

# **POWER YOGA FOR SPORTS TEACHER TRAINING**

**WITH GWEN LAWRENCE**

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# PYFS WHY WE ARE DIFFERENT

I have been a dancer since the age of 3, working fitness professional since the age of 18, Massage Therapist to the stars since 1990. With massage I worked with PT's, in fitness facilities, with Chiropractors and on Doctor referral. All this experience has given me a deep knowledge and understanding of the body, and how the body works AND REHABS, also how to train to maximize performance.

To be a Yoga Teacher you are required to study only 20 hours of anatomy I easily have 100 times that and growing , and I want you to be inspired to study for the rest of your life.

Since the age of 15, I was thrown into the world of sports, spending countless hours watching my now husband play and be pursued by the Pro's in the MLB. I learned how to interact with coaches, trainers and most importantly SCOUTS. I sat with them 2 double headers every weekend and picked their brains and shared arm speed times on our stop watches.....

This gave me the skills to make it in my business today, to connect to the coaches and trainers on the pro, college, high school and LL teams I train. I constantly consult with them on the needs and injuries past present and work in conjunction with them to improve most effectively their already grueling long training regimes. PYFS practitioners are there to enhance their already grueling training regimes not re-invent the wheel.

It is not unusual for me to see Coach Coughlin Of the NY Giants, and for him to shake my hand and address me asking me how my team ( the Giants) are doing!!! Giants' coaches email for advice for their own training needs too.

It is my passion to know how the games are played and the duties of each position, the qualities the coaches look for from a power player at that position. All this helps me formulate specific POWER YOGA FOR SPORTS programs maximizing the effects and minimizing the time, honing in on their needs and leaving out the FLUFF!!! Athletes are already bogged with crammed schedules

Players tell me everyday how it is the hardest workout they have ever done, and how they wish they started this as youth athletes.

Finally, I have a unique ability to read bodies. I position my athletes and analyze them for imbalances and symmetry that inevitably (UN addressed) will lead to injury

Symmetry problems are like never rotating the tires on your car and driving and driving on the balding tire until it blows! I will show you through video and pictures how to do this too.

The first time I saw Alex Rodriguez I instantly noticed that his torso was torqued to the right and, then I tested his eye dominance to find he was right eye dominant, so I knew he was at a disadvantage and I had to bring the back to center and open his neck rotation as much as possible to give him the best view of his pitcher and the least effort.

Plaxico Buress had been suffering with the right ankle problem, we worked together and it is Power yoga for sports 101 that right ankle problem without addressing symmetry WILL lead to left knee stuff next and it did.

I have people across the country, and beyond (Thailand) sending me pix to analyze their posture and I help to relieve some nagging mysterious pains

To me it's all about preventing injury in the first place and enhancing performance thereafter.

# CODE OF ETHICS

This Code of Conduct is a summation and declaration of acceptable, ethical and professional behavior by which all PYFS Certified teachers agree to conduct the teaching and business of Yoga.

As a representative of PYFS training , I agree to uphold the ethical goals set forth in the following Code of conduct

One of the most important aspects of PYFS is protecting its reputation in Professional athletics. That means anybody taking on the Name must adhere to a strict code of Ethics when teaching, whether it be little leaguers, Olympic champs or Professional players. Breaking of this code is a deal breaker and will not be tolerated. This is important to develop long term relationships based on trust.

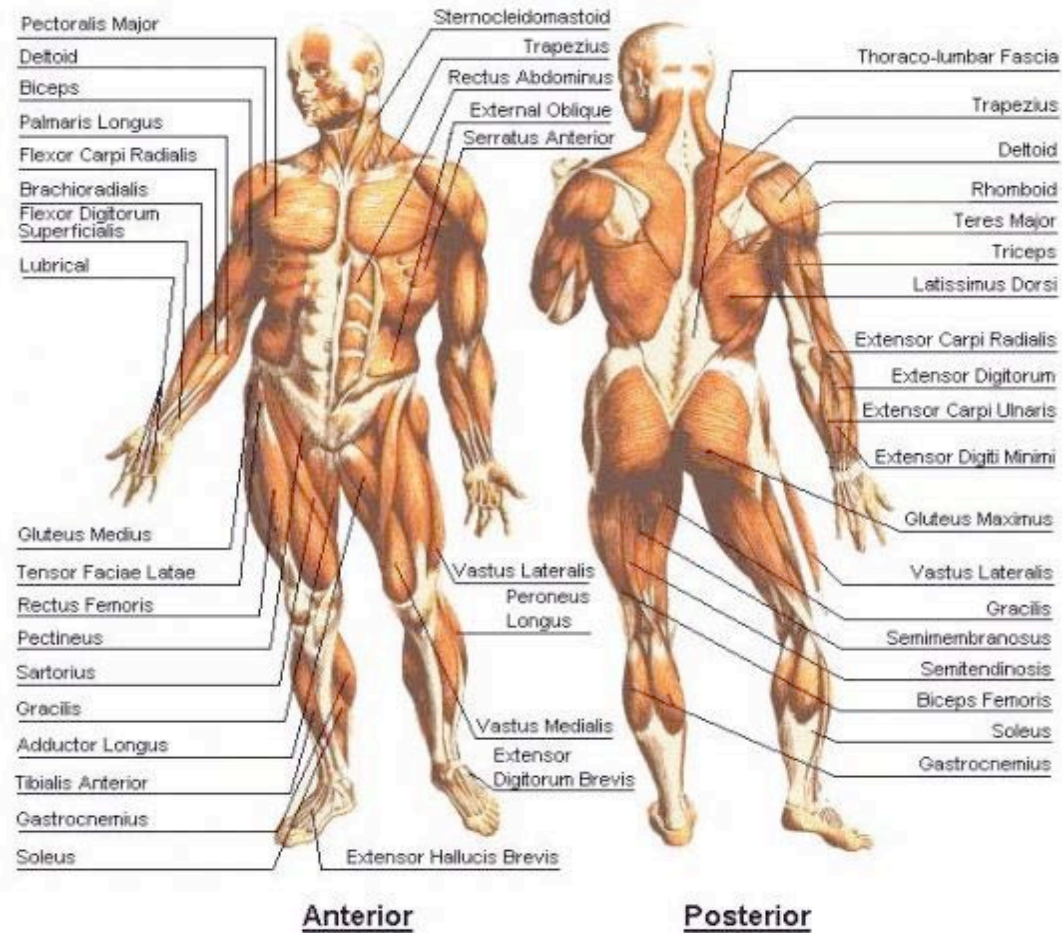
# CODE OF ETHICS

1. You must leave being a fan for home
2. Never ask for autographs
3. Never ask an athlete or Coach for favors
1. Never ask for tickets, only accept them when they are offered
2. Respect the rights, dignity and privacy of all students/ players and coaches
3. Avoid words and actions that constitute sexual harassment.
4. Adhere to all local government and national laws that pertain to my yoga teaching and business.
8. Uphold the integrity of my vocation by conducting myself in a professional and conscientious manner
9. Acknowledge the limitations of my skills and scope of practice and where appropriate, shall refer students to seek alternative instruction, advice, treatment or direction.
10. Create and maintain a safe, clean and comfortable environment for the practice of yoga.
11. Actively encourage diversity by respecting all students regardless of age, physical limitations, race, creed, gender, ethnicity, religion affiliations or sexual orientation.

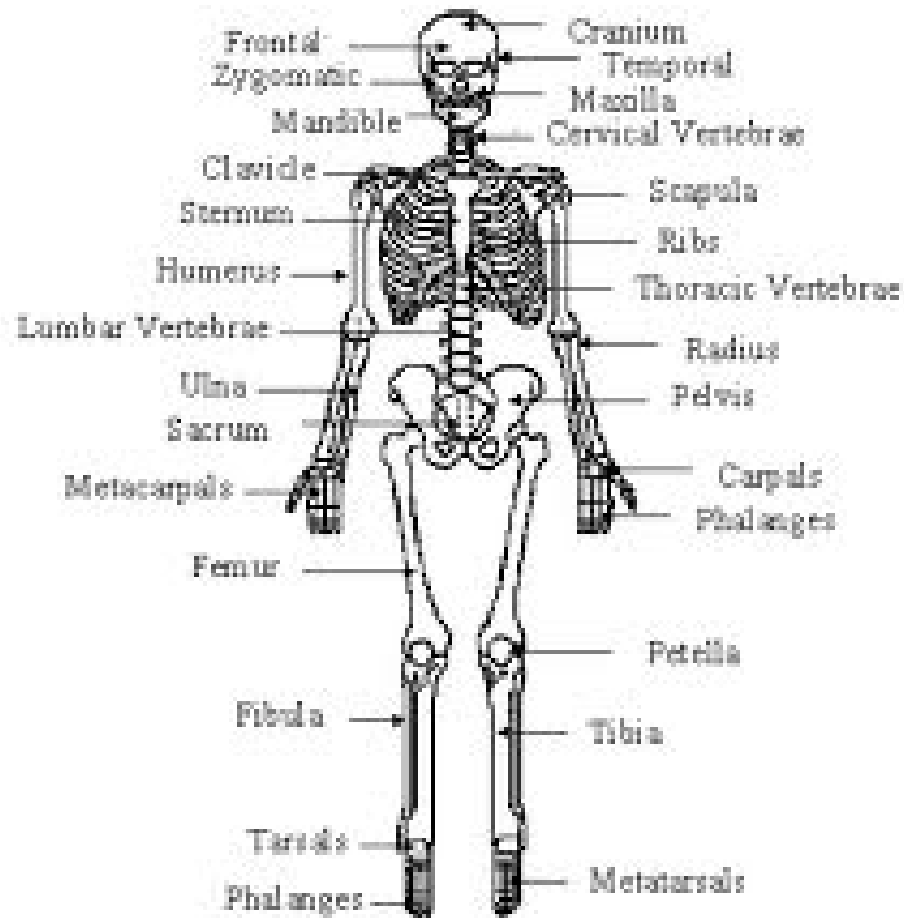
# REVIEW OF WHAT TO KNOW

Things to recall from your original training or certifications. Please review and familiarize.

## MUSCLES:

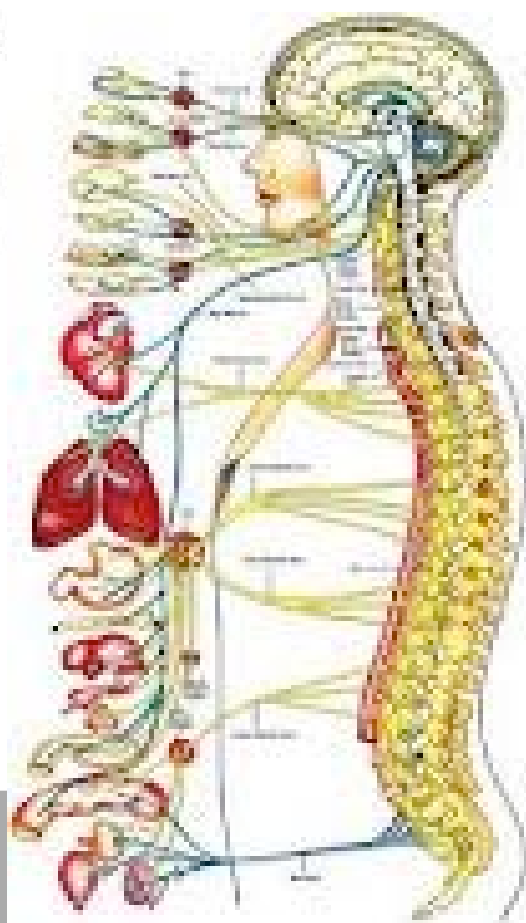
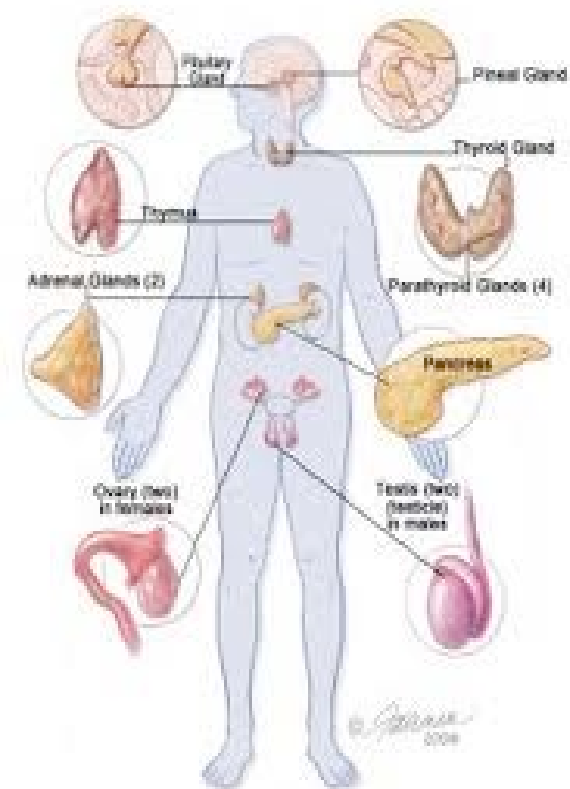


# REVIEW, BONES





# REVIEW, SYSTEMS



Chakra of	State of well-being	To help find a state of balance	Key ingredients	
7	Higher intuition, wisdom, certainty, control of your life	Devotion, wisdom, deeply spiritual, cosmic freedom	Organic: purple lot, sandalwood, and gemstone essential oil blend, synthetic: crystal: amethyst, purple flint oil	Lotus
6	Height, vision, clarity, awareness, intuition	Worship, love, pleasure, calm, selfless, tenderness	Organic: pink lot, lavender and rosemary essential oil blend, synthetic: crystal: amethyst, purple flint oil	Shivalinga
5	Communication, expression, clarity and feeling truth	Control of self and others, pride in expression, passion, sensitivity	Organic: purple lot, chamomile and ylang-ylang essential oil blend, synthetic: crystal: amethyst, purple flint oil	Om
4	Inner culture, compassion, inner peace and self-love	Love, protection, safety, emotional calm, growth, love of life	Organic: purple lot, rose and sandalwood essential oil blend, rose quartz crystal: amethyst, purple flint oil	Heart
3	Self-esteem, self-trust, confidence, freedom, forgiveness	Security, love of self, emotional stability, controlling, materialism	Organic: purple lot, sandalwood and cedar, cedar, crystal: amethyst, purple flint oil	Lotus flower
2	Inner energy, creativity, grace, sensuality, generosity	Security, passion, desire, order, anger, self-assertion	Organic: purple lot, passion essential oil blend, carnation crystal: amethyst, purple flint oil	Lotus flower
1	Life force, positive nature or life, abundance, vitality	Physical vitality, health, expansion, emotional acceptance	Organic: purple lot, passion and night essential oil blend, synthetic: crystal: amethyst, purple flint oil	Lotus flower

# WHY POWER YOGA FOR SPORTS?

**Learn the Game!**

**Work closely with Coaches, Trainers and Doctors**

**Make best use of athletes time**

**Dispel the myth that ALL yoga is just stretching**

**The Best Rehabilitation Technique is Prevention**

# LEARN THE GAME

While going to any yoga class will benefit an athlete, the mission of PYFS way is to make the Yoga Teacher step into the Athletes world. Not to make the athlete into a Yogi, or try to get them to put their foot behind their head. Everything is taught with a purpose relevant to the game they play and position they keep.

A PYFS Teacher is required to log in AT LEAST 10 games per sport they intend on working with. Here is what to look for when analyzing:

- Watch 10 games minimum
- Analyze the duties per position
- Actions of their body
- Research potential risks and common injuries for that position
- How these use their bodies on the field of play

# LINKS TO POKE AROUND IN

[http://www.ehow.com/video\\_2364906\\_baseball-positions-roles.html](http://www.ehow.com/video_2364906_baseball-positions-roles.html)

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/347393-football-players-responsibilities/>

<http://www.soccer-training-guide.com/soccer-positions.html>

# WORK CLOSELY WITH COACHES, TRAINERS AND DOCTORS

A PYFS Teacher is there to enhance the athletes' already grueling training regiment, you are there to check in daily monthly weekly with all coaches and trainers and ask questions about what seems to be:

- Recurring injuries
- Common complaints
- What their plans and expectations for you are for the session

At times players will confide in you with nagging problems, you are to respect the privacy of the player and not tell others unless you are asked by head coaches directly about things told in confidence...it is a sticky situation so be careful

Think in terms of players' specific needs ,when designing the program for the day for example:

- Passed injuries
- Abuse injuries you have discovered common in that position/sport
- Is it pre-season, post-season, in-season, all require different ways of training
- Is it pre-game, or post-game, both require different considerations in training
- Should you be considering recovery Yoga poses

# COMPRESSION AND TENSION

We cannot eliminate all risks in asana practice but we should do our best. One large step in this direction is to identify the difference between tension and compression. Tension is the sensation of tissues being pulled, compression is the sensation of tissues being pinched or pressed. If we feel tension in a muscle then careful training will eventually modify that tension, making the muscle more supple. But if we feel compression then we have to recognize that this is the limit to our range of motion, and if we try to “push through it” then we will get injured.

The limit to every range of motion is compression and this limit is determined by the shape of our bones. Exercise can influence the health and density of our bones but it will not appreciably affect the angles and proportions of our bones.

Tension and compression occur on the opposite sides of a joint, this can be demonstrated by the shoulder joint. If someone raises their arm above their head and feels sensation in their chest or armpit then these sensations are tension, the muscles are being stretched. But if the sensation is on the “top” of the shoulder then this sensation is compression, the bones are pinching the tissue. Practicing downward dog will stretch and “open” the muscles of the chest and armpit, but the compression at the top of the shoulder will not change. If the yogi ignorantly tries to “open” the top of the shoulder by aggressive, repetitive practice then injury is inevitable. I know of several experienced yogis who have had hip and shoulder surgeries to repair damage caused by aggressive, repetitive compression in these joints.

Discriminating tension and compression will not eliminate all risk, even experienced yogis who are not being aggressive strain themselves. Restorative yoga is neither aggressive nor repetitive and yet injury is possible.

As more and more people start practicing yoga asana more and more injuries are going to be reported because all forms of physical activity involve risk. Even patients following carefully prescribed physical therapy have painful setbacks and sometimes orthopedic surgeries need to be redone because “the first one didn't ‘take’”.

To view pictures of bones that demonstrate the wide range of human variation please visit [www.PaulGrilley.com](http://www.PaulGrilley.com) and click on [Bone Photo Images.](#)” --Paul Grilley

# MAKE BEST USE OF ATHLETES TIME

Whether you are teaching Pro's or little leaguers it sadly seems that when push comes to shove and their training timing is limited flexibility training is the first to go. Or they resort to the lame group stretches we have witnessed for decades team performing on the field pre game, or pre workout. These 10 second stretches that never change your flexibility and they bring an athletes awareness of their weakness (tight muscles) to the fore front therefore the athletes graze through them and even cheat at them and then what? How has this technique been working for them? It does not.

Yoga can be and should be an important part of a players overall training, some athletes find that yoga pre game or practice works best and some say post. I preach that you encourage the athlete to find what works best for their individual body's response. Here is the thing we are all different from skeletal structure to muscle and life experiences so find what works best for you and you will reap the best quickest reward.

I hear ALL THE TIME from athletes:

- “If I get too flexible I will lose strength” I say tell that to a gymnast who is equally strong as flexible and can reek havoc on the apparatus’ and can literally generate unstoppable power.
- “I do not have time to stretch” I say make time!!! If you can find time to train you can carve time to do some flexibility training. If you go head to head with an athlete that is exactly your body and ability and he is doing flexibility training and you are not, guess what he/she wins every time. Get joints open and increase your power

**Strength + Flexibility = Power**

**The mantra of PYFS**

# THE BEST REHABILITATION TECHNIQUE IS PREVENTION

Want to keep you athletes engaged? Then do what we do and take this beautiful proven over 5,000 year old art of yoga and use exactly what the athlete needs per position per sport. That is why it is a requirement for you to view hours of sports on TV and live to see how they use their bodies. Is it:

- An endurance sport and they run 8 miles a game?
- Quick agility bursting moves?
- Diving moves? Soccer goalies
- Twisting moves? Hoops agility football hitting baseball
- Jumping moves? hoops
- Static however core driven? Skiing
- Mental positions? Quarterback, pitchers
- Upper body driven?
- Lower body driven?

All things to think about as you observe observe observe!!!

**I am not interested in making athletes into Yogi's**



## What are my players' needs?

- Think position specific
- Think repetitive movements
- Think most common injuries
- Orthopedic studies, reduce knee injuries

**AWARENESS IS THE KEY TO PREVENTION**

# What are my players' needs?

**Think Position specific:** as we mentioned, I cannot express enough for you to consider what are the duties of each player on the field of play and what are the bodies common movements. This is what separate PYFS from athletes going to a “regular” class.

**Think repetitive Movements:** is there a common movement constantly made in the position and sport you are observing? Of course there is, so stretch and strengthen commonly called on muscles. I need you to be a thinker, observer and listener. So you can choreograph the perfect routines per sport per position. Later I will give you guidance with common injuries and top poses per sport, but I would rather teach you to fish than give you a fish, so you can be successful going forward on your own. That is what makes successful PYFS teachers, that they can think on their feet because they know the game of sports and demands of the athlete.

Another reason to be aware of repetitive movements is critical. As I teach over and over to my students is sports by nature are one side dominant, therefore they create imbalances. Correct? So be aware of misalignments born of repetitive moves on the field of play. If you are a right batter in baseball for example and for decades perfect your hitting game, this has to amount to imbalances in the body, right? So what do we do about it? We will never make the body perfect because there is always a dominant side (righty or lefty but we can make the asymmetry less and more manageable. Still don't get it? Well think on this, you would never drive from New York to Florida in a car that has misalignments would you? No, because you would drive miles and miles until you wore and wore on a tire and it finally blew out. The same is true for your body. Athletes seem to take better care of their sports car than their own bodies and its time we realize, there will not be great cars without a healthy athlete continually performing on the field injury free.

# AWARENESS IS THE KEY TO PREVENTION

Think most common injuries: as you observe the hours of play be aware of the possibilities of injury. For example a few are

- An offensive lineman: wrist injuries, back
- A hockey player: rotation back issues, shoulder
- Swimmer: shoulder issues

Etc etc

Be aware of common injuries for that position **before** they happen

- Do the research
- Constantly talk to coaches and trainers player
- Listen to complaints
- Ask before each session if there are new aches pains and injuries
- Look asymmetries in their body (more on that later in assessment poses)
- Look for bumps
- Observe tightness and changes in flexibility

# STUDIES TELL

Studies tell us that the more open and flexible the hips are the less the injury potential to the knees.

It is not so difficult to understand. If your hips are cemented in place and have no or limited flexibility and range of motion and lets say you are a defensive back in football, your job is to be quick agile and change direction on the dime, well, if your hips do not move and open while you are cutting and changing direction, the potential energy of your speed and movement on the field has to go somewhere, if your hips do not resolve for you the most vulnerable alternative is the knee. Which is so complicated it will move fore the hip and absorb the shock and then what? Unfortunately a

Knee blowout

We see it all to much in nearly every sport that requires the use of legs against ground.

So keep the hips open first and foremost.

# BOW AND ARROW

Contrary to popular belief yoga is NOT just for flexibility

As we mentioned before a popular quote I hear from athletes is;

“Yoga will make me too flexible and I will lose strength”

WRONG

**Strength + Flexibility = POWER on the field**

Let me give you another analogy to help you relate to this better.

This is my favorite analogy the Bow and Arrow!

Imagine you have a bow and arrow and the Bow string is so strong it won't break, but it is so tight you can only pull it back about an inch, release the arrow and what happens? Plop...the arrow has nothing behind it and doesn't launch to the target...

Now imagine a bow and arrow where the bow string is so strong it does not break and sooooo flexible you can pull the bow string all the way back beyond your ear, release the arrow and what happens. The ultimate illustration of power, the arrow soars to the target and sticks hard.

The same idea is true of your body you want the ultimate harmony of

**Strength + Flexibility + POWER**

Now for EVEN more benefits of Yoga other than flexibility...

# BENEFITS

## **Balance- standing balancing poses and balance of body or symmetry of musculature**

Working balance will surely help you on the field. An athlete's body needs to be able to support compromising positions that sports put you in. If they have better balance acrobatic plays will be common place for them, therefore better athletic ability and performance.

The second part of balance that we spoke of before is balance of body OR symmetry of the muscles and alignment of the body.

## **Strength -holding functional strength building poses**

A common misconception of yoga is that it does not build strength. Nothing could be further from the truth with certain forms of yoga including PYFS. Try holding a forearm plank for 2 minutes and let me know if your shoulders are not screaming and your core is not challenged to the fullest while the sweat drips down your face. Enough said!

## **Flexibility- long deep holds elongate muscles better**

Of course flexibility is the poster child for yoga, with PYFS we do flexibility training and we do LONG DEEP holds to better increase flexibility. More on that later.

# BENEFITS CONTINUED

## Focus- 2 types- finding calm in uncomfortable situations & fixing gaze for balance

Focus is critical to being a superior athlete. We like to say:

- finding calm in an uncomfortable situation
- don't look for the exit door
- do not bail out
- trying is an excuse for future failure

A successful athlete needs to know that games are won and lost in the last quarter, period, hole or set so staying in the game and knowing you cannot stop means you need to find a way and dig deep. Long deep holds in yoga teach you that like nothing else.

Physical balance is perfected when you find your visual focal point and that is the second aspect of focus. When performing challenging tree poses if you are not focused and you are looking all around you will certainly fall.

## Mental Toughness- holding poses using strength, flexibility and breath prepares you for difficult game situations don't run for the exit door

Beyond focus mental toughness is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most untalked about quality for the great athlete, mental toughness, just like focus the desire to want it, win and be better than the next guy, WINNING is mental toughness. Sticking to the hardest yoga poses , complicated, twisty, breathing and balancing teaches you to find your zone and succeed. Translating the same lessons and feelings into their game.

# STILL MORE BENEFITS

As our beloved Yogi Berra said,

“ 90% of the game is half mental”

Well if this is true, what are you doing to train for the mental game? If you even think 20% of your game is mental, not only would I beg to differ, but I would ask then what are you doing to train the mental game. If you say nothing then you are automatically putting yourself at a 20% disadvantage. Again if you meet up against an athlete same size, same ability and he/she trains the mental game and you do not, then you are leaving yourself at a greater deficit.

PYFS trains the mental game by teaching goal setting and visualizations techniques, as well as scripting.

## VISUALIZATION STUDY

**Its NOW a great time to go over your Goal Setting Bonus course!!!**

**Scripting** is taking visualization to the next level, it is not just meditation and seeing your goals materialize in your brain, because your brain cannot tell the difference between real and visualized, but scripting is writing down your goals and sport dreams. Taking pen to paper and writing your goals increase the likelihood of actualization to the 10<sup>th</sup> power!!!! Now that is great odds to me. So keep the vision board and the notebook constantly of goals and dreams.



# ARE YOU KIDDING, MORE BENEFITS!!!

Breathing- rib and lung openers and yogic breath work, aid exercise-induced asthma and increase lung capacity, also nasal/belly breathing increase calm, decrease stress and anxiety

Some athletes have exercise induced asthma,

## What Is Exercise-Induced Asthma?

Like it sounds, exercise-induced asthma is asthma that is triggered by vigorous or prolonged exercise or physical exertion. Most people with chronic asthma experience symptoms of asthma during exercise. However, there are many people without chronic asthma who develop symptoms only during exercise.

## Why Does Exercise Induce Asthma?

During normal breathing, the air we take in is first warmed and moistened by the nasal passages. Because people tend to breathe through their mouths when they exercise, they are inhaling colder and drier air. In the yoga world breathing is done in and out through the nose only.

In exercise-induced asthma, the muscle bands around the airways are sensitive to these changes in temperature and humidity and react by contracting, which narrows the airway. This results in symptoms of exercised-induced asthma, which include:

- Coughing with asthma
- Tightening of the chest
- Wheezing
- Unusual fatigue while exercising
- Shortness of breath when exercising

NOTE: check out Body Mind Sport by John Douliard

# PRE GAME ANXIETY AND BREATHING

some have pregame anxiety.

Anxiety is a natural reaction to threats in the environment and part of the preparation for the 'fight or flight' response. This is our body's primitive and automatic response that prepares it to 'fight' or 'flee' from perceived harm or attack. It is a 'hardwired' response that ensures survival of the human species. Sporting competition promotes similar psychological and bodily responses because there is often a threat posed towards the ego; your sense of self-esteem. Essentially, when the demands of training or competition exceed one's perceived ability, anxiety is the inevitable outcome.

Sport places a wide variety of stressors upon participants; it can be physically exhausting, it pitches you against superior opponents, hostile fans might verbally abuse you, the elements may need to be overcome and your emotional frailties are constantly laid bare for all to see. Despite this, sport offers participants an opportunity for growth – a chance to push back personal boundaries, and a means by which to liberate the body and the mind.

There is nothing damaging about the stress associated with a sporting contest, and in fact stress can be a very positive influence that leads us to tackle the challenges that make life far more rewarding. However, when we perceive stress to be negative, it causes anxiety and therefore, much depends upon how we view the demands placed upon us.

The main causes of anxiety

At the same time as providing challenge and stimulation, sport also provides considerable uncertainty. At the precise moment the Olympic archer releases an arrow, or the rugby fly-half kicks for goal, the outcome is unknown. The stress that sport provides therefore is inevitably linked with its inherent uncertainty. Sport is a cultural focal point because it is a theatre of unpredictability.

# GREATER LUNG CAPACITY AND SPORTS PERFORMANCE

some just need greater lung capacity to cope with the length of long games, and increased playing time

Whatever it is your athletes may suffer from, greater lung capacity will help your performance.

Why do athletes have more lung capacity than people who don't play sports? This is a common question. If you've ever watched a sporting event such as an endurance marathon or a triathlon, you've probably wondered how it's possible for some people to compete at the level these athletes do in such events. Especially in swimming, you may wonder how these athletes maintain the needed strength, not to mention breath, in order to finish the event.

The expanded lung capacity that athletes have allows them to regulate their breathing in a way that lets their heart pump blood more efficiently, making it possible for runners to accomplish marathon runs, or for swimmers to break world records.

Why do Athletes have more Lung Capacity than People who don't Play Sports?

The reason that athletes have more lung capacity than people who don't play sports is because they work at developing this lung capacity and endurance.

Athletes obtain a greater lung capacity through a strenuous and consistent workout program. As athletes work out and engage in sports- sometimes for hours at a time - they begin to moderate their breathing, generally automatically or subconsciously although sometimes through a targeted effort to learn breath control.

Eventually, athletes develop the proper timing, depth, and speed at which to breathe throughout the duration of the exercises they perform.

This, in effect, is the same reason they also often have more muscle content on their bodies than most non-athletes: they use their lungs more. Through exercise and training, athletes develop endurance capabilities for their lungs that allow them to perform at heightened levels, which would typically leave a non-athlete on the sidelines, gasping for breath.

# SIMPLE BREATHING TECHNIQUES TO IMPLEMENT

Duration of each inhalation and exhalation depends upon individual capacity. This capacity will improve over time with constant practice. Over a period of time, try to develop a ration of 1:2 between the durations of inhalation and exhalation.

## Step-by-step

Sit in any comfortable cross-legged posture, keeping the spine upright, eyes closed, and arms and shoulders relaxed.

Start with an inhalation bringing the awareness to the abdomen. Stretch the arms straight and bring the hands at knee level, slightly in front of the knees. Consciously make a gentle effort to push the diaphragm down so the belly can fill up like a balloon.

Continue deep inhalation and shift the awareness to the chest area. Expand the chest and the ribcage, filling the middle part of the lungs with air. At the same time move the arms upwards, synchronizing with the breath and bring the hands at the level of the chest.

Continue the inhalation and bring the awareness to the clavicle area lifting the collar bones upward. Along with the breath, move the hands upward and bring them in line with the shoulders.

At the end of inhalation, take a momentary pause and begin the exhalation cycle proceeding in the reverse direction.

Bring the awareness to the clavicle area and soften the collar bones.

Shift the awareness to the chest area and soften the ribcage. At the same time, lower the arms in line with the chest.

# THREE PART BREATH

Continue to exhale and bring the awareness to the abdomen area. Allow the navel to be drawn in toward the spine as you approach the end of exhalation. Synchronize the movement of the arm with the downward moving breath. At the end of exhalation, bring the hands back in line with the knees.

That completes one breathing cycle. At the end of the exhalation, take a momentary pause and begin the next breathing cycle.

Continue for about 4-6 breathing cycles. At the end of the last cycle, keep the eyes closed and relax for a few breaths.

## Benefits

In this deep, three-part breathing, we engage the entire capacity of the lungs in the breathing cycle. It is estimated that we may be able to bring in as much as seven times more oxygen into the system than in normal, shallow breathing.

More oxygen implies that more oxygenated blood is available for circulation to all the cells of the body.

At the cells, due to the gas exchange, we are able to get rid of more carbon dioxide from the system.

Thus, deep breathing brings in more prana (life force), energy and vitality with each inhalation while providing deeper cleansing and purification with each exhalation.

Deep breathing calms the nerves down and reduces stress levels. We have all heard the term, "take a deep breath!" when one is agitated or angry.

# ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

In this breathing technique, we use deep, soft (almost soundless) ujjayi breaths for each inhalation and exhalation.

## Step-by-step

Sit in any comfortable sitting posture with the spine erect, eyes closed and shoulders relaxed.

Make the Vishnu Mudra (shown in the picture to the right) with the right hand – make a soft fist, lift the thumb and the last two fingers up, keeping the middle two fingers at the base of the thumb. During the practice using this mudra, the thumb is used to close the right nostril whereas the ring finger is used to close the left nostril.

With the left hand, make the Chin Mudra – join the tips of the index finger and the thumb, keeping the rest of the fingers open and relaxed. Keep the hand on the left knee, palm facing up.

Use the right thumb to close the right nostril. To get started, exhale through the left.

Begin the first round by inhaling through the left nostril.

At the end of inhalation, close the left nostril with the ring finger and open the right. Then exhale through the right nostril.

Inhale now through the right. At the end of inhalation, close the right nostril with the thumb again and exhale through the left.

This completes one cycle of breathing. Continue for about 6-7 similar cycles. Make sure to use deep and soft Ujjayi breaths for each inhalation and exhalation.

# UJJAYI BREATH

Ujjayi is practiced while breathing through the nose but narrowing the throat by partially closing the epiglottis (the piece of cartilage at the top of your voice box) thus producing a slight hissing sound (it may also be compared to a light snoring sound or the sound of an ocean wave). This sound is a result of friction of the incoming or outgoing air at the base of the throat and not from friction in the nostrils. Let that sound become your teacher. Listen to the tone of that voice as you inhale and exhale, and make that tone as even and smooth as you can, without any catches or wavering and without any change in pitch. The sound should be soft and gentle and only you should be able to hear its sound. Listening to the voice of ujjayi pranayama will give you greater sensitivity and control over the nuances of your breath.

At first, you may wonder exactly how to manipulate this epiglottal valve at the root of your throat. Here are a couple of methods which can help you learn this action.

Just sigh, and notice the slight constriction in your throat that occurs. That's the area you need to control when you're practicing ujjayi.

Open your mouth and inhale softly, noticing where the breath touches your throat. For most people, that will be deep down at the base and back of the throat. Again, that's the spot you need to constrict slightly to practice ujjayi. After you've zeroed in on this area, close your mouth and inhale, letting the breath touch your throat there. Once you can inhale in this way, practice exhaling with the same constriction of the epiglottis.

Another technique that you can use to experience Ujjayi is to hold your hand up to your mouth and exhale as if trying to fog a mirror. Inhale the same way. Notice how you constrict the back of the throat to create the fog effect. Now close your mouth and do the same thing while breathing through the nose.

# TOOLS TO LEARN AND TEACH

- **Promote true body awareness and its importance for athletes**

It is critical when teaching athletes to give them tools that not only make sense to them but leave them independent from you. Do not worry they will always come back for classes, but giving them tools to succeed on their own is invaluable.

- **Tuning into body can prevent future injuries**

Constantly give them cues so they learn to feel their feet in their shoes. Too many times they are so focused on the workout, game, opponent that they tune out of their bodies to a detriment. They need to constantly learn to feel their clothes on their body, feel the ground beneath them, the weather on their skin, the rate of respiration. Being in tune will notch up their performance and ability to regulate their bodies to maximize performance.

- **Prevent injury by feeling and looking**

Start talking to them not only about feeling but looking. It is time to train your athletes to actually SEE their bodies. They should look for asymmetries, bumps bulges misalignments most of which are precursors to imbalance injuries. Look in the mirror and truly see don't just look. Follow the outlines of their form and compare both sides daily.

**REFER NOW TO POSE ASSESSMENT POSE WORKSHOP VIDEO!!**

**Be the advocate of your tool.. YOUR BODY reap longterm reward**



# Teach to understand and notice body alignment

we already mentioned that it is a given that sports by nature are one side dominant therefore create imbalances. You throw with one arm, you start a sprint with one leg, you (most) are righty OR lefty, so PYFS teaches you as the teacher to notice the

imbalances when they are way out of whack

Teach the athletes to see their own imbalances

Give the tools to bring the body back to a sounder posture to increase performance and efficiency

Remember our analogy of driving the car that is misaligned and implement it with every class

All the work you do as a teacher for the athlete and as an athlete on the field is not fully effective if the athlete is not in alignment and balances first

Start looking at pictures and observe people and notice the outline of their bodies and see if you can notice and train yourself to SEE the body not just look.

yoga body brings symmetry closer

# EYE DOMINANCE

Address the importance of eye dominance for an Athletes performance. What the heck does this mean? And why is it important to the athletes performance?

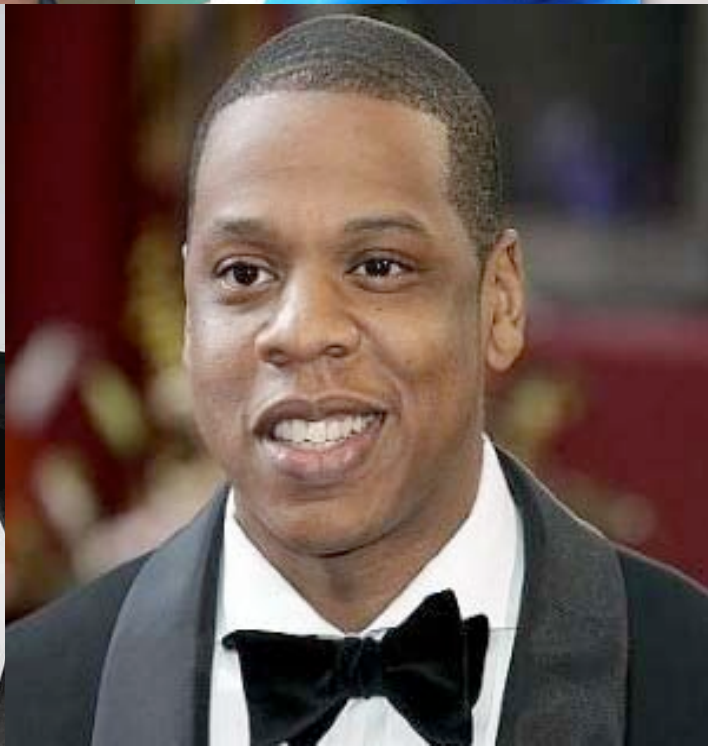
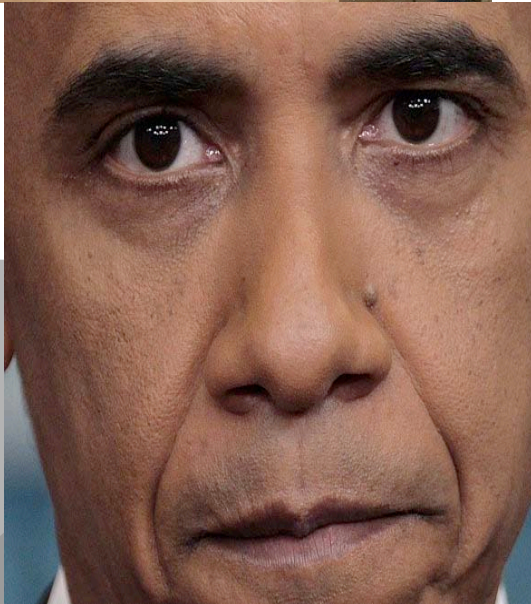
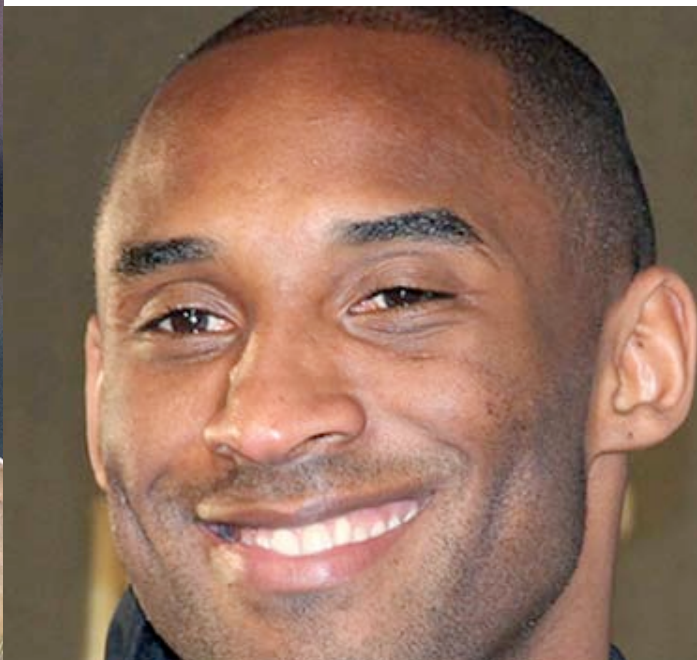
First, how to tell the dominant eye

Refer to “how to determine eye dominance” video

When you are training your athletes as always observe, observe the eye shape and compare the sizing of one eye to the other







# STUDY THE SLIDES I LAID OUT FOR YOU

## Observe

- Size
- Shape
- Symmetry

Do they look the same on each side wide open clean and clear? If so great. If not, how can we fix it and why do we care?

Fixing it is as simple as neck and shoulder openers bilaterally. You want to open all the muscles surrounding the neck and shoulders in order to enable proper blood flow and not allow muscles to press and impinge on the nerves. When the blood flow and or nerves are effected you can see a shut sown in an eye creating the imbalance and asymmetry.

## Poses:

- Wheel of life
- Rabbit
- Happy cow arms
- Plow
- Bridge and wheel

# WHY ARE THE EYES SO IMPORTANT TO SPORT PERFORMANCE

Ok so now why does this matter? Lets for a moment envision a righty batter in baseball. We have determined that that batter is right eye dominant... think about where the 95 mph fast ball is coming from...over his left shoulder. Right? If his right (dominant eye) is not clean, clear and wide open he is leaving his vision at a disadvantage. He already is at a disadvantage being a righty and right eye dominant, it would certainly be better to be a righty batter left eye dominant wouldn't it? You cannot change eye dominance that I know of , but you can change how open and clear your vision is.

To make matter worse imagine that same player (this example is taken from and actual Pro I work with) righty , right eye dominant, AND when HE gets tight they tend to have a back/ spine that torques right. So now what... now you have to make sure the spine evens out and gets back on track just so they can see the ball better

See Derek, how important an open eye, great spine and Also the ability to turn the neck so the chin is right over the Shoulder and he can get the best view of the ball.

Get it?

Poses to open spine and back:

- Wheel of life
- Lunge twist
- Chair twist



# ONE MORE EXAMPLE: PUT WHAT YOU KNOW TO THE TEST





# ONE MORE REASON FOR GREAT EYES

Check out the great jerry rice. Think about his job on the field of play. By now you will have observed hours of play so you know. Quick down field, sensing his surroundings, peripheral vision like an eagle (not Philadelphia) spinal twist deep and ready to turn and cut on the dime. If he has restriction in his spine and the ball is being thrown over his left shoulder as he runs down field and his body tends to torque right and his twist to the left is inhibited, AND he happens to also be right eye dominant. Well he is creating a blind spot for himself over the left shoulder and shooting down his game a notch. Not only that when players watch film of games and watch their next opponent they will see he cannot catch a ball over the right shoulder so it will give a clue how to cover him, further inhibiting his performance.

When the spine is not open and the eyes are not clear in addition the neck is tight, it is like driving a car without a side view mirror and we all know how uncomfortable a feeling that is, try just backing out of a space with out the side view mirrors and imagine doing it with a closed eye and a tight neck and being pressured to perform like a million dollar recruit. A lot of pressure. So

- Neck open
- Eyes wide
- Shoulders clear and flexible in ALL directions
- Spine supple and flexible in all directions

Refer to Gwen Lawrence Yoga Channel on You tube for some great videos to open these areas.

Up the players game and performance, the same examples translate from soccer to tennis, hockey to hoops.

# Addressing Injuries the Yogic way

In the yoga world we look at the body in a holistic way. If you have a shoulder injury and you go to the best doctor in the world for that injury he will surely be stellar in healing the shoulder. What is more rare in the medical community but critical to PYFS is looking at the entire body and the effect the shoulder injury is having on the rest of the body.

## •Crisscross effect:

If you have an injury the effect it has on your body is fascinating. What starts as a hip injury can manifest in so many different ways. If you have a hip injury the crisscross effect would show you that through compensation for pain and discomfort of the injury causes you to compensate for the injury and your posture and positioning therefore manifests an imbalance across the body. So an athlete who had the right hip injured, you should be aware of left knee, left calf both of which will bare the brunt and accept the extra load while healing takes place, and may actually become larger muscularly.

In addition a natural change of gate takes place whether you are aware of it or not. You start to compensate and limp perhaps causing a breeding ground for muscular imbalances and asymmetry, and I cannot tell you enough a potential injury in another area of the body. A hip injury can change the gate so much I have seen a person put undue pressure on the spine and walk so out of whack that the neck and shoulder were then an issue. So keep eyes wide, watch your clients and athletes from all angles

Think beyond the pinpoint view and consider surrounding joints and muscles to an injury to prevent additional injuries from surfacing.

## •Pay attention to all the surrounding joints and Muscles:

If there is an injury stop obsessing over the injury and pay attention to the area around it before it becomes a casualty. Remember we talked about before that orthopedic studies should show that the more open the hips are the less the stress and injury on the knee.

## •Armoring:

is the self-protection of the injured body which causes stiffness in surrounding muscles so always keep an eye out for the whole body



# PLAYER ASSESSMENT

**Assessment poses that coach, trainers players can use now**

**What to look for... assess**

**stability in their base**

**hands and feet**

**body symmetry/asymmetry**

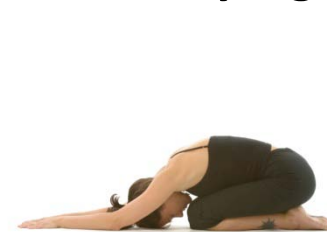
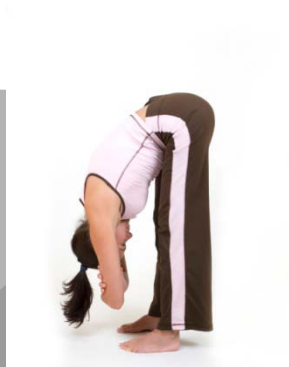
**muscle tightness**

**bumps**

**...rolling up and back**

**...savasana = hips cues**

**...heavy legs, lymph**



**INCREASE YOUR POWER**

**STRENGTH AND FLEXIBILITY**

**LONG DEEP RESTORATIVE HOLDS**

**The Best Rehabilitation Technique  
is PREVENTION**

## Long holds...for every sport

- Shoulder stand
- Open chest stretch on the ball
- Forward bend the right way/wall
- Pigeon, Double Pigeon
- Frog
- Hero's toes tucked and untucked
- Happy cow with arms
- Twisting: lengthen first
- Head standing, don't be scared, its easy- step by step
- HEAVY LEGS!!!!

# Going deeper into the pose

## Timed 2-10 minute holds:

- Tibetan rites to warm each joint
- Headstand: no wall - neck integrity and increased o<sub>2</sub>
- Shoulder stand and Plow for neck flexion
- Backbends: Open wrists and anterior spine (with assistance or on ball)
- Forward bends: Hamstrings - proper way on floor or wall
- Pigeon for sciatic trouble, tight glutes, speed, agility, and knee protection
- Frog: Groin, mental toughness, hips to protect knee
- Heroes Pose: Plantar fasciitis, speed, ankle integrity, knee flexibility

# FOOTBALL

## Position: Defensive backs and receivers

- Need great stamina, agility and strength.
  - Strong flexible legs to run
  - Ankle integrity to turn on the dime
  - Abs and back strength to make a twisting catch and stay in bounds
  - Balanced shoulders and arms for the extraordinary reaching catches
  - Stable wrists
- Common injury: Knees, back fingers wrists, ankles,



# TOP 5 POSES FOOTBALL SPEED AGILITY

- Lying opposite arm opposite leg:** This movement is amazing for warming up the whole hip socket, and shoulder socket pre-game, as well as syncing the breath with the movement and warming up the abs and trunk, critical for the quick elusive moves you need on the field. Try it for 2-4 minutes.
- Lunge twist:** doing this pose will increase strength in the legs and at the same time stretch the quadriceps and increase the rotation in the back. Just watch a receiver and you will know how important it is to be able to twist and torque to catch a less than perfect pass. Great execution of this pose will also help you better your balance which also can come in handy when landing from a leaping grab or having to have the presence of mind to land your feet inbounds.
- Plank pose elbow to knee variation:** performing plank on its own will increase your abdominal and hip flexor strength but adding elbow to knee variation will deepen the abs crunch and strengthen the wrist joint (which needs to be strong in the event that you land on your wrist after an air born catch). Having the best abdominal strength you can, will support your back in all compromising positions on the field.
- Chest down shoulder stretch:** doing this yoga pose will give you a deep opening in the anterior deltoid (front of the shoulder), stretch the biceps muscle, neck and spine, all very important to run and turn on the dime to prevent a catch or make a catch.
- Frog:** This pose is a long deep hold up to 20 minutes to clearly by looking at it release the groin and inner thigh. Inner thighs need to be open to make a run stop and change direction move injury free. Also this is another example of opening the hips in all directions keeps the knees safer and more exempt of stress and strain.

# TOP 5 POSES FOOTBALL: STRENGTH STABILITY

**Chair pose:** Chair is a perfect pose to strengthen the back and quadriceps, as well as opening gently the calves and Achilles tendon for linemen.

**Flat back chair pose:** Flat back variation of chair with intensify the ability to strengthen the back of a lineman. The starting position of the player can be very forward and put the spine in a flexed position often, it is great relief to the back to increase the strength in the back of the spine, to keep abs strong and support the back more completely.

**Squat:** Holding squat for 2-4 minutes will allow the player to not only open the hips very deeply, it will stretch and strengthen the calves, Achilles tendon and lower legs at the same time, especially if you are patient and mentally tough enough to stay in the position for the maximum hold. Once a player becomes seasoned holding this they can work on flattening of the back and get more of the benefits that you get from flat back chair hold.

**Forearm plank hold:** Multiple benefits will arise from regular practice of this pose. You will undoubtedly increase the abdominal strength which for a strength stability position will increase the immovability of your body. Also, it will increase the potency of the chest muscles and stretch the wrist joint and flexors and extensors of the forearm. You watch a lineman for one play and you can see power to push, block and stop an opponent with their wrists is what they do, if the wrist joint is tight you can be guaranteed your challenger will open it for you in an uncomfortable way perhaps even damaging your wrists. It also comes in handy if in the event you get knocked on your butt {I know it is unlikely : ) } but your wrist will be able to take the weight on the fall with less damage done.

**Inverted table:** This pose will load you up with the same benefits as the forearm plank pose but will add a great shoulder chest opener and quad stretch. At the same time it will strengthen the back, chest, shoulders. A tough one for the bigger guys but well worth the effort.

# SOCCER

## All Players:

- Extraordinary stamina and aerobic
- ability to last in the grueling running game
- Strong flexible ankles and toes to add
- powerful push and fancy kick work
- high jumping headers
- Great agility to elude defenders
- Strong, symmetrical legs, flexible groin
- and healthy knees to support the running game
- **Common injuries:** Achilles, back, hips, calves





# TOP 5 POSES FOR SOCCER 1-2

While it would be beneficial for Soccer players of every level and ability to take yoga classes to improve their: functional strength, balance, flexibility, power, breathing techniques, visualizations skills and focus, in particular there are certain moves that are more beneficial than others. If a player does not have much time they should consider the top 5 choices below.

Triangle pose and revolving triangle: triangle pose is a great way for a soccer player to stretch the inner thigh and side body, which will help increase breath capacity, as well it increases strength and stability of the core. Doing the revolving variation is important to open up the ever resistant ilio tibial band, or the outer thigh muscles, so integral to the sport of soccer used in cross boy kicks. Also this variation is an important way to increase the rotation in the spine which is called upon unendingly during the game of soccer.

Seated spinal twisting: This is a great way to warm up before your game. Sitting and twisting for 1-4 minutes will increase the strength in your spine and again increase the spinal rotation. It will give the athlete the opportunity to identify which side it is harder to rotate towards, and then the information to utilize to better it. A soccer player who displays tight rotation on one side is at risk of creating a blind side and the soccer ball will be taken from you blind side every time.

## 3-5

**Squat:** squat is a great way to get a deep stretch in the hips and groin to give the athlete more range of motion. Also this pose will help elongate the Achilles tendon and calves decreasing the incident of strain on them.

**Hero's pose toes tucked/untucked:** Soccer being one of the fastest pace most acrobatic sports it is critical to keep the lower legs flexible from shins, top of the foot (extension), calves, Achilles tendons, bottom of the foot and under the toes. All these body parts staying flexible and strong will maintain your power of running kicking and movement on the field.

**Pigeon pose:** Pigeon is a great way to keep the gluteals and hips open. Doing this pose everyday for several minutes on each side will maintain a flexible supple hip. I cannot stress enough the importance of keeping the hips flexible in relation to lessening the stress, strain and injury of the knees. There have been orthopedic studies done proving that more flexible hips reduce the injury potential to the knee. I cannot think of a more relevant study for a soccer player youth to Pro.

# BASKETBALL

## All Players:

- Strong legs for the intense running
- aerobic game
- Strong flexible ankles to turn on the dime and be elusive around defenders
- Increased vertical leap with healthy open knees
- Great agility
- Quick reaction time
- Spinal suppleness to twist and turn around opponents,
- Flexible groin
- **Common injuries:** Groin pulls, ankle sprains

Back problems, knee strain.



# TOP 5 POSES BASKETBALL

**Locust:** Locust Pose is a great option to strengthen the entire posterior spine. It actually simulates the look of getting air on the court before you stuff a basket. Also, locust is great because on the floor training the back and in addition it has the same extended arms as blocking a shot at the hoop

**Bow:** Bow pose also stretches the anterior spine allowing for the flexibility of the back muscles. At the same time bow allows deep quad stretching and hip flexor flexibility. Both are important to total balance of leg flexibility and power. Open quads, hip flexors and hamstrings allow over all balance in the legs.

**Frog:** Hoops is an elusive sport that demands a movement on the dime. Keeping the groin open allows for the quickness of move and maintains safety of the often put at risk knee. If the groin can give a little the knee stays safer

**Hero's toes tucked/ untucked:** both versions of this hero's pose allow continued opening in the quadriceps muscles but in addition keep the knee flexible and give it pliability in case of a jarring fall on the court. Hero's toes tucked allows you to open the Achilles tendon, calf, plantar fascia and toes, all of which allows more power to push off and therefore increased ups! The untucked version opens the shin and top of the ankle for over all stability.

**Warrior one:** a great pose for hoops players to strengthen the thigh and stabilize the knee, at the same time it strengthens the back, adding a twist in warrior 1 can enhance the game form by increasing rotation of the spine for more ability to twist out of compromising situations.

# BASEBALL

## Position: Pitcher

- Great reaction time
- Sense of distance to pitch and field
- Bursts of intense energy to bring a fastball
- or pick off a man on first
- Open hips and shoulders
- Incredible balance and leg strength
- Strong & flexible elbows and wrists to deliver the pitch with the most power and precision
- Overall flexibility and mental toughness to stay in the game at the toughest of moments
- **Common injuries:**  
Rotator cuff, dead legs, back imbalance strains, hamstrings and groin



# TOP 5 POSES BASEBALL

**Pigeon pose:** from batting to quick sprints down to first it is always important for baseball players to keep their hips open, to increase speed and agility, torque at the plate and lessen the potential strain on the knees. Pigeon pose will open deeply in to the glutes and release any pressure that could accumulate on the sciatic nerve.

**Frog pose:** frog is another example of how a player can open the hips and at the same time stretch the inner thigh groin which is a point of injury for a lot of baseball players. You should look to hold this pose for 2-20 minutes.

**Standing forward bend against the wall:** Getting away from seated forward bend when more often than not is done incorrectly, doing this pose while folding in half facing the wall and stabilizing your feet on the floor lean against the wall, gravity takes over. You can get deeper faster to this resistant set of muscles known as the hamstrings. Learn to hold this pose 1-3 minutes, you will also find your mental toughness and focus challenged here, hang tough, literally.

# BASEBALL 4-5

Happy cow shoulder stretch: for throwing either in the infield or outfield, or from home to second with split second reflexes and full extension in your swing it is a well know fact that a baseball player needs strong open stable shoulders. This is once stretch that will focus on the anterior deltoid (front of the shoulder) which is often the tightest part of the intricate shoulder. You can add wall walks and plank holds (check site for more info) to also increase the stability of the shallow vulnerable shoulder joint.

Seated twisting: this is a great movement for a baseball player to increase the rotation in his/her spine on their non dominant side. Keeping equal flexibility helps maintain a more symmetrical body which is more stable. A strong deep rotation with help with torque at the plate. This exercise also helps build total strength in the back and sync the breath with the movement. All athletes can benefit from increased breath capacity to remain calm in the most stressful situations.

# TOP 5 POSES BASEBALL PITCHERS

- Hero's pose:** toes tucked and untucked...this pose opens up the bottom of the pitchers foot. It gives more flexibility and power to his foot to push off. The more supple the toes are the better the push off of his foot creating more force and speed in the pitch
- Warrior 1 to warrior 3:** doing this move back and forth 5-10 times will develop the pitchers balance. This move creates huge strength and stability in the ankle. It will create stronger quads and hamstrings, and develop deep glute strength, to also help the pitcher with hip force and power
- Warrior 2:** holding this pose for 1-3 minutes will not only help develop a strong knee joint from the support of the quad and hamstring it will help open the groin to prevent pulls and tweaks. Doing this pose the practitioner focuses greatly on tracking his knee over the toes to learn to protect it will proper form.
- Seated arm ups:** this repetitive pose don from 1-4 minutes will help warm the shoulder joint and build functional strength in the vulnerable joint. It helps the pitcher to start to sync the breath with his/her movement preparing him for the mental rigors of a game situation.
- Plank pose wrist turns:** This is a great one. Not only does this move strengthen and challenge the abdominals and legs, it opens the wrist joint for more range of motion in the joint. Increasing the range of motion will help the pitcher to hold ball easier in all formations and give the wrist snap. Finally it will help relieve flexors and extensors in the forearm that could tighten up after a game or a pitcher that grips to hard.



# HOCKEY

## Position: All Players

- incredible balance
  - ankle strength and stability
  - sound achilles tendons
  - strong legs flexible spines
  - open necks
  - clear vision
  - strong open wrists and foreams – supple hips
- Common injuries:  
Groin pulls, ankle trauma, tight hips, strained pulled forearm muscles, asymmetrical back strains



# TOP 5 POSES HOCKEY

- Triangle:** a great pose for hockey player because the sport puts high demand on the thighs and legs. Triangle opens the legs but also strengthens the back and oblique's so a player has greater power to change direction on the fly.
- Revolving triangle:** same benefits as triangle except this adds increased flexibility to the iliotibial bands. The more open they are the less the strain on the knees and back especially during powerful twisting or rotating moves on the ice.
- Lunge twist:** more work to increase spinal rotation with as mentioned is critical to the hockey game. Strong rotation and deep rotation allow the player to respond to the direction of the play quicker and stronger.
- Inverted table:** Inverted table is beneficial for 2 reasons first it opens hip flexors, which reduces strain on the low back by stabilizing and releasing the pelvis, and second it is dominant to opening the wrist joints and forearms allowing the player better control of the stick and ability to have safer falls on the ice because the wrists can absorb the shock of the fall. It also opens the chest for increased power to slap shot. A tight chest has limited range of motion.
- Frog:** the perfect pose for long hours on the ice. Skating is on such an unstable surface that the inner thighs are in constant demand to work. The frog pose pre or post game for 5 minutes is awesome to release the tension and increase the stride.

# WRESTLING

## Position: All Players

- symmetrical back strength
  - flexible hips to protect knees
  - flexible spines flexion extension and rotational – strong flexible necks
  - open wrists and strong grips
  - incredible overall strength and stamina
  - tremendous mental toughness
- Common injuries:  
knee injuries, back strain, neck pulls, overworked forearms



# TOP 5 POSES WRESTLING

- Down dog:** wrestlers obviously need overall flexibility otherwise your opponent will stretch you beyond your limits. Down dog stretches chest shoulder and hamstrings as well as building strength in the arms and shoulders for critical moves of strength and precision,
- Bridge:** bridge is a great pose to open the back of the neck a position a wrestler can find himself in a lot on the mat. It also allows you to open the shoulders and chest. And stretch the anterior spine
- Wheel:** a more advanced pose but a marriage made in heaven for wrestlers. Being able to open their anterior spine the the fullest and at the same time bare weight on the wrists and arms as well as shoulders will allow the wrestler to escape compromising situations with less effort.
- Warrior three:** while a wrestler would not mimic this pose in a match it is important for building strength stability and flexibility in the ankles and deep glutes while training balance . Strong legs quads a flexible ankles with power to push are critical to come out of the referees position and strip your opponent to escape so you can come to standing and get neutral.
- Face down shoulder:** this pose should be every wrestlers go to long deep hold. For over all open chest, shoulders biceps for better range of motion and therefore allowing the wrestler to endure whatever the opponents puts them in. This pose is also great for increasing spinal rotation so you can roll out of sticky situations and avoid the pin.

Lunge twist  
plow

# GOLF

## Position: All Players

- great hands grip and open forearms
  - symmetrical back muscles and strength – open hips spinal rotation
  - flexible neck rotationally clear eyes,
  - calm mind and breath
- Common injuries:  
strained back, heavy legs, neck strain, tight hips



# TOP 5 POSES GOLF

**Pigeon:** it is very important for a golfer to have clear open hips to rotate to drive the ball. It is important to always open both sides to not surrender to the massive imbalance that golf creates. Pigeon is great to get deep hips and opposite quad.

**Hero's toes tucked:** picture the finished pose of driving the ball. Up on that back toe. Hero's toes tucked allows great finesse of the finish.

**Boat;** Not only strengthens a golfer's core but increases back strength and improves posture for better breathing in critical pressure spots

**Inverted plank:** a nice compliment to golf. This pose opens chest for better posture and increased spinal rotation, it strengthens arms, it opens wrist to decrease wrist strain and increase grip strength. It also adds a little power to the legs.

**Lunge twist:** increasing power and strength in the legs and at the same time, allows the golfer to increase the spinal twist for more power at the tee.

# RACQUETS SPORTS

Position: All Players – great agility,

- ankle strength and stability – superior spinal rotation
- quick mind
- strong grip
- strong forearms open wrists for power
- lightness on your feet

- Common injuries:

back strain and tightness, groin pulls, hamstrings, knee injury, neck pain





# TOP 5 POSES RACQUET SPORTS

**Seated twist:** the best yoga pose to do for warming up your spine and synchronizing your breath with your movement. It is important to do this pre-match, since racquet sport require great range of motion in the spine in all directions, but especially rotation. It gives the athlete a good opportunity to zone in for a second and see which side may be restricted for you on any given day and then open your body accordingly. Do this movement for 1-3 minutes.

**Seated arm ups:** this too a great pre game warm up. Arm ups with completely warm up the shoulder joint. This is obviously important for any racquet sports to decrease injury and increase flexibility therefore poser on the courts.

**Lunge Knee down/forward rock:** lunges are imperative for racquet sports for clear reasons, since it is a lunge position dominant sport. There wouldn't be one minute where the athlete is not making a spectacular lunge save. This makes it very important to keep your body open and receptive to this position so you do not pull muscles or get extremely sore afterward. This particular pose opens the hip flexor, quadriceps ankle and calves, as well it stretches the torso. The forward rock variations gives the participant the opportunity to open the bottom of the foot the bottoms of the toes and Achilles tendon and calves deeper, enabling him/her to have greater power to push off and increase quickness.

**ing a weakness of the support structure.** Wall walks not only challenge the mind and body they will help build great support in the shoulder and further reinforce the wrist joint.



# RACQUET SPORTS 4-5

**Wrist openers:** A critical stretch for a player to consider adding is wrist openers. Often overlooked but perhaps the most important stretch you can add to your warm up or cool down. Wrist openers in plank position will open the wrist joint and strengthen the grip, stretch the flexors and extensors of the forearms and at the same time if you can maintain the plank pose increase the abdominal strength. Open strong flexible wrists are crucial for the racquet competitor.

**Wall walks:** Although this always proves to be a challenging exercise for athletes, they always fries up and conquer it. Wall walks will help to strengthen the whole rotator cuff. Traditionally players will bench press and shoulder press inadvertently leaving out other critical angles of the shoulder to strengthen, leav

# LACROSSE

Position: All Players – strong legs

Lacrosse

- stamina
- endurance
- strong flexible wrists and forearms
- flexible spines
- open necks
- agility
- Common injuries:
  - knee injuries, groin pulls, hip tightness, back strain, wrist problems



# TOP 5 POSES LACROSSE

**Standing crescent:** this pose increases oblique strength and lateral movement in the spine, simulating the wild strength moves on the field of play. It also opens shoulders in a fully extended posture much like you do in the game.

**Revolving triangle:** opening the ilio tibial band is important in lacrosse because the legs get very tight with miles of running on the field. The more open they are the better protection of the knee giving it a little more leeway for twists and turns.

**Warrior one:** another way to strengthen the legs as well as the back while the arms are extended over the head. Longer holds in this position truly prepare the player for short spurts of needed strength on the field

**Up dog with wrist turns:** a variation of upward dog which is also beneficial for the lax player, it brings the back into full extension, and opens stretches the wrist forearms for better stick control and chest to counter balance the repetitive motion of being forward and running while contracting the chest in front of you to hold the stick.

**Childs pose:** a delight for the lax player to ease the low back from miles of pounding running on the field it is also a mild back stretch and hip release.

# SKIING

- Endurance
- Superior breath work and control
- Knee stability
- Refined hips strength and flexibility
- Strong back
- Strong abs



Common injuries: ACL and knee problems, hip tightness, foot cramping, plantar problems, back strain, neck tightness



# TOP 5 POSES SKIING

**Chair and chair twist:** a pose that literally simulate the skiing position, strengthening the legs and back, as well as inner thighs. It also poses a challenging stretch to the Achilles tendon. Adding a twist gives a skier a much needed release of built up tension in the back.

**Warrior one hold:** in addition o chair a pose to go to to build overall leg strength and flexibility while adding core strength. A great one to hold for a minute to challenge the skier to building stamina as well.

**Triangle:** skier's need overall leg flexibility and triangle is a nice way to open groin inner thigh and at the same time build strength. Another great one to hold for a minute or longer to challenge the skier.

**Open chest stretch on ball:** most of the time the forward b=otion of the skier can cause tension to build in the back. Open chest stretch on the ball is phenomenal to counterbalance this motion. Open the chest and anterior spins as well as the front of the shoulder. It is also a great way to release and open the hip flexors muscles that are in constant contraction while skiing and often get overworked and abused.

**Plank hold with wrist (abs):** a multi tasking pose to chose for skiers, plank not only builds crucial core strength for the skier, it builds strong arms and breeds nice open wrists and forearms for a more relaxed grip on the ski polls. Adding wrist turns steps the stretching up a notch and commands the abs to work harder. A top pick for skiing enthusiasts.

# SWIMMING

- Full range of motion in rotator cuff
- Stronger than average back lats
- Flexible ankles
- Overall power in legs
- Great rotation in neck
- Superior breath control



Common Injuries: shoulder strain and tendonitis, tightness in neck, hip flexor problems, chest back strain



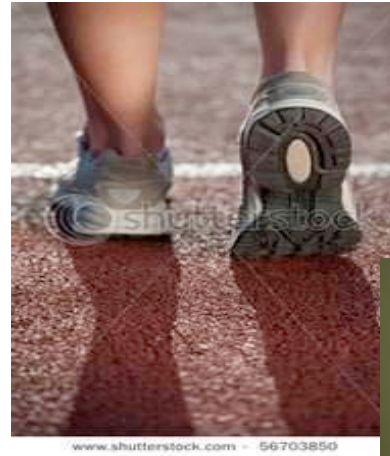


# TOP 5 POSES SWIMMING

- Face down shoulder stretch:** a clear favorite for the swimmer to enhance the range of motion in not only the entire shoulder but the chest as well. This will increase power against the water.
- Open chest stretch on ball:** to counter balance the forward contraction of the chest in strokes like the breast stroke and crawl. This pose will open the back and spine and chest. Also an open chest increases lung capacity something of great concern for the best breath possible on swimming.
- Pigeon quad stretch:** although range of motion is not huge in swimming the power of the legs can make or break a champion. Opening hips and quads will allow the power needed against the resistance of the water.
- Warrior 2 arm circles:** holding warrior 2 opens groin inner thigh and strengthens the legs and hips, lowering into a right angle variation and circling the arm simulates big range of motion in swimming prepping the shoulder for a great race.
- Wheel of life:** a great way to open the spine while fully supported by the floor and being able to sink in. This pose is unique in that it enables you to stretch the neck and achieve full rotation, chin over shoulder. Being able to execute this movement will make achieving an inhale to the side in the crawl an effortless feat. Not many poses allow you to open the neck without effort this does. Soon a favorite of the swimmer. It opens the spine which adds the effortless turns of direction pushing off the pool wall.

# RUNNERS

- Incredible mind control
- Better than average breathing technique
- Open flexible hamstrings
- Open flexible quadriceps and hip flexors
- Toned and clear ankles and plantar fascia
- Back extension
- Relaxed shoulders



Common Injuries: back strain, shoulder fatigue, hamstring leg strains, quad strains, foot cramping and tendonitis, ankle sprains,





# TOP 5 POSES RUNNERS

Half side squat: runners should get in the habit of doing this pose to open the inner thigh groin deeply; also it will stretch the Achilles tendon calves and deep hips. This is important for healthy long term running before and after taking to the street.

Standing forward bend against the wall: Most people will perform standing forward bend seated, it has been my experience that this is frustrating to athletes and they make little progress over years of trying because they are doing it wrong and over stretching the back. We all know that stretching the hamstrings is very important to runners, folding over and leaning your back against the wall to open the hammies is very deep and you will get results faster when you do this regularly and for a 3-5 minute hold.

Hero's pose toes tucked/untucked: kneeling in hero's will keep nice flexion in the knees as well as stretching the quadriceps. Keeping the toes untucked first and holding for 2-3 minutes you will also stretch deep into the shin which is hard to access and open the top of the foot to increase range of motion in the ankle for greater power to push off and increased quickness. Doing the toes tucked version will intensely open the Achilles tendon and plantar fascia (bottom of the foot, arch area) as well the bottoms of the toes which all three together also increases the ankles range of motion and makes for a smoother easier more effortless run.

# RUNNERS 4-5

**Pigeon pose with quad variation:** Pigeon pose is a beloved position for runners as it is the key to release the hips, glutes and relieve sciatic pain. Bending the back leg to add a quad stretch to the position will do just that open the quad and deep hip flexor for better range of motion. All this together will also help to alleviate stress on the back as well, anytime you keep the hips more open and supple you will in turn decrease stress and strain on the knees.

**Lying psoas stretch:** this stretch will release the deepest hip flexor to increase the range of the hips and again strain and excess pull on the low back that can plague runners on a daily basis.

# POSES FOR ALL ATHLETES TO BUILD CORE STRENGTH

- Boat
- Boat knee ins
- Wipers
- Plank hold
- Forearm plank hold
- Side plank oblique touches
- Plank knee to elbow, knee to forehead , knee to opposite elbow
- Twisted root abdominal
- Back bend
- Standing crescent
- Triangle
- Leg raises
- Side forearm plank hip kisses

# Q & A

- Visualization techniques: what are they, how to use them in teaching PYFS... I recommend the book Mind Gym as a teaching aid to inspire your athletes to work visualization into their programs. Visualization is a form of mental training, and in a nut shell tricks the brain into thinking it can already do things it is currently only training to do.
- Working with injuries (knee, shoulder, hip)...working with injury is a topic you will encounter every day, as we expressed in the program once they are cleared to workout with you , you can go ahead and conservatively go in and teach. Concentrating on all the surrounding joints and muscles to the actual injury, as they are assuredly tight from compensation and armoring.
- Good pre-practice or post-practice routines (poses)...each sport will have their favorites but refer to long holds for every sport page.
- Poses for tight hamstrings (series) ...tight hamstrings are a common theme, the only true remedy is a motivated athlete. Hamstrings have to be addressed every day in order to make improvements. Try standing forward bend, standing forward bend against the wall. Pigeon, and plow 5 minute holds everyday
- Teaching how to let go of competitive edge, build mental endurance... again I cannot recommend the book Mind Gym enough check it out and read it every year and read it to your athletes. Visualization and mental training techniques are something you should commit to studying for the rest of your life to improve athletes game.

# Q & A

- The primary role of joints...movement ,flex bones ,Gives skeleton mobility, hold the skeleton together
- The primary role of the nervous system...The nervous system has three basic functions: sensory neurons receive information from the sensory receptors, interneurons transfer and interpret impulses, and motor neurons send appropriate impulses/instructions to the muscles and glands.
- Assessment techniques - how to evaluate
- Developmental stages of an athlete - at different ages and effects on bones, muscles and injury... copy this link for a valuable chart to study...

<http://www.canoe-england.org.uk/media/pdf/Balyi%20-%20Characteristics%20of%20Physical%20Mental%20and%20Emotional%20Development.pdf>

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# MORE QUESTIONS

- How to conduct a class of athletes - voice, structure...always pull your your most confident voice, for full command of athletes attention. Make sure you are sure about what you are teaching and can answer questions on the fly.
- Restorative practices for athletes in general & for recovery from an injury...see long deep holds page as it applies to all sports
- Best breathing techniques for specific sports...<http://www.livestrong.com/article/381244-breathing-techniques-in-sports/>

# RECOVERY Q & A

-Which poses to teach when student has back pain?. There is no short answer but Back pain is almost always associated with tight hamstrings. When back is in peril go to standing forward bend, (as long as the athlete is not acute), downward facing dog, and seated spinal twists both ways, be sure they are cleared by a doctor to accept your help.

Upper, lower, shoulders, work spinal twists and spinal flexion and extension, to take the pressure off the demand in the shoulders

-Which poses to teach when student has knee surgery/bad knees? Always make sure they are cleared to train, open surrounding muscles to the knee quad stretches, hamstring stretches and hips hips hips, the best way to release the knees from strain is to open the hips as mentioned in the program.

-Which poses to teach when student has had hip replacement? Once the student is cleared regular poses that work their hip rotation with pigeons and frogs, but also strength of the leg with warriors and their variations

-Which poses to teach when student has spinal injuries? Be very cautious and make sure you are confident and sure otherwise hold off or refer them, but this is hard to answer without specifics of the injury, and help of their doctor.

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# Q & A


- Which poses to teach when student has neck injuries? Always consult their Dr. for clearance to do yoga and avoid weight bearing inversion until cleared, gentle plow pose with props and blankets and back extending poses to help take up the slack of the limited neck.
- Which poses to teach when student has carpal tunnel? Try table pose wrist turns to open the carpal tunnel and release tension, if weight bearing on the floor is too much do wrist turns on the wall until you are ready, once mastered in table go to plank wrist turns.
- Which poses should you AVOID teaching in all of these situations? Always depends on the individual you are teaching and their history, with the neck avoid weight bearing inversions and with the wrists, while they are in an acute stage avoid chaturanga and jump backs and also arm balances
- What are 3 of the most strength building poses? Three I like are plank holds for 1-3 minutes a full body challenge, handstands against wall 1 minute, warrior one with variations for longer holds 1-3 minutes
- What are 3 of the most restorative poses? Definitely do heavy legs on the wall, open chest stretch on a ball, and reclining cobbles



# Q & A

- What does vinyasa mean? Breath synchronized yoga poses often associated with a continual flowing series of poses
- What does asana mean? It is the Sanskrit word for pose in yoga
- What is pranayama? The art of breathing control
- What are the major benefits of meditation? Can never narrow it down read this...  
<http://www.ineedmotivation.com/blog/2008/05/100-benefits-of-meditation/>
- How do I get started meditating and how do I keep it consistent?... Read 8 Minute Meditation for great guidance
- What is prana? It is Sanskrit for “vital life” Prana refers to the essential subtle energy that underlies all of reality.
- How do inversions affect blood pressure? You should check with your doctor about your individual case, but standard medical advice for people whose blood pressure is controlled on medication is to engage in exercise and other healthy activities that a person with normal blood pressure would do. Therefore, it seems reasonable that you can safely introduce inversions if you do so gradually. In fact, inversions trigger several reflexes that temporarily reduce blood pressure, so theoretically, regular practice may enhance treatment of your high blood pressure. Note, however, that people whose high blood pressure is not under control should bring the pressure down first by other means before practicing inversions.
- When should we not teach inversions? Why? anyone who has high blood pressure, heart related problems, eye issues (seen floaters in eye), neck problems, epilepsy, previous stroke or sinus problems should never practice Headstand or Shoulderstand, and omit other mild inversions or be adjusted by the yoga teacher.  
During any stage of pregnancy, yoga should be practiced in a prenatal yoga classes specifically designed for that purpose or privately with a qualified pregnancy yoga teacher.  
During menstruation, Headstand and Shoulderstand pose should preferably be avoided and other milder inversions should not be hold for long, although at the end of the day it is your personal choice.

# EVERY SPORT THINGS TO THINK ON

- What are the repetitive motions - look at videos and pictures
  - The poses to keep muscles, joints, ligaments, tendons open for the specific motions
  - The counter poses to work opposing muscles to retain symmetry
  - Look at individual athletes and their particularities (ex. Lindsey and lordosis) and what would be effective in treating
  - What are the common injuries in a particular sport and how to prevent
  - How can you predict what injuries could occur
  - Suggestions for an abbreviated home routine to give to the athletes
- 
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# THINGS TO THINK ON WHEN TEACHING

- What are you passionate about and how will you communicate it through your teaching?
- Why is it important to focus on the transitions as well as the poses themselves?
- transition between poses.
- write a sequence of 5-10 poses
- your warm-up sequence
- think knee-protecting foot and leg placement at all times
- adjustments you'll often do on your students.
- where in the training cycle your athlete may be
- if they have past or present injuries
- what are possible injuries for the sport or position you are working with

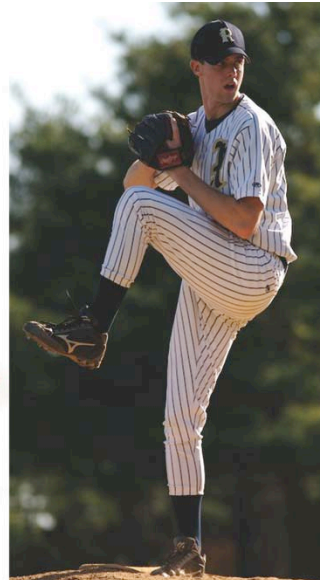
# WHAT EVERY PYFS CLASS SHOULD INCLUDE

- Motivated willing athletes, with a serious mind set to excel
- Warm up poses, suggest the kundalini warm ups, seated twist opposite arm opposite leg, reclining cobbles butterfly with hold,
- A series of poses appropriate to the sport and the position
- Breath work and reminders to incorporate breath peppered throughout the entire practice
- Long deep hold relevant to the sport and position at the end
- Some sort of final resting pose, savasana, with guided meditation or reading from a sports psychology book...which is their recovery

# Power Yoga for Sports

**STAY COMFORTABLE IN AN UNCOMFORTABLE  
SITUATION**

**THAT'S WHAT MAKES A  
GOOD ATHLETE  
GREAT!!**



# REQUIRED READING

Mind Gym,

Clean, Alejandro Junger

8 Minute Meditation, Victor Davich

Power Yoga for Sports Pose Book, Gwen Lawrence

Stopping Inflammation Nancy Appleton

Body Mind Sport, John Douliard

Yoga for Athletes, Aladar Kogler

The 7 Secrets of World Class Athletes, Steven Yellin

The Mental Athlete, Kay Porter

Athletes Plate, Adam Kelson

# MANIFESTO

Don't look for the exit door

Find comfort in an uncomfortable situation

Pain Is temporary

Everything you are is a result of everything you think

Breathe

Check your ego at the door

Don't go to Florida when you only need to go to New Jersey

Talk it out, out loud

Ask Why!!

There is no can't, should or try

I am temporarily unable to comply

You'll achieve it in two weeks

Strength + flexibility = Power

Be inspired and humbled everyday

Trying is an excuse for future failure

Fearlessness

Change your habit and you automatically become conscious

Visualize change

Look feel and realize

Be positive

NOW!

The greatest form of suffering is in attachment

Be less reactive

Good is the enemy of Great!