

Describing Classes

I Spinal (C-S-S-C) / Global: This class is foundational to all the others. Explore movement techniques and integrate awareness with focus on spaciousness, alignment and the relationships of your head, neck, ribcage, spine and pelvis. The next 10 classes will use this information, these strategies, as a base layer as we expand on different regions of the body.

II Lower Extremities: Building upon the foundations of spinal organization we will further align, mobilize (stretch/balance) and stabilize (strengthen/balance) the feet, ankles, knees and hips and pelvis by way of working with the myofascia and links

III Upper Extremities: Although we do not 'leave behind' the lower extremities and certainly not the axial body, our focus will be on the fingers, hands, wrists, elbows and shoulders and shoulder girdle for this class. In fact every class focusses first on the spine and then on the extremities. We will learn and organize so that we are strong, mobile and resilient in functional ways. For this class, and all the classes, we work from where we are, building our capacity/abilities, respecting and navigating our challenges or limitations.

IV Pelvis: We have a goal with all our joints to help them to stay hydrated, in nice alignment/relationship, able to move in all the ways that they are structurally designed to move and respond. This is amply true for the joints and tissues of the pelvis. We will work with how our pelvis participates with our low back and our whole back; our abdomen and our whole front; our thighs, right down to the soles of our feet ... and keep going from there (without forgetting about our arms).

V Lumbar: Our 'low backs' need our love! Of course there will be overlay of exercises from other classes that we get to repeat and further explore through-out the sessions. We want healthy spinal curvatures, hydrated intervertebral discs, strategies to mitigate compressive forces in life and segmental motion so that we feel less stiff and rigid.

We do not use much equipment. Typically we will start in standing and then move down to the floor and spend most of the class down on the mat... sitting in various ways: legs tucked up, legs outstretched, one leg doing this, the other leg doing that; laying in various ways: on our back, our belly, our sides; kneeling: hands and knees, knees and feet.... Never only on our hands :)

Props may be used to support your comfortable ability to be in the positions. Ideally they are used minimally and are an individual modification to support the posture or exercise to be most effective. We will discuss and find these, as need be, in class.

VI Thoracic: This region is that of our ‘ribcage spine’ or ‘middle back. It is the longest area of our spine and therefore the tallest also! We will learn and practice, learn and practice, accessing the regions of our ‘lower back ribs’ our middle ribcage’ and our ‘upper back ribs’ so that when we get to the actual Ribcage class we have a more clear foundation from which to build upon! So many moving parts! So many linked connections!

VII Cervical: Our neck area actually functionally starts down in the upper T-spine, and extends up to meet the skull at our occiput. The cervical area houses the hyoid bone and has very direct connections with our jaw, floor of the mouth, hyoid bone and the great structures within including the voice box, trachea, esophagus, cervical and brachial plexus, lymphatic structures, carotid and jugular structures and more! I look forward to hearing how you feel after this class (and really, after all of our classes!)

Of course All our ‘regions’ have important organs, glands, digestive, circulatory and neural structures that are of valid consideration. These tissues are affected by the way we use and move our bodies and therefore the exercises /movements /efforts that happen in class. With improved tissue health there is improved circulation and lymphatic movement, improved digestive and organic motility, improved sensation and motor skill/control.

VIII Abdomen: Yes we will recruit and develop our abdominal wall musculature in healthy and strategic ways to support spinal curvatures and further build core stability, endurance and power. There are many variations we can learn so that we feel more robustly strong! You might think that you can’t yet I know that you can!

Since we each are working from different starting places, with our own unique set of circumstances naturally not every exercise will be ‘for everyone’. There is value to resting, listening, trying, stopping when appropriate, being curious, patient, and doing the best we can. This is true for all the classes.

IX Ribcage: This nuanced area has many moving parts and is a foundation for the shoulder girdle. Let us fine-tune the joints and muscles, as we create space, mobility, strength, resilience and organization of the whole! This class will help us feel more long/tall in our thoracic spine and have more dimension in our posture.

When I say ‘joints’ and ‘muscles’ what I really mean is the Fascia of these structures! The myofascia, the articular fascia and their connections and relationships. The fascia is very intelligent so we are clever to work with the body through this lens!

X Proprioception: The intelligence of our joints relies on the receptors of the ligaments and articular capsules informing our brain about position and movement in space. Then we can balance, control and move with more co-ordination, agility and grace. It is true that we will be developing our sense of proprioception in all classes yet these specific exercises will guide us to be more sure and aware of managing our joint in space.

XI ELDOA: In case we spend so much time warming up, stretching, strengthening and just not doing enough ELDOA in all the other classes, this class is dedicated to focus on it!! ELDOA brings it all together. The rewards from all our hard work are realized here :) Let’s have fun and do these brilliant 60 second exercises and then feel great afterwards!

XII Restorative /Parasympathetic: And..... since I hardly ever leave enough time for a good ‘Savasana’, let us have a full class to practice /experience Relaxation! We may do some ‘yin-inspired’ slow stretches, breathing techniques, meditation, and explore Be-ing rather than Do-ing to invite parasympathetic activation for an overall restorative session.

Well, this is my current attempt to summarize and give a brief description of classes. It is in no way ‘set in stone’ and, in fact, I welcome you to share with me how you would describe these unique and potent classes.