • Spleen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches and tones the whole legs, buttocks and hips. • trains postural stability in a side lying position. 	

Teaching Side Lying

Part A

- Place the ChiBall underneath the ankle of the bottom leg and press it firmly into the floor with both legs
- Stabilise the shoulder girdle, pelvis and spine in neutral for side lying position.
- Check that your knees, feet and hips are facing forward, and in a straight line; the waist drawn away from the floor, extend your top hip towards your feet, draw your ribs down towards your hips and top shoulder towards the hip.
- Inhale, exhale: engage abdominals by drawing the navel to the spine without over recruiting the abdominal core muscles.
- Inhale: raise the top leg with a foot extended.
- Exhale: flex the foot and lower the leg.
- Observe your posture throughout: keep the body long and stable

Swimming (Swan Dive Prep)


Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Pilates Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Intestine • Stomach Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens the entire spinal muscles: • Trains shoulder girdle. • Stabilises for postural muscles. • Stabilises shoulders, front of hips. 	

Teaching Swimming (or Swan Dive Prep)

- Lying face down (prone), place the ChiBall on the sternum then hug the ball with your body as you lower your head to the floor with the arms at a 90 degree angle.
- Inhale, exhale: engage abdominals by drawing the navel to the spine.
- Inhale: draw the shoulder blades down to your hips; extend the thoracic spine and then cervical spine and as you lift feel you are pushing the ChiBall away from you with your chest. This elongates the spine and waist.
- Exhale: maintain stabilisation of core abdominal muscles
- Inhale, exhale: slide the shoulder blades down towards the hips, flex the thoracic then cervical spine to lower the body down.
- Repeat 4 - 6 times.



Cat & Alternating Half Plank

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Pilates Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Intestine • Stomach Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens postural muscles. • Teaches postural stability and spinal awareness. • Promotes training of transverse abdominus. against gravity. Switches on all stabilisers promotes awareness of shoulder girdle.	

Teaching Cat & Alternating Half Plank

Cat:

- Kneeling on as shown on 'all fours or cat position', find neutral spine with knees apart, with hands underneath the shoulders and knees directly under the hips.
- Inhale, exhale: engage abdominals by drawing the navel to the spine. Draw the shoulder blades down to your hips, without deviating from the neutral pelvic position.
- Inhale, exhale: flex the spine by moving the tail bone, lumbar - thoracic - cervical spine.
- Inhale: extend the spine by moving the tail bone, lumbar - thoracic - cervical spine and extending head on the spine to return the pelvis and spine to neutral position. (Allow the neck curve to mirror the lumbar curve).
- Repeat flexion and extension of the spine 6 - 8 times.



Half plank:

- Kneeling on as shown on 'all fours or cat position', find neutral spine with knees apart, with hands underneath the shoulders and knees directly under the hips.
- Inhale, exhale: engage abdominal muscles by drawing the navel to the spine. Draw the shoulder blades down towards your hips.
- Without deviating from the neutral pelvic position, place the ChiBall into the right hand, press down into the floor with the left hand, inhale/exhale: extend the right arm lifting the ChiBall away from the floor. Inhale to lower, exhale to lift. 3 – 4 times max.
- Inhale: lower the ChiBall and draw the leg back to the start position.
- Exhale: lift the ChiBall to shoulder height and roll the second ChiBall away from the hip. Repeat 3 more times before changing to the opposite side.
- Inhale, exhale: extend the body, reaching from ChiBall to the big toe of the left foot to lift the ChiBall to shoulder height and roll the second ChiBall away from the hip. Be aware of your posture. Have you sustained neutral pelvis and spine and balance in the hips and shoulders?

Modification:

- The ChiBall is placed underneath one leg as shown.
- The ChiBall is also placed on the back of the sacrum for stability awareness as an alternative, modification of progressions to single arm and leg lifting from the 'Cat' position.





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Pilates Based Body Awareness*
(182 Shaftesbury Ave, London WC2H 8JJ)

Barker & Hocking

ChiBall Release



The Metal Element

- Rising Yin -

Characteristics of the Metal Element

Energetic

Gathering in - letting go - conservation - storage - withdrawal

Physical

breathing - circulation - skin tone - elimination - posture - abdominal tone

Emotional

tolerance - considerate - understanding - enthusiasm

Mind

clarity - positive outlook - mental alertness - opening minded



The Metal Element - ChiBall Release

ChiBall Release within the ChiBall programme represents the metal element, the autumn time of year. The corresponding partner organs are lung and large intestine. The emotional and physical theme is gathering in and letting go, clarity of mind and emotional enthusiasm.

The Principles of Moshe Feldenkrais

Moshe Feldenkrais was born in a town on the Russian/Polish border. He became an engineer, physicist, athlete, Judo master, mathematician and student of acupuncture. He learned anything pertaining to human movement; acupuncture, kinesiology, physiology, neurology, anatomy and psychology and paediatrics to name but a few.

Feldenkrais began his work in functional re-education after he healed an old knee injury sustained while playing a social game of soccer. Feldenkrais developed a unique understanding of sensory-motor function and its relationship to thought, emotion and action. The Feldenkrais Method is awareness through movement and functional integration.

Feldenkrais believed that, for those who have experienced years of injuries and physical stiffness, these states can be changed by learning new patterns of movement. The brain registers this new information and a more efficient image will replace the old distorted one. This is achieved by breaking down functional movements and patterns to their most simple components. Gradually new neural connections between the motor cortex of the brain and the muscular system are made. Although concentration may be on one particular area or joint, other areas will also be transformed because of the integrated neuromuscular linkages.

According to Feldenkrais we become imbalanced and distorted because we repeat only a limited number of movements and fail to vary them. The body adapts to this set repertoire of movements and the skeletal structure can become distorted resulting in an uncomfortable posture.

Movement in this day and age for most western adults has been reduced to lying, sitting or standing. We become stuck in a groove as far as our movement patterns are concerned. Because we rarely alter or change these muscular patterns, the corresponding motor pathways to the brain via the central nervous system remain fixed too. It is suggested that this physical state can directly reflect our mindstate, i.e. how stuck or stiff we are in our thoughts, attitudes, and perceptions.

Moshe Feldenkrais observed that the floor was the place where a child discovered and developed motor skills which were vital to their brain development. Children would instinctively find the most effortless route to sit, crawl or stand. Muscular strength is achieved through exploratory learning, which promotes muscle growth and strengthening. In classical Feldenkrais classroom formats, participants are encouraged to revert to those early days of learning. The focus is not on any particular muscle or joint but rather on the entire system. Either sitting or lying on the floor, students are taken back to an almost childlike level in order to re-discover long forgotten movement patterns. The repetitive sequences allow time, to find a new alternative route which results in a more efficient pattern for movement. The brain registers the new pathway and will begin to use it. The result? Movement which is more efficient, uses less energy, and consequently makes one stronger and more relaxed.

The wonderful thing about Feldenkrais is that it is very relaxing and rejuvenating. Body scanning (before and after comparison) is encouraged to promote awareness of change, in both the physiology and psychology. If one is in physical discomfort through injury or just general habitual stiffness the relaxation and increased mobility will have a significant effect on the mindstate.



The Principles of Moshe Feldenkrais and ChiBall

This section of ChiBall uses some very basic principles of the Feldenkrais Method. The ChiBall is used to increase sensation and kinetic awareness as well as a massage tool. Lying and moving slowly over the ball acts as a trigger to release stress and tension. There is a remarkably quick response as the joints and muscles begin to surrender to the gentle movements and pressure of the ChiBall. A before and after check will reveal an increased range of motion of the back, neck, pelvis or hamstrings and a blissful ease in the area where the ball was used.

The ChiBall teacher training module really does not do justice to the full Feldenkrais concept which deserves years of study and higher learning. As a teacher, we can build a bridge between those of us who participate in fast paced lives and fitness concepts, and still have our own individual blockages and limitations whether they be unconscious or conscious. Through deeper study and practise of The Feldenkrais Method we may learn that many limitations and injuries incurred can be as a result of a lack of awareness and an inefficient movement pattern.

Feldenkrais teaches us to re-learn and discover step by step, new patterns and pathways which allow us to experience not only exercise but also life as deeply relaxed, strong and energetic.

Principles for Teaching Feldenkrais Based Lessons

Vocabulary & terminology

- A sequence of Feldenkrais movements is referred to as a 'lesson', not an exercise.
- The term 'Body' is not used in Feldenkrais and is instead replaced with reference to the person or individual body parts. Refer to parts of the body as 'your...' e.g. 'your arm', and also to the 'whole of the self' – as in "How is the whole of yourself making contact with the floor".

Further examples to use are

- "Roll yourself onto your left side."
- "Take your right arm and pass it over your head."
- "Bring your awareness to an imaginary mid-line which divides your left and right sides."
- "How does your right arm/shoulder/leg/back feel now?"
- "Is there an echo of this movement somewhere else?" "If so, what are you becoming aware of now?"

Be sure your directions for the movements are clear. Even though lying supine or prone Feldenkrais gave his instructions as if standing.

- 'Up' means towards the wall behind where the head is lying.
- 'Down' means towards the feet.
- 'Forward' or 'in front' means towards the ceiling.
- 'Back' means behind you, or towards the floor.

It is not necessary to correct a student during a lesson. Use the power of suggestion to define an instruction without *telling* them what to do. It is important to use the correct terminology.

Words & phrases

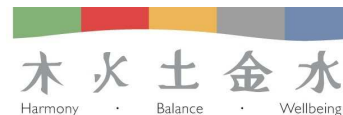
The harsh environment in which we live today has unfortunately cultivated attitudes which are severely critical, inflexible, and insensitive. Words such as gently, softly, easily, effortlessly are valuable affirmations for us all to hear. Use these words to encourage the participant to explore and discover themselves unhurriedly, sensitively and patiently.

Experience first before teaching

Experience the lesson yourself first. When teaching Feldenkrais you verbally guide students through a sequence of movements based on your experience.

Developing awareness

Begin a lesson with a preliminary check as to how your students sense themselves lying on the floor. Refer back to this regularly throughout the lesson so that changes in perception can be recognised by the individual.



Curious exploration

The lessons are exploratory and not goal-orientated.

Keep reminding students to do less and make smaller movements. Encourage them to close their eyes, if more comfortable. This enables the individual to internally observe the movements and become less distracted.

Feldenkrais lessons are meant to be gentle, playful, and relaxing. While teaching these lessons, endeavour to use your voice in a manner that encourages easy learning.

Remember Feldenkrais is about the whole self being involved in freer movement, also recognising that “If the skeleton is well organised then the muscles are free to do what they are meant to do – move the skeleton”.

Additional Teaching Points for ChiBall Lessons

Learning from ourselves about ourselves

Encourage slow mindful movements so that the class participant can become aware of how they could organise themselves better during the movement sequences to make a fundamental change in themselves. Fast automated movements prevent valuable learning opportunities. When a more efficient and organised pattern for movement has been discovered a change in pace and rhythm can also be added.

Untangling the knots

Realigning ourselves is much like untangling a knotted ball of wool. We know that if we move too fast or aggressively the knots become tighter and are very hard to undo. We start with one end and weave and unweave with patience until finally the ball of wool is loose, and in straight lines. Only then can it be rewound back into an organised shape that is much easier to work with.

Be comfortable

Comfort is of great importance when participating in a Feldenkrais class. The clothes you wear, the floor, the mat, the temperature of the room are important considerations to ensure the least amount of distraction, and to provide the best opportunity possible to completely relax. It is far easier to become aware of ourselves and the environment that surrounds us when we are totally comfortable.

Relax

All the movements need to be executed in a completely relaxed way. The more effortlessly you execute the movements the easier it is to discover the resistance and how you respond to it.

Focus on movement not muscle

Throughout the movement sequences or awareness lessons the goal is to use no muscular effort. During the smallest, slowest and most simple movements it is important to be watchful and alert and learn to listen to your intuitive guide.

Vary the movement speed

Once the sequence has been repeated and the greatest opportunity for learning achieved then experimentation between slow motion movements and faster movements can begin.

Body scanning- “what have you learned?”

Before and after comparisons or body scanning helps the participant become aware of what they have learned. A simple way to help the student learn about themselves, prior to participating in a Feldenkrais movement sequence, is to have them try any twisting, bending, sitting, or lying exercises as practised in all ChiBall disciplines. Then following a Feldenkrais based movement sequence, have them try the same movement again. What have they learned or become aware of?

Breathing


Learning to breathe in an uninhibited way is the key to being able to live and work in a relaxed state. Observation of the breathing pattern before, during and after the exercises is another exceedingly useful step along the path to awareness.

Be a Teacher and a Guide

There is a fine balance between allowing people to learn and discover, but also being skilful and intuitive enough to offer guidance just before any level of frustration or negativity has the opportunity to manifest. This enables the participant to blossom and awaken in a kind and gentle way.

ChiBall Release and the Principles of Feldenkrais Lessons

Side Lying Shoulder Rock

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Lesson
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gallbladder Small Intestine Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relieves stiffness and tension in shoulder and neck. Re-awakens natural movement in upper back and scapula. 	

Teaching Side Lying Shoulder Rock

Part 1

- Lie on your right side with your legs at 90 angle with your head resting on your folded arm.
- With the ChiBall in your left hand, keeping the arm absolutely straight, push the ChiBall away, then pull it back towards you without bending your arm or breaking at the wrist
- Continue pushing the ChiBall back and forth and be aware of your shoulder and shoulder blade movement

Part 2

Useful step by step stages for learning


(lying on the right side)

- Try placing the palm of the hand on top of the ChiBall and without bending the arm just allow the wrist to bend and touch the floor and then lift back up level with the ball. What do you observe?
- Keep the hand on top of the ChiBall and allow the wrist to drop without touching the floor so that the hand flexes. Then push the fingers down onto the front side of the ChiBall so that the wrist flexes. Throughout, do not allow the arm to bend. What do you feel and where?
- Allow the hand to roll off the ChiBall and let the little finger touch the floor roll across to the other side and allow the thumb to touch the floor. What are you feeling? What do you observe?

Part 3

- Repeat Part 1. Have the sensations and feelings changed compared to your first impressions about the movement? Lie flat on your back and integrate the experience of what you have learned before repeating this sequence lying on the left side.

Side Lying Pelvic Rock

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Lesson
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallbladder • Spleen Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosens sacrum. • Relieves tension and stiffness in middle and lower back muscles. 	

Teaching Side Lying Pelvic Rock

Part 1:

- Position yourself as for Shoulder Rock.
- Place your ChiBall between your knees.
- Try and push the ChiBall away with your hips.
- Draw your hip back, pulling the knee over the ChiBall.
- Keep the ankles and feet together and focus on the movement within the pelvis, lower back and waist. After several repetitions, notice if the upper torso or limbs become integrated and active in the movement also.

Part 2:

Useful step by step stages for learning


(lying on the right side)

- With the ankles touching, try lift the weight of the knee off the ChiBall.
- Place the left ankle bone on the floor just in front of the right one. Continue lifting the knee off the ChiBall
- Put the left ankle behind the right and continue lifting the knee off the ChiBall.
What are you observing? What response is there to this action? How does it feel?
- Have the ankles touching again. This time keep the knee on the ChiBall and lift the ankle and lower leg up in the air. Repeat several times and then place on the floor in front and then on the floor behind the right leg.
What are you observing this time? What response did you have to this action? How does it feel?
- Remove the ChiBall, lie on your back, and pause for a moment.

Part 3:

- Repeat Part 1. Have the sensations and feelings changed compared to your first impressions about the movement? Lie flat on your back and integrate the experience of what you have learned before repeating this sequence lying on the left side.

Space Roll

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Lesson
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spleen • Lung Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Lung 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosens sacrum. • Relieves tension and stiffness in middle and lower back muscles. 	

Teaching the Space Roll

Part 1

- Position yourself as for Shoulder and Pelvic Rock.
- Lie on your right side with your legs at 90 angle with your head resting on the floor or on a pillow and both arms outstretched holding the ChiBall.
- Breathe in and take the ChiBall across to the left side.
- Breathe out and chase the ChiBall with your left, then your right leg, rolling yourself on the floor until you are lying on your left side.
- Repeat to the right side and then side to side.
- Be relaxed and playful so that you melt and mould into the floor.

Part 2

Useful step by step stages for learning


(lying on the right side)

- With both arms outstretched on front of the chest, place the ChiBall between the palms
- As for the shoulder roll, keep the arms straight and just roll the head up to look at the ceiling and down to look at the floor. (keeping it in contact with the floor) What have you observed?
- Progress to rolling the head and letting the arm and hand lift the ChiBall up and let the left leg lift up until you are almost lying flat on your back and then close again. Repeat several times. What do you feel? What do you feel you want to do? Can you feel any awkwardness, or resistance. Is there anything you could do to change this?
- Lie flat on your back with the knees bent and the feet hip distance apart and the ChiBall in the left hand. Try rolling onto the left side but without letting the right hand leave the floor. Try this several times. What are you observing? What is your response to this action? How does it feel?
- Now let the hand lift off and almost roll onto the left side before returning to the supine position. What did you feel this time?
- Now roll all the way across. Repeat all of the above on the left side

Part 3

- Repeat Part 1. Have the sensations and feelings changed compared to your first impressions about the movement? Lie flat on your back and integrate the experience of what you have learned.

Pelvic Clock

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Lesson
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spleen • Bladder Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releases stiffness and tension in the pelvis and lower spine. 	

Teaching the Pelvic Clock

Part 1

- Begin with the ChiBall placed between the knees, lying on your back with your knees bent, arms out to the side.
- As if tracing the hands of a clock from 12 o'clock to 6 o'clock press the pelvis into the floor so that the back arches. Breathe out and gently use the feet to push the waist down towards the floor and feel the low back flatten. Do this several times
- Now trace the clock hands between 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock. Repeat several times
- Beginning at 12 o'clock, trace each number on the clock all the way around until you reach 12 again. Do this several times before going anti-clockwise.

Part 2

Useful step by step stages for learning

- Repeat the same procedure as above but this time on the ChiBall.
- Lift your pelvis off the floor and place the ChiBall at the top of the pelvis just below the lower back area.
- As if tracing the hands of a clock from 12 o'clock to 6 o'clock. Breathe in and allow the buttocks to fall over the ChiBall so that the back arches. Breathe out and use the feet to push the waist down towards the floor and feel the low back flatten against the ChiBall. Avoid being over enthusiastic with this movement. Be gentle and watchful throughout.
- Now trace the clock hands between 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock.
- Beginning at 12 o'clock, trace each number on the clock all the way around until you reach 12 again. Do this several times before going anti-clockwise.
What do you feel? What do you feel you want to do? What are you feeling this time?

Part 3


- Repeat Part 1. Have the sensations and feelings changed compared to your first impressions about the movement? Lie flat on your back and integrate the experience of what you have learned.

THE PELVIC CLOCK:

Lying supine imagine the face of a clock lying on top of the pelvis:

1. The pubic bone is 6 o'clock.
2. The right hip bone is 9 o'clock.
3. The top of the abdominals/base of the ribs is 12 o'clock.
4. Left hip bone is 3 o'clock.

Shoulder Rolling

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Lesson
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Triple Heater • Pericardium • Bladder Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releases habitual stiffness and tension in the middle spine area (thoracic spine). • Releasing this area of the spine, also releases shoulder, neck and lower back muscle aches. • Produces mobility at the most rigid area of the spine between the shoulder blades. 	

Teaching Shoulder Rolling

Part 1:

- Place the ChiBall in the middle of your back (thoracic spine), or just below the shoulder blades. If this feels too uncomfortable air volume of the ChiBall can be reduced to suit your spinal flexibility. Also lie on a pillow or cushion if necessary, to elevate your neck and head
- Have your legs outstretched into a wide 'V', then wrap your arms and hug yourself tightly.
- Begin rolling side to side on and off the ChiBall.
- Allow the head to fall in the opposite direction to the elbows.
- Repeat several times, breathing in to rise up onto the ChiBall and breathe out to roll off to one side.

Part 2:


Useful step by step stages for learning

- Place the ChiBall in the middle of your back (thoracic spine), or just below the shoulder blades. If this feels too uncomfortable air volume of the chi ball can be reduced to suit your spinal flexibility. Also lie on a pillow or cushion if necessary, to elevate your neck and head.
- Stay here for a minute or two and allow the back to yield to the shape of the ChiBall. Note any resistance to the ball being in that position of the upper back. Explore for yourself where a more comfortable position may be for you.
- With the arms outstretched, begin wobbling the legs, setting up a gentle vibration throughout the body until you feel it surrender and relax further.
- Now bend your knees. Allow them to fall over to the right side and then the left. Do this slowly and carefully allowing the ribcage and pelvis time to adjust.
- Extend your legs again and shake like a floppy jelly! Can you feel any change or response to this?
- With the knees still bent, support your head with your hands and arch and curl over the ChiBall, at the same time lift the pelvis off the floor. Repeat several times then hold the position with the head and pelvis up off the floor and breathe deeply several times. Then release.
- What do you feel? What do you feel you want to do? Can you feel any awkwardness, or resistances. Is there anything you can do to change this?

Part 3:

- Repeat Part 1. Have the sensations and feelings changed compared to your first impressions about the movement? Lie flat on your back and integrate the experience of what you have learned.

Neck Press & Circles

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Lesson
<p>Meridians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Gallbladder • Triple Heater • Pericardium • Bladder <p>Organ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kidney 	<p>Neck Press:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulates blood flow to the neck, shoulder and upper back muscles. • Stimulates muscles along the spine. • Stimulates acupressure points for relieving insomnia. <p>Neck Circles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings awareness of tension being carried in the neck muscles. • Reminds the neck what it feels like to lean, let go, and rest. • A good exercise for slowing the mind down and release mental stress and tension. 	

Teaching Neck Press and Circles

Part 1: Neck Press:

- Place the ChiBall at the base of the head.
- Inhale, exhale and press your head down into the ChiBall..
- Inhale to release, exhale and again press down.
- Repeat six to eight times.

Part 2: Neck Circles:

Useful step by step stages for learning

- Completely relax the head and neck and close your eyes.
- Release the jaw, part the teeth and very slightly open your mouth.
- Begin making circles clockwise about the size of an orange with your chin.
- Next have your nose draw circles the size of a plum.
- Finally draw tiny circles the size of a cherry with the space between your eyebrows.
- Repeat each circle eight to ten times.
- Return to the largest circle and observe what you feel now compared to the first time you executed this circle. Repeat the whole routine anti-clockwise.
- Observe whether the circles are perfectly round or is the movement choppy in certain places?
- Is the smallest circle you make shaking slightly (which may be evidence of tension being held there) or is it smooth and relaxed?
- Breathe naturally throughout.

Part 3

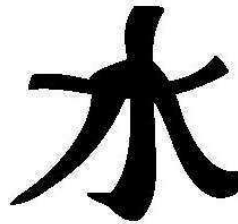
- Repeat Part 1. Have the sensations and feelings changed compared to your first impressions about the movement? Is there an increase of strength in the neck muscles? Remove the ChiBall, lie flat on your back and integrate what you have learned.



Further Reading and Reference

Awareness Through Movement	Moshe Feldenkrais
The Potent Self - A Guide to Spontaneity	Moshe Feldenkrais
The Master Moves	Moshe Feldenkrais
Mindful Spontaneity*	Ruthy Alon
Awareness Heals: The Feldenkrais Method for Dynamic Health*	Steven Shafarman
The Feldenkrais Method: Teaching By Handling - A Technique for Individuals	Yochanan Rywerant
The Art of Letting Go - A Taoist Approach Reproduced with kind permission	Amy Suplee

Breathing, Deep Relaxation & Meditation



The Water Element - Condensed Yin -

Characteristics of the Water Element

Energetic

preservation - hibernation - rejuvenating - stillness - reflection - quiet - depth - calm

Physical

low back pain - fluid retention - knees - hearing - bones and marrow - sciatica - sex drive

Emotional

calm - fearful - trusting - driven - perfectionist - apprehensive

Mind

adapting and flowing with change - will power - wisdom - receptiveness – instinct - imagination



The Art of Letting Go - A Taoist Approach

Reproduced with the kind permission of Amy Suplee LAc MTCM

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Surrendering

The idea of 'letting go' is logically such a simple concept, but can be one of the most difficult of tasks to carry out. If there were a simple solution, a 'quick fix' remedy to being able to 'let go', it would surely be desirable and likely worth millions. It has been said that "learning to live is learning to let go", (Sogyal Rinpoche), for nothing in life is permanent, and eventually we have to let go of each and every thing that enters our lives, including ourselves. Life can be a difficult struggle because our minds become preoccupied with desire, and more specifically, desired outcomes relative to people, places and things. Whether we achieve the desired outcome or not, we have a tendency to cling incessantly to the object of our desire. In time, this becomes a conditioned response, as we cling to everything that enters the parameters of our life. This NEED is what stagnates us and puts us into a state of misery. Rather than enjoying the freedom within change and the new doors that are trying to open for us, if we would only let them, we stare at the closed doors long after they are in fact CLOSED. Our minds busy our lives with their useless thoughts – the fears we have about the future, the torment that we have about our past, and the anxiety of what "may or may not happen." These very thoughts keep us spinning our wheels in our self-constructed whirlpool of negativity as we replay and rehearse situations of which we have no control. The more productive stance to take is, "when we find ourselves in a useless battle, we merely walk off the battlefield." [1] Of course this is easier said than done. Because of our conditioning to cling to everything, it will only be achieved by practising and rehearsing the act of letting go. It is not a task which will happen overnight, but rather a process of putting one foot in front of the other, where progress is made each day. It comes down to making a conscious decision to practise this art by ridding our minds of worthless anxieties, toxic thoughts, debilitating anger and resentment, and unnecessary fears/worries about the future. This fear of uncertainty can surely steal our life force if we allow it to overtake us. Even though circumstances themselves may be out of our control at the present moment, it is important to remember that we ultimately have control over ourselves, our response and our attitude in relation to these circumstances. With our own awareness, we can use this time to clean up our own side of the fence by taking responsibility for any part we played in creating the present circumstances. With this new attitude, we are more easily able to accept that which life has in store for us by allowing our direction to come from the divine.

Letting Go of Resistance

Our challenge in life is to face whatever it is that is presented to us by the universe, and to become enthralled by the mystery and the unfolding of our lives, without knowing exactly how it will unfold. Since there are no guarantees, this concept is only grasped by truly understanding that everything is impermanent; no moment in time can be held on to forever, be it good or bad. In this way, life has an admirable quality to it in knowing that all situations can be transformed, which is especially appreciated when one hits a low point. It is relieving to remember that 'this too shall pass'. Life does continue to flow, and no situation lasts forever. Therefore, true healing is occurring all the time, and once the situation is brought to light, within the realms of universal timing and our own inner awareness, the pain will subside. It is our task to find that seemingly small amount of light within the dark moment and expand on it. It can be an uncomfortable place to be while in the thick of it, but if life didn't push us to our limits, we would likely lack the discipline needed to dive into ourselves with such vigour. By being placed in a state of discomfort we are forced to find the answers in ourselves to transcend beyond our static state of being. Change is followed by growth, and growth can be a painful experience if we are unprepared and resistant to what is taking place. We begin to experience problems when we try to hold onto a moment, in an effort to make the situation permanent or different than what it is. We all have a tendency to get 'stuck' in a state of 'longing' for something that inevitably must change. "This emotional investment can cloud our



ability to be able to see clearly.”[2] The key is to stop grasping and accept the changes that are taking place. Once we come to understand that new beginnings can only occur by letting go of the old, we can be open to that new beginning and feel the opportunity rather than the pain associated with the change. When it becomes clear that what once supported our own growth and expansion is no longer fulfilling that need, it is time to move on. Change which occurs against our will is usually difficult, because of the vulnerability within ourselves, when we must surrender to the circumstances that are outside of our control. This state of powerlessness can cause us to feel helpless; thus emerges the fear that facilitates the downward spiral. But, through this fear, we are then able to evaluate exactly how much of our ‘identity’ is attached to a particular person/situation/outcome based on the amount of anxiety experienced, and how difficult it is to withdraw. With our own awareness we can recognize the fear, but keep it at bay. We must not forget the restorative nature of this change – it is in itself a death of something that we have outgrown. Not only have we likely outgrown the life circumstances, but we too have outgrown certain habits/behaviours of our own. In order for our lives to flow again, we must take a look at what needs to be changed within ourselves. Without this opportunity for a new beginning, all would surely come to a halt and life would remain dark. Darkness must first die before it can again come to light. This follows the exact laws of nature in the birth-growth-death-rebirth cycle that all things undergo. For example, a forest fire seems to be a purely destructive force, but it is tremendously positive in actuality, allowing the opportunity for re-birth and re-growth. Without this, the forest would become very unhealthy.

Trusting Divinity

Our bodies are constantly undergoing change with the birth and death of our tissues and cells. However, it goes unnoticed much of the time because of our conditioning to overlook it, but this is in fact going on all around us. Yet, we most often only notice the big devastating changes because of the pain that is associated with them. This type of change puts the ego in a very vulnerable position, because it is no longer holding the reins of our life with complete control. There is a power greater than ourselves which has stepped in and taken over. The ego still wants to be the one in control so it causes a great deal of confusion within us. The idea here is to stop pushing forward and allow change to run its course, by allowing life to show us what it has in store for us; hence the universal plan takes over. By accepting this existential reality, we can pull our energy back into ourselves for rejuvenation, allowing for the inner-growth process that is necessary at this time. This is in fact what the universe is pushing us to do. Then, when the tides change and the new opportunity presents itself, the appropriate action can be taken, and we have a newfound strength to work with. This is a time when we must completely surrender, because we are often times being forced against our will to go within and do Nothing. As Lao Tzu (the great Chinese philosopher) once said, “practise not doing and everything will fall into place”. This does not literally mean ‘do absolutely nothing’, but rather that we should ‘go with the flow’ by creatively keeping ourselves involved in life and what the present moment has to offer, without trying to push for answers and make spontaneous changes. This is clearly a time to strengthen the Self, and as the Self is strengthened, new levels of creativity will emerge that were previously undiscovered, for this new space allows for expansion. “By strengthening your defense under adverse conditions, you will create an effective offense.”[3] It is the ultimate test of power and self-control, and when this test arises it is often unavoidable. To resist this universal shift and attempt to Act will only create more pain, confusion and chaos. The universe sends us very clear messages, and when life speaks to us loud and clear, it is wise to listen. There is a deep lesson here that must be learned internally before external events can shift. It is natural to go through a healing process and even a state of crisis. It is very important to allow this grieving process to occur and let the emotions come to the surface, without trying to resist, repress or suppress the feelings. Once we move through this stage, we can reach a certain point in our healing where we can simply observe our own minds and thoughts without having the energetic attachment to them. Once we distance ourselves and become less fascinated with the outcome, we can rise above it, as if we are on top of a mountain looking down, and realize that it is all just a story. By tapping into our inner truth, we can then realize that we have the ability to change that story and to live out a new life which has been set before us.

By taking action and making decisions out of fear, we move further away from our own happiness, because we are pushing at this door before it is ready to open, since the situation is not yet ripe for

action. It is a time for withdrawal, to look inward and wait in Faith that all will unfold when it is meant to. Events happen in their own time. You cannot force a flower to grow or make a tree bear leaves. It is a process that 'springs' forward after a much needed downtime. This period of darkness is actually rejuvenative for the nature of all things. The same holds true for us. By making poor choices to avoid this downtime and the pain, that may be associated with looking deeply at ourselves, it will only deepen the state of darkness, making it much more difficult for us to dig our way out. During this time of restoration, patience must be practised. Though dark now, everything will again be illuminated later. "When negativity has nothing to feed upon, it destroys itself, making room for the new opportunities to take root." [2]

Be Here Now

Far too often we put our energy into the future, in an attempt to create a desired outcome. According to a Chinese proverb, "people in the West are always getting ready to live", rather than actually living. The fact of the matter is that if our energy is invested in our future, then we have no energy left for the present. If we are skipping over the surface of our lives by physically being present but our consciousness is invested elsewhere, we are missing out on the depth of each experience of life. Often we move from event to event without truly appreciating what is offered in each moment, and miss out on the deeper wisdom that life offers us, because of our preoccupation with what is to come and how we can 'will it' into being. Our own preoccupation with what we 'want to happen' often blinds us to what is happening on a macrocosmic level. This desire can cause us to act, failing to honour the timing that is necessary for things to fall into place. When the time is right, life will present the new opportunities which will begin the flow back to vibrancy and vitality once again. "What was depleted is again replenished," [2] and any energy that was stored up during the period of stagnation will be used in the most beneficial way. Relaxation, trust, patience and faith will allow one to have understanding and peace of mind during this time. It is imperative to understand that whatever crisis we are experiencing is happening to push us to find our true strength and deepest wisdom within ourselves. As a result, this awakening will take us to a better place in life, and once it all unfolds, this newfound clarity will make it evident why it all happened the way it did. By gaining distance and perspective on the situation at hand, we can calm our inner energy and evaluate the options before taking a new action. In pulling back we gain hindsight that we did not previously have. The strength and centeredness gained at this time will prove to be invaluable by preparing us for future challenges. There will then be a knowingness that we can conquer life's most difficult challenges and persevere through rough times, and not only remain standing, but prosper! This is also an opportunity for us to take a personal inventory of our lives and show gratitude for all that we have, rather than everything that we think we need. As the well-known Zen Buddhist (and author) Adyashanti says: "We have already reached enlightenment. We just need to wake up and realize that it already exists within us." I believe that once we come to this understanding we will have control over ourselves and our ability to react to life's dilemmas. We will view the concept of 'letting go' as a refreshing experience, and wonder why others continue to fight the battle when there is much inner strength, wisdom and rejuvenation to be gained. We will see that "what was once a breakdown, becomes a breakthrough." [2] We all seem to have a tendency to scurry around, seeking answers in every direction but within ourselves. I personally found myself going from healer to healer to try to heal myself during my own crisis. However, the best healers/teachers are those who don't give us the answers, but who guide us to the place where we can find them on our own accord, which is within our own divine wisdom. I found that it is, in fact, important to seek counsel from the right teacher for "without guidance, trust is blind and without trust, guidance is powerless." [3] A highly attuned professional can help us find the tools within ourselves to use during such times. Success is not something that is gained in the external world by who we become professionally, the status that we attain, and the assets that we acquire. True success is measured by how well we can withstand the hurdles that life throws at us, and our ability to uphold the inner-strength within us while life is testing us to the maximum. Our own humility, and our ability to humble ourselves during this time, is what allows our virtue to grow exponentially. To do this, we must detach ourselves from the desire for specific outcomes. As Erich Fromm (renowned German-American psychologist and humanistic philosopher) states: "The quest for certainty blocks the search for meaning. Uncertainty is the very condition to impel man to unfold his powers". By stretching ourselves beyond what is 'known', we open the doors to a place of faith and trust in the existence of life.



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The Water Element – Breathing, Deep Relaxation & Meditation

Introduction

Deep Relaxation & Meditation within ChiBall programme represents the WATER element, the wintertime of the year and the purifying, quiet energy of the season. The corresponding partner organs are the bladder and kidney. The emotional and physical theme is wisdom and trust and the ability to adapt and flow with change.

Improving our breathing habits and increasing our daily intake of oxygen has been proven to have a significant benefit on our immune system. Our breath is a sign post clearly indicating either the degree of resistance and suppression or the receptiveness and expression of our emotions. Fullness of breath demonstrates our ease and equanimity with the natural flow of life. Inhalation is an active process, exhalation is passive; a 'letting go' of tension. This natural expansion and contraction is connected to our ability to expand and contract naturally with life and all its challenges. It is estimated that the average person breathes about 14 - 26 breaths per minute. For Yoga, Tai Chi and Qi Gong masters the breath can be slow and deep at a rate of 3 - 6 breaths a minute which is thought to be why they are able to sustain such mental alertness and tranquillity in every situation.

Corresponding Elements	Breathing In	Breathing Out
The Mind	Stimulates, stirs, activates	Settles, releases, calms
The Muscular Body	Activates, prepares	Releases and relaxes
The Metabolic Body	Nourishes: millions of new cells are born	Cleanses: millions of dead cells are expelled

Yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong and many other ancient eastern exercise disciplines discovered that smooth and even breathing is the link to us having a strong immune system, a calm mind and stable emotions. If the breath is calm and even, the experience of the mind will be the same. Conversely, if the breath pattern has been interrupted by our emotions and has become choppy, laboured and uneven our mind will be a roller coaster of erratic thoughts and perceptions.

Physiologically, deep breathing cleanses our active air sacs of pollutants, by allowing more oxygen to reach the lungs, replacing stale air which has gathered there through shallow breathing. Traditional Chinese Medicine says that if you control your breath, you then control your life. Babies are born knowing exactly how to breathe. Babies naturally breathe with the lower abdomen moving in an out allowing the diaphragm to fully expand.

Emotions and Breathing Patterns

When we were children the body was 'light and free', yet to be burdened by unexpressed emotions such as fear, anxiety, frustration, grief, sadness or disappointments which all accumulate as adult mental concerns, turmoils, and conflicts. Children cry, scream and do whatever is necessary to communicate their unhappiness or frustrations and release the appropriate emotion in the moment until taught otherwise. Their emotions are freely expressed and the mind unencumbered by conditions or restraints, connected to behaviour, such as "what is expected of us" now and in the future. Emotions are best understood as unexpressed feelings or blocked energy (energy being expression) which then take refuge somewhere in the body. These unexpressed feelings 'cling' to the body which over time not only disrupts the natural breathing pattern, but also tightens, constricts and 'weighs down' our entire system. Yoga, Tai Chi & Qi Gong exercises work on freeing the body of habitual tension. Breathing exercises and meditation helps free the mind of conflict and negative thought and emotions. Eventually when we acquire the ability to detach the mind completely from thought we will also experience a body which has returned to a state of complete and replenished relaxation.

If left unexpressed the following emotions will develop associated breathing patterns:

<i>Emotion</i>	Breath response
Fear	light, shallow (upper chest)
Anger/Frustration	weak inhalation, forced exhalation (deep sighing)
Sorrow/Grief/Sadness	jerky inhalation, weak or faint exhalation

The majority of us are completely unaware of how we are breathing or how the body moves and responds to the action of breathing.

In order to feel fully alive, calm and peaceful the breathing needs to be full and relaxed. The most common impediment to relaxed breathing is muscular tension. If tension is held in the abdomen the natural movement of the diaphragm will be restricted. The secondary breathing muscles are then overloaded and begin taking on the primary role of the diaphragm.

The first step to breath awareness is to identify our breathing patterns and the second step is to release recognised muscular tension in the ribcage, chest, shoulders, neck, throat and facial muscles.. To breathe naturally and diaphragmatically is to allow the abdomen to move out on the inhalation and relax back into the body on the exhalation.

We can slowly dismantle these unnatural patterns by using exercises which:-

- Stretch and expand the ribcage.
- Balance the muscular body, releasing tension.
- Use the breath to focus the mind.
- Use deep relaxation and meditation to ensure that the historical patterns become a thing of the past.

Common Deviations from Natural Breathing

The table below will give common deviations from that natural breathing action.

Action	Breathing Pattern	Physiological effect	Psychological effect
Reverse Breathing	On the inhalation the abdomen moves back, on the exhalation the abdomen distends.	Chronic tension in back of neck, shoulders, upper back and jaw.	Confusion and disorientation.
Chest Breathing	Abdomen pull in tight and chest heaves up and down (a military type posture!).	Chronic tension in upper body, digestive problems due to excessive tension in abdominal area.	High anxiety, type 'A' personalities, driven, low self esteem, deep seated fear.
Collapsed Breathing	Hunched shoulders, chest drawn down, abdomen projected forward, posture slumped and collapsed.	Abdominal distension, inner organs sluggish, lung & heart problems.	Depressed, little regard for the physical body - usually working and living in the head. Facial expressions are active, physical body totally inactive.
Hyperventilation	Next stage on from chest breathing.	Abnormally high number of breaths per minute. Acid/Alkaline level becomes imbalance, poor circulation, insomnia, shortness of breath, chest pain, cramps and muscular stiffness & tension.	Anxiety, nightmares, poor concentration and memory, feeling disconnected and disorientated.
Throat Holding	Throat thickens and tightens in emotional situations closing the vocal diaphragm.	Neck, jaw and facial tension. Tense voices, sounding slightly panicked; sore throats.	Unable to 'speak their truth'. Holding back on what they really want to say.
Breath Grabbers	Inhalation or exhalation is never fully completed.	Tight , tense bodies. Facial expression of a 'startled rabbit'.	Rushed, pressured, finish other people's sentences, uncomfortable with pauses in conversations.
Frozen Breathing	The outer body is rigid, suppressing the breathing action of the inner body.	Shoulders are drawn up and tense, cringing frightened posture.	Immense fear of failure, not measuring up, not making it. Memories of a devastating emotional experience locking up the body and emotions.



A Breathing Journey of Discovery

All ancient physical disciplines emphasise the importance of the breath and its link to a healthy mind, body and emotions. Daily practise of mindful breathing can be a significant contribution to achieving good health and happiness. Tai Chi & Qi Gong calls it Dan Tien breathing or “back to baby breath”, the Japanese call it hara breathing and Yoga uses a practise called Pranayama that incorporates many varied permutations of breathing to influence the mind and body.

Within ChiBall emphasis on breathing is of paramount importance. It is the first gateway for learning and becoming aware of any tension being carried within the body and how it feels when these bands of tension begin to dissolve. When the body is completely relaxed the journey into meditation is an easy transition. These exercises are very easy to teach and are most beneficial to both teacher and practitioner.

Reconnecting a person to become aware of their own unique breath is the greatest gift we can offer. The breath is capable of rejuvenating and cleansing every aspect of our whole being. It is the key for all of us to experience peace and harmony in mind and body. Correct breathing has a profound effect on the body and state of mind. Our ability to concentrate is determined by how well we breathe.

Years of poor postural habits suffocates the diaphragm, impeding our oxygen uptake. Poor breathing also:-

- Stiffens the rib cage and back.
- Depletes the energy of the body systems.
- Diminishes our full mind potential, and dampens the spirit.

10 signs of tense or restricted breathing patterns

1. More evidence of breathing in the upper chest than abdomen when lying down.
2. Limited flexibility in shoulders (ribs stiff, diaphragm is restricted and stuck).
3. Holding the breath during physical or emotional discomfort.
4. Shallow or restricted abdominal movement during challenging exercise.
5. Frequent sighing or yawning.
6. Switching from nasal to mouth breathing during slightest physical exertion.
7. Resting breath rate is rapid (18 - 20 breaths or more.)
8. Tension in neck, throat, jaw, and facial muscles.
9. Thinking too much. Can't slow the mind down (uncomfortable with lying or sitting still).
10. Difficulty in controlling emotions; overreacting in mildly irritating situations.

We cannot relax if our breathing pattern is tense and irregular, so we focus first on regulating and correcting it. To breathe properly we must first become aware of any tension in the ribcage, chest, shoulders, neck, throat or face that is preventing proper breathing, and then learn how to release it.

Exercises to liberate the diaphragm

- Twisting
- Torso/ribcage stretching
- Spinal extension/flexion
- Pelvic/low back mobilisation

Hara breathing (Diaphragmatic breathing)

- Is the breathing felt more in the chest and shoulders?
- Is it difficult for you to breathe diaphragmatically?
- Is diaphragmatic breathing causing you to feel slightly panicky and emotional?



Deep Relaxation

The goal of deep relaxation is to become intimately connected to and familiar with the feeling of being deeply calm and relaxed. The test is then how long we can remain in that state before the drama of life takes over. A body and mind held in a straight jacket of tension, stress and dissatisfaction causes disease, ill health and a weak immune system. Progressive relaxation concentrating on the idea of relaxing using sequences that incorporate movement and stillness is a simple but effective way to bring awareness to areas of unconscious and previously unrecognised tension.

Physical Benefits

- As breathing improves daily oxygen intake increases.
- The body is better able to heal itself when it is calm and relaxed and rejuvenated from within.
- Effective antidote against stress, immune system is strengthened.
- Conserves vital energy resources.

Mental Benefits

- Trains the mind not to re-act to stressful situations.
- Develops creativity and cultivates inspiration and mental clarity.
- Teaches objectivity, detachment and the art of observation.
- Stabilises the emotions.

Emotional Benefits

The body is a storehouse of blocked memories and experiences that you carry as a burden. Each session of meditation gives you the opportunity to release thoughts and feelings that come to the surface of the mind along with aches and pains that are stored memories in the body.

Deep relaxation improves our ability to concentrate, become creative, decisive, be fulfilled and content with our lives. Commit yourself to a period of relaxation and contemplation at least once a day during your working week, a whole day on the weekend, and two to four days every three months.



Principles for teaching Deep Relaxation & Meditation

Prepare the environment

- Rooms that are too cold will cause distress and distraction both physically and mentally for beginners.
- Have cushions, chairs and comfortable mats available so that each person may adapt their posture for optimum comfort.
- Lower the music volume. As we sink into deep states of relaxation the hearing becomes more acute.

Music

- Choose your music carefully. The right frequency of music can harmonise any imbalances in the body and mind. Recent research has demonstrated that music of about 60 beats per minute or less can slow the brainwaves down to alpha-waves which are associated with relaxation. Physiologically the outcome of slower brainwaves is that it calms the breathing, reduces the heart rate, lowers the blood pressure. Mentally it also calms the mind and thus soothes the spirit.
- Be mindful of your choice of music during the movement sequences. Anything too entertaining will cause much hungered for distraction for the mind especially during relaxation practises.

Voice volume, tone and pace

- Become aware of when it is appropriate to lower or raise the tone of your voice.
- A voice that is high pitched and too loud during the deepest states of relaxation is very distracting and not congruent to the purpose of the practice, which is to relax. The projection of your voice at the end of the ChiBall class is half to a quarter of the volume of the beginning of the class.
- Slow down the pace of speech and pause between instructions during all relaxation and meditative practises.
- Avoid over talking during the meditative movement sequences. Keep the voice calm and soft throughout.

Relaxation is your theme throughout

- The ChiBall class is created specifically to lead the participant to a point where relaxation becomes effortless, much valued and welcomed.
- Create awareness during all the movement phases of your ChiBall class.
- During the early days the mind can be resistant and uncomfortable with stillness and silence. Gradually as you journey through the seasons and the seasonal class formats, the relaxation and meditation sequences will vary. At the end of the winter season you and your participants will become more and more comfortable with sitting and without judgement just being with inner conversations and feelings.

Respect the practise

Guide your participants slowly and respectfully out of their deep relaxation practise. Leaping up immediately after concluding the practise virtually cancels out the experience. Dismantling stressful patterns is reliant on you and your class's ability to take the experience of the deeply relaxed state into daily activities and on into life.



Using the Breath to calm the mind


1. First of all feel the air moving in and out of both nostrils as you breathe.
2. Slowly breathe in and feel cool air enter the right nostril and warm air leave the left nostril.
3. Now switch; slowly breathe in and feel cool air enter the left nostril and warm air leave the right nostril.
4. Now breathe again through both nostrils. Has the sensation within the nostrils changed or increased at all?
5. Is your breathing slower and deeper at all?
6. Do you feel more relaxed?

Returning from deep relaxation

1. Slowly increase the depth of your breathing.
2. Gradually draw your heels towards your buttocks.
3. Roll over onto your right side - away from the heart and allow the forehead to fall forward onto the floor. Stay for 3 to 4 breaths.
4. Slowly sit up into a cross legged position. Lift the arms above the head slowly 3 or 4 times to reawaken the body and the mind.
5. Take your time standing up and re-engaging with your day. To leap up straight after such deep relaxation virtually cancels out the experience. Dismantling stressful patterns will happen if you take the experience of the deeply relaxed state into your day and on into your life.

Breathing, Deep Relaxation & Meditation Exercises

Tai Chi & Qi Gong Dan Tien Breathing

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Organ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaxes mind and body. Promotes detachment during stressful periods. Lessens anxiety. Promotes efficient gaseous exchange in the lungs. Massages internal organs. Stimulates kidneys. Increases overall vitality and energy level. Chi flows more efficiently throughout the body. 	

Teaching Dan Tien Breathing

This breathing is also known as full diaphragmatic breathing:

- Stand with the feet hip distance apart with the knees relaxed and slightly bent
- Allow the shoulders to relax down and the space between the shoulder blades to broaden.
- Place one hand on the abdomen and one hand on the back of the rib cage/ lower back.
- Inhale: feel both the lower back and abdomen expand.
- Exhale: feel the lower back and abdomen sink inwards.

Try and image during this breathing exercise that a ChiBall is expanding and filling the internal space when you inhale (pushing the abdomen and lower back outwards) and the ChiBall is shrinking in size when you exhale.

- Now place both hands on the Dantien, about three fingers widths below the navel.
- Inhale: feel the abdomen expand.
- Exhale: feel the abdomen relax.
- Continue for at least 6 - 12 breaths

For many people in our society today, this can initially be a very challenging exercise. The upper chest and shoulders often rise and fall while the abdomen remains flat and tense which indicates a reverse breathing pattern. This unnatural action creates tension in all the secondary breathing muscles; the chest, shoulders, neck, and facial muscles. The following practise can be a useful one for those who find Dan Tien Breathing a challenge :

This can be practised lying, sitting or standing:

- Breathe in deeply without stress or strain, fully expanding both chest and ribcage and then exhale naturally 3 - 5 times.
- Next, breathe in focusing only on the left side of your chest (3 - 5 times), then repeat on the right side.
- Fully expand the ribcage sideways on the next 3 - 5 breaths.
- Inhale deeply and fully into the left side of the upper back (3 - 5 times) then repeat on the right.
- Inhale deeply and fully expand the whole of the upper and mid back of the body.
- Now take a full deep breath: Has the feel of the breath in your whole torso changed? Now try once again the above Dan Tien Breathing.

Yoga – The Complete Breath

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart Kidneys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaxes mind and body. Lessens anxiety & promotes detachment during stressful periods. Revitalises and energises. Prana flows more efficiently throughout the body. First stage of learning to control the subtle energies of the body and attaining control of the mind. Can be manipulated to induce natural healing of the body. 	

Teaching The Complete Breath

The simplest of the Yoga breathing exercises is the Complete Breath. It is easy to confuse complete breath with deep breath. A Complete Breath involves all the stale air being expelled out of your lungs before fresh air is drawn in, and the whole of your torso being free to naturally participate in the breath.

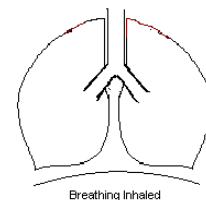
Many of us suffer from a form of 'frozen breathing' – a breathing action where the ribs or abdomen are restricted and prevented from moving and expanding.. The diagram below demonstrates how the diaphragm (the sheet of muscle separating the chest from the abdomen) is the controlling agent.

Always breathe in and out through the nose. This nose filters the air, removing pollutants and warming the air before it reaches the lungs. A recommended method for practising the Complete Breath is to lie down on the back with knees bent. In this position the sensation in the ribs and diaphragm can be more easily felt. As the awareness of the Complete Breath develops it can then be practised standing or sitting.

All Yoga breathing exercises are extremely powerful. Performed regularly for brief a period can promote positive change and outcomes. Should there be any instance of light-headedness or strain, immediately cease the exercise, relax and breathe normally.

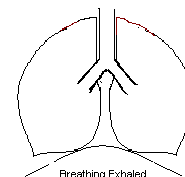
Diaphragm contracts

Moving down, and the entire ribcage expands outwards and upwards as air rushes in to expand the lower, middle and upper parts of the lungs



Diaphragm relaxes

Coming up, and carbon dioxide is expelled from the lungs as the ribcage relaxes contracts downwards.



Preparation for the Complete Breath

Below are three preliminary steps which helps build awareness of the breath in the upper chest, ribcage and abdomen:

Abdomen

- Place palms on the stomach
- Exhale, completely empty the lungs of air
- Slowly inhale, feel the diaphragm contracting as it moves downwards
Although actual contraction of the diaphragm may not be felt, try and sense the pressure applied to the muscles at the top of the stomach which the diaphragm is displacing as it moves down
- Exhale smoothly: feel the muscles relax as the diaphragm relaxes upwards



Ribcage Breathing

- Rest the palms on the lower ribcage, fingertips touching
- Exhale, completely empty the lungs of air
- Inhale, slowly expand the ribs, pushing the hands apart
- Exhale, slow relax the muscles between the ribs until the finger touch again



Upper Chest

- Place palms on the upper chest, fingertips touching
- Exhale, completely empty the lungs of air
- Inhale, push the fingertips apart until the chest can expand no more
- Exhale in one continuous movement, contracting the chest until the fingers touch again



Teaching and Practising the Complete Breath:

The complete breathing is executed in three phases.

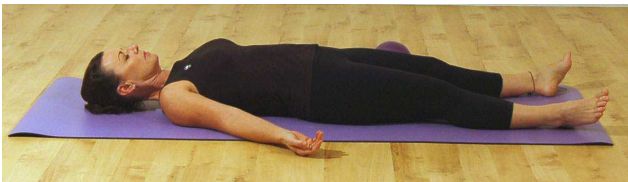
As you inhale:

1. Phase 1: allow the abdomen to swell and expand
2. Phase 2: allow the ribcage to widen and expand
3. Phase 3: allow the chest to lift and expand to the clavicles

As you exhale:

1. Phase 1: allow the abdomen to relax and sink downwards
2. Phase 2: allow the ribcage to relax and funnel down towards the abdomen
3. Phase 3: allow the chest to relax and drop downwards, releasing the breath from the clavicles down the centre line of the body towards the abdomen

Deep Relaxation – Yoga Nidra

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Stomach • Lungs • Kidneys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides essential preparation for meditation. • Is relaxing and rejuvenating. • Boosts the immune system. • Promotes deep restorative sleep. • Mind becomes more concentrated and steady. • Calms and balances the emotions. 	


Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra simply induces relaxation by focusing on one body part at a time while relaxing in a chair or lying comfortably on the floor. If in a chair the feet are flat on the floor (avoid crossing the ankles) and the hands relaxed - one on top of the other - in the lap with palms up. If lying on the floor have the hands about 30 degrees away from the body with palms up. Legs are our flat along the floor (if the low back is pulling, place a pillow or blanket underneath the knees). Ask your class to simply call to mind as you suggest them, each body part:

1. Right hand thumb, first finger, second finger, third finger, fourth finger, palm of the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm, shoulder, armpit, ribcage, waist, hip, thigh, knee, lower leg, ankle, sole of the foot, big toe, second toe, third toe, forth toe, fifth toe. Now be aware of the whole of the right side of the body. Repeat same sequence on the left side.
2. Back of the body. Right leg, left leg, right buttock, left buttock, small of the back, right side of the back, left side of the back, whole spinal column, neck and the head - the whole head.
3. The forehead, right eye brow, left eyebrow - eye brow centre. Right temple, left temple - bridge of the nose. Right cheek, left cheek - tip of the nose. The jaw, the throat. Right side of the chest, left side of the chest - sternum. Upper part of the abdominals, lower part of the abdominals - navel. Right side of the hip, left side of the hip - pelvic centre.
4. Now feel the whole body against the floor. Whole of the right leg, whole of the left leg, whole of the right arm, whole of the left arm, the torso, and the head, - the whole head.

This sequence can be lengthened by allowing the class five or ten minutes to lie quietly to fall deeper into the relaxation or alternatively, if time is a factor just one part can be given to quieten the mind and body for three or four minutes.

Meditation – Straw Breathing

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Exercise
Meridians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart • Stomach • Lungs • Kidneys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces stress levels. • Is relaxing and rejuvenating. • Reduces decline in brain cells and the ageing process. • Promotes unity, harmony and happiness. • Mind becomes more concentrated and steady. • Calms and balances the emotions. 	

Teaching Straw Breathing -

Sit comfortably on the floor or in a chair. The object of this exercise is to increase the length of the exhalation which calms and relaxes the mind. Before commencing, count your number of breaths per minute.

Stage 1 - a preparation for Meditation

Place the straw in the mouth:

- Inhale through the nose for 4 counts, exhale for 8 counts through the straw 4 - 6 times.
- Inhale for 4 counts - hold for 2 counts; exhale for 8 counts - hold for 2 counts 4 - 6 times.
- Inhale for 4 counts - hold for 4 counts; exhale for 8 counts - hold for 8 counts 4 - 6 times.
- Remove the straw and try and continue the slow deep breathing for at least 3 - 5 minutes.
- Close your eyes and continue observing your breath. Every time the mind wanders bring your awareness back to the breath. Stay for 10 to 15 minutes.


Stage 2 - Breath control to calm the mind

Be prepared to sit for 10 to 15 minutes more. Close your eyes and begin observing your breath. Every time the mind wanders bring your awareness back to the breath.

- Breathe in for 4 counts, breathe out for 4 counts.
- Breathe in for 4 counts - hold for 2 counts, breathe out for 4 counts - hold for 2 counts.
- Breathe in for 4 counts - hold for 2 counts, breathe out for 4 counts - hold for 4 counts.
- Now breathe in for 4 counts - no hold, breathe out for 4 counts - hold for 4 counts.
- Now breathe normally.
- Bring your attention now to your breathing. Observe the abdomen rising on the in breath and then the abdomen falling on the out breath. Each time the mind wanders bring your attention back to observing the breath.
- Now open your eyes and be fully present and aware of the feeling you now have in your body and your mind.



Healing Organ Meditation

Meridian/Organs Activated	Benefits	ChiBall Exercise
Organs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directing with intent peace and relaxation to each organ aids healing and organ function at its optimal level. This meditation draws the Chi back to its source and regulates the spirit (qi). 	

Teaching Points

Refer to the diagram mapping the Organ Locations in the Distance Learning introduction to Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Standing in the 'Wu Chi' position, feet shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent. Begin with three deep breaths.

Liver & Gallbladder:

- Place your hands over your liver and gallbladder. Close your eyes and breath slowly and deeply three times, visualising the colour green. As you exhale feel the organs soften and absorb the colour.

Heart & Small Intestine:

- Place your hands over your heart. Breathe three times visualising the colour red.

Stomach & Spleen:

- Place your hands over the stomach and spleen on the left side of your body. Breathe three times and visualise the colour yellow.

Lungs & Large Intestine:

- Place your hands over your lungs. Breathe three times and visualise the colour white.

Kidneys & Bladder:

- Place your hands over your kidneys. Breathe three times and visualise the colour dark blue.

Bring your hands over the Dan Tien and again take three breaths. Absorb the sense of wellbeing and integrate it into your whole sense of being.

For further study and practise use the following:

- Dance of the Dragon Music CD
- Dance of the Dragon DVD
- Power of Relaxation – The Meditation
- Power of Relaxation DVD



Further Reading and Reference

Breathe! You Are Alive

The Breathing Book

Light on Pranayama

Science Of Breath - A Practical Guide

The Healing Power of The Mind

Everyday Zen

Taoist Ways to Transform Stress Into Vitality

The Myth of Freedom

The Power of Now

Stillness Speaks

The Tao for Inner Peace

Power Vs Force

Simple Path to Relaxation

Thich Nhat Hanh

Donna Farhi

B.K.S. Iyengar

Swami Rama, Rudolph Ballentine M.D.

Tulku Thondup

Charlotte Beck

Mantak Chia

Chogyam Trungpa

Eckhart Tolle

Eckhart Tolle

Diane Dreher

David R. Hawkins Md Ph.D

Anthea Courtenay

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