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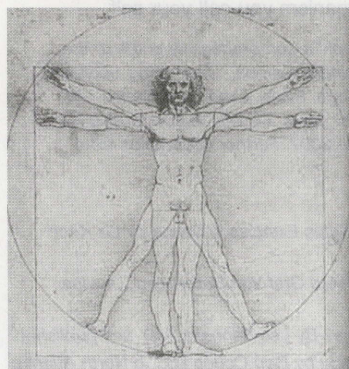
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EUROPE'S BEST SELLING YOGA MAGAZINE

the sacred sacrum

By Liz Koch

introduction



The human sacrum is Sacred Geometry made manifest. Leonard De Vinci, in his famous drawing of man, illustrated the geometric patterns found within all bio-intelligent life including the human body. One of the sacred shapes, the triangle, forms the sacrum. As keystone of the pelvic bowl, the sacrum is the heart of the essential Navel root, *Hara*, and *Tan Tien* of the belly core.

A physical and energetic keystone, all weight passes through the sacrum from one (spine) into two (legs) to form a seaway transporting energy between heaven (gravity) and earth (rebound). Belonging to both heaven and earth, the sacral keystone unifies and serves as an organising force. Suspended between two pelvic ileum bones, the sacrum houses one end of the central nervous system, where vital electrical and energetic information is translated via a web of ligaments known as the *sacral iliac* joints (SI joints). A fascial sheath, called the *dura mater*, protects the precious spinal cord. Attaching to both ends of the spinal cord (the sacrum and the cranium) the *dura* assures a direct and fundamental coherency between the root sacrum and crown cranium - the two ends of the primitive brain.

healthy SI joints

Like a buoy in the cosmic ocean, the sacred keystone responds to every pulse and flux. The web of ligaments that weave the three pelvic bones together gives the sacrum its resiliency and its capacity to respond. The SI joints communicate electrical impulses that orient, co-ordinate both internal and external forces and rhythms. The proprioceptive communication within the SI joints provides an internal orientation system, which gives us the location even when our external perception is closed. It is internal proprioception which locates us within spatial dimensions. It tells us, for example, when we are upside down or right side up even when our eyes and ears are closed.

Throughout all the fluid joints and buoyant diaphragms, proprioceptive cues exchange a continual flow of fluid information that informs and supports our relationship as part of the earth's flow and embedded within the cosmic flow. On a very personal level, it is your proprioception that provides the feeling of being centred and grounded.

Good proprioception results in responding to life with a sense of wholeness, coherency and integrity. Thus the nature of ligaments protects proprioception, creates limits and defines the articulation of motion. In other words they help us recognise our own boundaries and differentiate ourselves from others. They are not intended to be elastic but to clearly define range. They limit rotational ability and do not respond well to torquing motion. Only during the birthing process (as a result of specific hormones, released into the blood stream) do the SI joints soften and stretch in preparation for forming the birth canal. During birth the pelvis is no longer solid, but opens to form a dynamic muscular canal that massages the undulating infant down a passageway into the vaginal opening - the sacred door of life. Once completed the SI joints regain their integrity.

dysfunctional SI joints

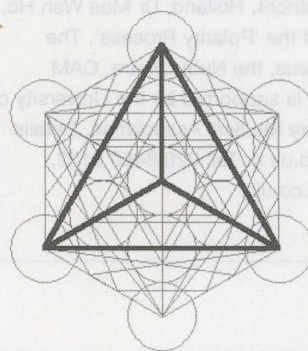
Many women complain that their sense of pelvic wholeness feels compromised after birth. Our cultural lack of tradition has forgotten to honour this time as a laying in period, where mother and baby are bonding and both are cared for through a ritual called mother roasting, a series of deep *moxa* treatments to close the door between the two worlds. Accidents, falls, sport activities and exercise can also injure the precious SI joints or bruise or break the sacral coccyx. Breaking the tailbone, the very tip of the sacrum, often goes untreated. Yet if unattended, such breaks within the spinal circuit can compromise the entire skeletal proprioceptive system.

Once torn or over stretched, SI joint dysfunctions cause a variety and very extensive list of symptoms that can become a maze of health related complaints; headaches, TMJ, low back pain, depression, anxiety, shorten and tight psoas muscles, tight hip sockets and sciatica to name but a few.

Intentionally over stretching the sacral ligaments with the intention of awakening *Kundalini* has been shown to be a dangerous path often leading to forms of mental illness. However most often over stretched SI joint ligaments occur simply due to accidents or a lack of core awareness. If muscles are to stretch with out causing injury to ligaments, core awareness is necessary. Muscles need resiliency to contract and stretch properly so as not to pull on ligaments and damage sensitive proprioceptors. Good skeletal alignment is the basis of healthy muscles.

When an *asana* is too challenging, too much neurological and muscular excitation drowns out the subtle proprioceptive cues that keep us from over extending. Speed, force and arrogance also

override the cues that tell us to stop. The mind set, which believes that moving through pain or going beyond our limits is a good idea, encourages a disrespect of the internal processes of growth. Just as pulling on a flower's petals does not result in a blossoming, so too pulling on the SI joints to open energy flows or accomplish an *asana*, is a futile and destructive



endeavour. Prevention, respect and awareness are the safe guards for honouring your sacred sacrum and awakening consciousness.

safe guarding the SI joints

Safe guarding is essential for survival and absolutely necessary for becoming a coherent being. It is the centring of the pelvis that opens the door into a deep communion and awakening with our spiritual energetic nature. The base of our core is founded within a centered functional pelvis. The balanced pelvis provides support for the whole spine, extending all the way up the core to include the ribcage, shoulder girdle, neck and head.

The centred pelvic bowl has been called the cradle of civilisation. Maintaining a centered pelvis is the first step in establishing core integrity a civilised way of living your life.

Positioning, that is being aware of one's pelvis, is an important tool for both prevention and healing over stretched ligaments. Once lost, it may take a diligent awareness to learn the subtle cues that signal

internal boundaries and yet as one's core awareness develops and pain diminishes, the delicious sense of support once again returns from deep within to become your inner guide.

three vital points:

1) Positioning: The first step in finding the sacred centre is through skeletal awareness, neutral joints and a basic understanding that the pelvis belongs to the core not the leg. Sit on and in front of the sits bones. Do not tuck the tailbone under. Allow the spine its natural curves. Limit your range of motion until you can sense yourself fully.

2) Layering: There are layers to organic movement and within every stretch of our being. Going too deep, too fast can pull on pelvic integrity. Instead soften the surface of your body, by sensing your skin membrane and the superficial muscles (such as the latissimus dorsi) to obtain a glide free stretch. Explore the subtle fluid movements of being breathed by sensing the threshold between the surface of your membrane and air.

3) Forcing: Remember: you are part of a living process in perpetual motion, not an object to be manipulated. Using too much force can yank on the delicate SI joints. Pushing and forcing are symptomatic of a lack of inner trust.

conclusion

Yoga is the art of self-awareness. Slowing down, letting go of goals,

being here now, can all help in awakening core awareness within the sacred sacrum.

Prevention and healing begin with this growing core awareness. Proprioceptive explorations can enhance your internal gravitational orientation, stimulate fluid movement and innovate new neurological pathways. By eliminating aggravating behaviour and developing good ergonomic positioning it is possible to bring alive the profound sacred geometry and coherency of the organism you call your self.

Liz Koch is the author of 'The Psoas Book' a comprehensive guide to the iliopsoas muscle & its affect on body/mind/emotions, 'Unravelling Scoliosis' CD and 'Core Awareness: Enhancing Yoga, Pilate, Exercise & Dance'. An international workshop leader for over 27 years, Liz will be conducting a 3 workshop in Warwickshire England June 2007. Further information from www.coreawareness.com.

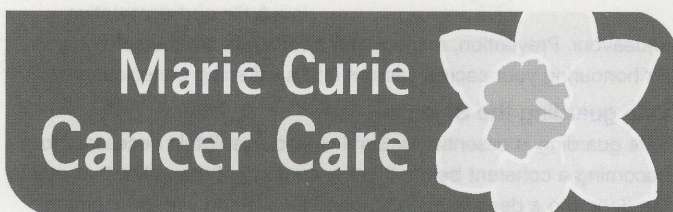
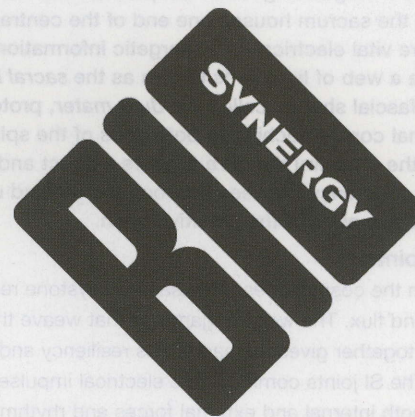
Further Reading:

1. Core Awareness: Enhancing Yoga, Pilates Exercise & Dance by Liz Koch Guinea Pig Publications
2. Hara The Vital Centre of Man by Karlfried Graf Von Durckheim Unwine Paperbacks
3. Kindalini: Psychosis or Transcendence? By Lee Sannella, MD self published
4. An Introduction to Craniosacral Therapy by Don Cohen D.C. b North Atlantic Books
5. The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems by James Gibson Waveland Press
6. The Way Life Moves by Caryn McHose and Kevin Frank North Atlantic books

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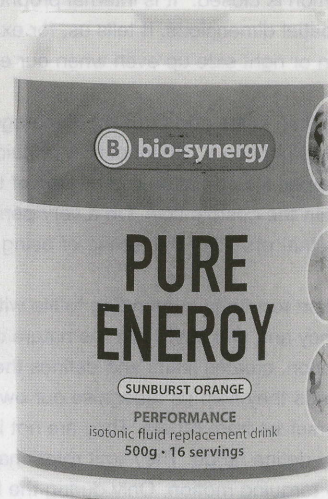
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