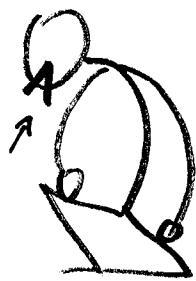


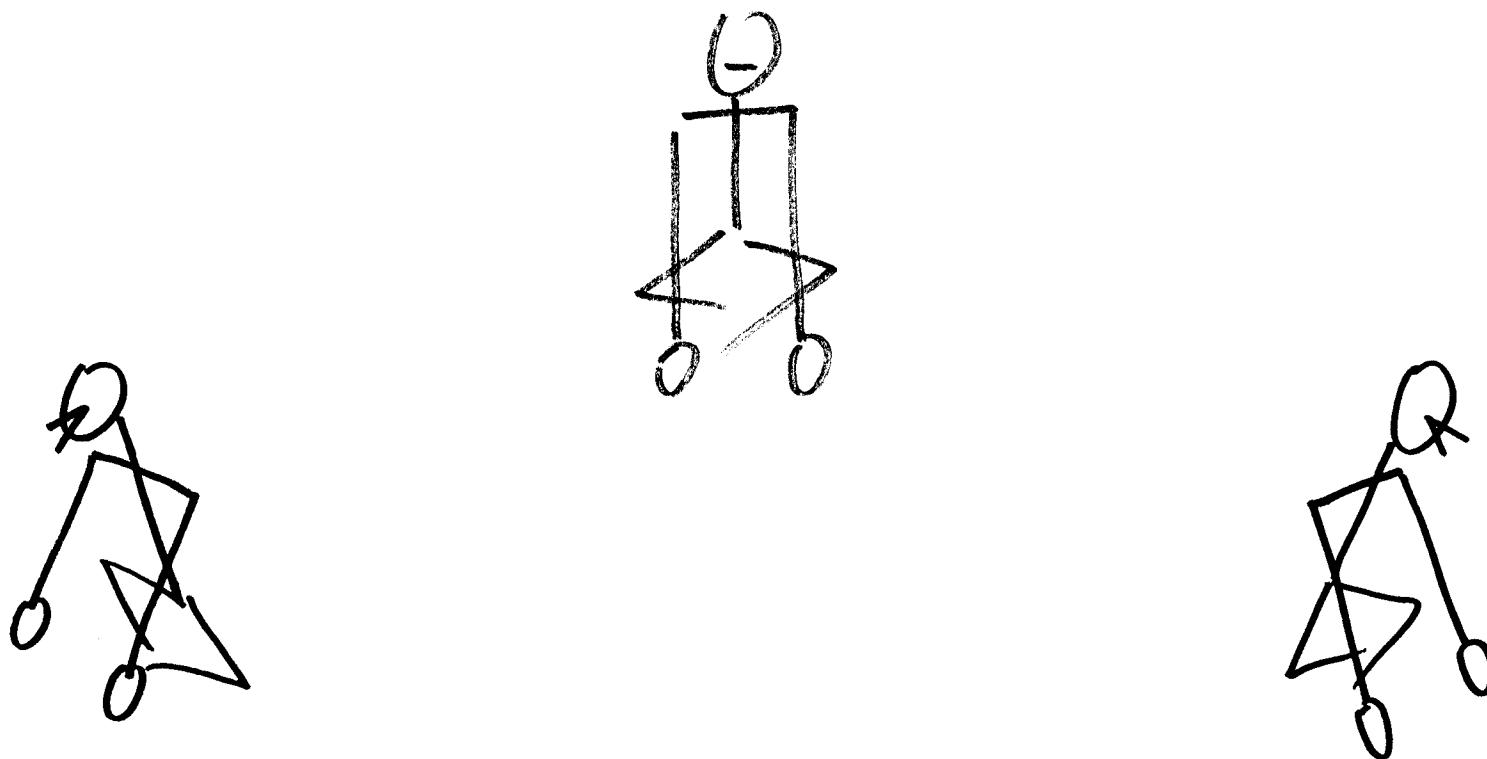
1. Sit on the floor with the legs crossed and the spine lengthened. Feel the length of the spine all the way up into the skull. The spine actually intersects into the skull halfway up the back of the head. Think of the back lengthening and widening. Slowly inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Repeat five times. Take the time to do this slowly, it helps the body to relax, lowers the blood pressure and allows the mind to focus.



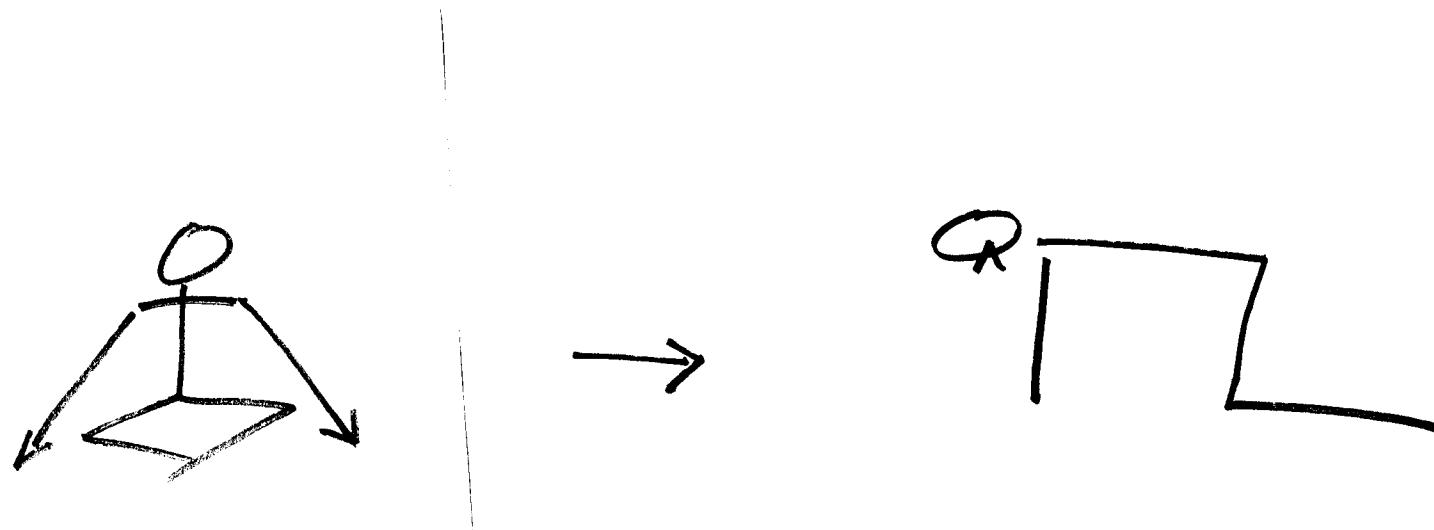
2. Contract the abdominal muscles with the spine curving outward as you exhale. Imagine that you are contracting around a large beach ball. Beginning at the base of the spine - lengthen up through the spine as you inhale. Repeat sequence five times. Return to original sitting position with spine lengthened.



3. Lean forward, place your palms on the floor, keeping the spine straight and lengthened right up through the skull - inhale and exhale five times - return to center position . (inhale and exhale) twist upper torso to the right - lean forward with your hands on the floor on either side of your right knee and repeat the inhalation and exhalation five times - return to center position, (inhale and exhale) now twist upper torso to the left with your hands on the floor on either side of your left knee (and repeat the inhalation and exhalation five times. Return to center position. Inhale and exhale.



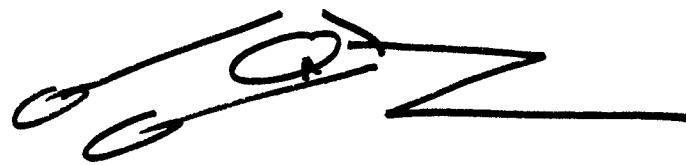
4. Extend your arms to the side with the fingertips on the floor -keeping the back lengthened as if body were a perfect triangle- if you can, push yourself forward on your knees until you are positioned on your hands and knees, if your knees are a bit stiff (as mine are now) just take the position on the floor with your weight evenly divided on hands and knees . Inhale and exhale.



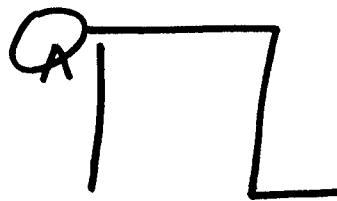
5. Exhale and contract spine down to the floor allowing the hips and head to lift up with your spine contracts down in a U shape, Inhale - arching the spine up as you inhale. Think of a cat arching and stretching. Repeat five times: exhale contracting down and inhale arching up.



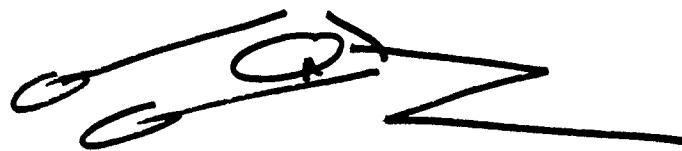
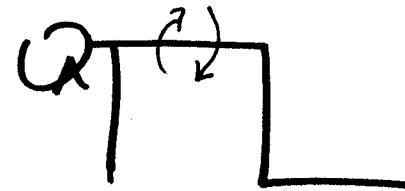
6. Push forward with your hands placing the body in the "pray" position as in yoga, with your hands stretched out in front of you and your head on the floor. Inhale and exhale five times. Push back to the hands and knees position.



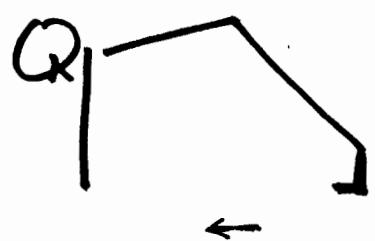
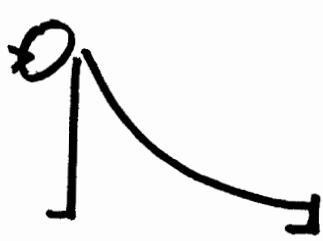
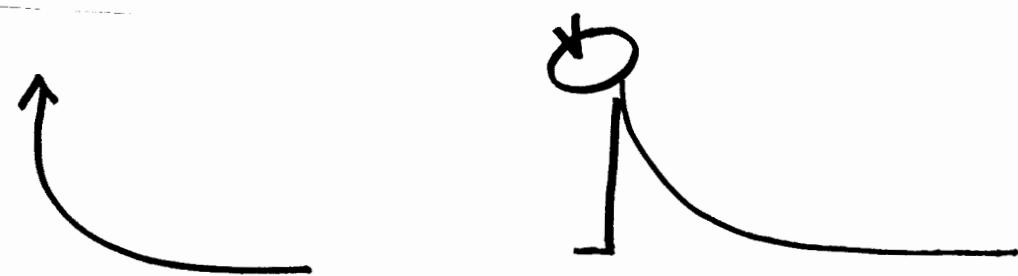
7. As you are balanced on your hands and knees, exhale, then inhale extending the rib cage to the right and make a circle with the body -five times to the right and then reverse circle and extend the rib cage in a circle to the left five times. Inhale as the body arches upwards and exhale as the body moves downwards, then reverse the process. Return to the "pray" position.



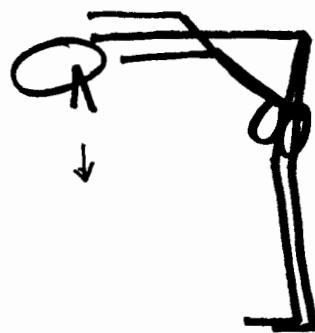
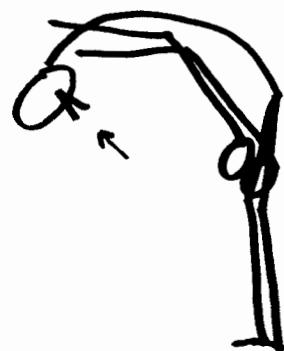
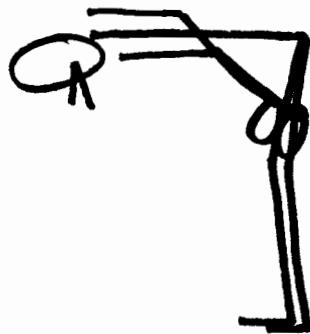
.....



8. Keeping your palms on the floor, inhale as you push forward from the 'pray position' following your nose until you have arched the body upwards - the head is arched back so that you can see the ceiling, push back into the "pray" position as you exhale. Repeat four times. On the fifth stretch upwards, tuck your toes under you and push up, stretching the back of the legs - then walk your feet towards your head - keeping the palms on the floor - feel the spine lengthened and then come up slowly vertebra by vertebra as you inhale. Stop when your hands are level with your knees.



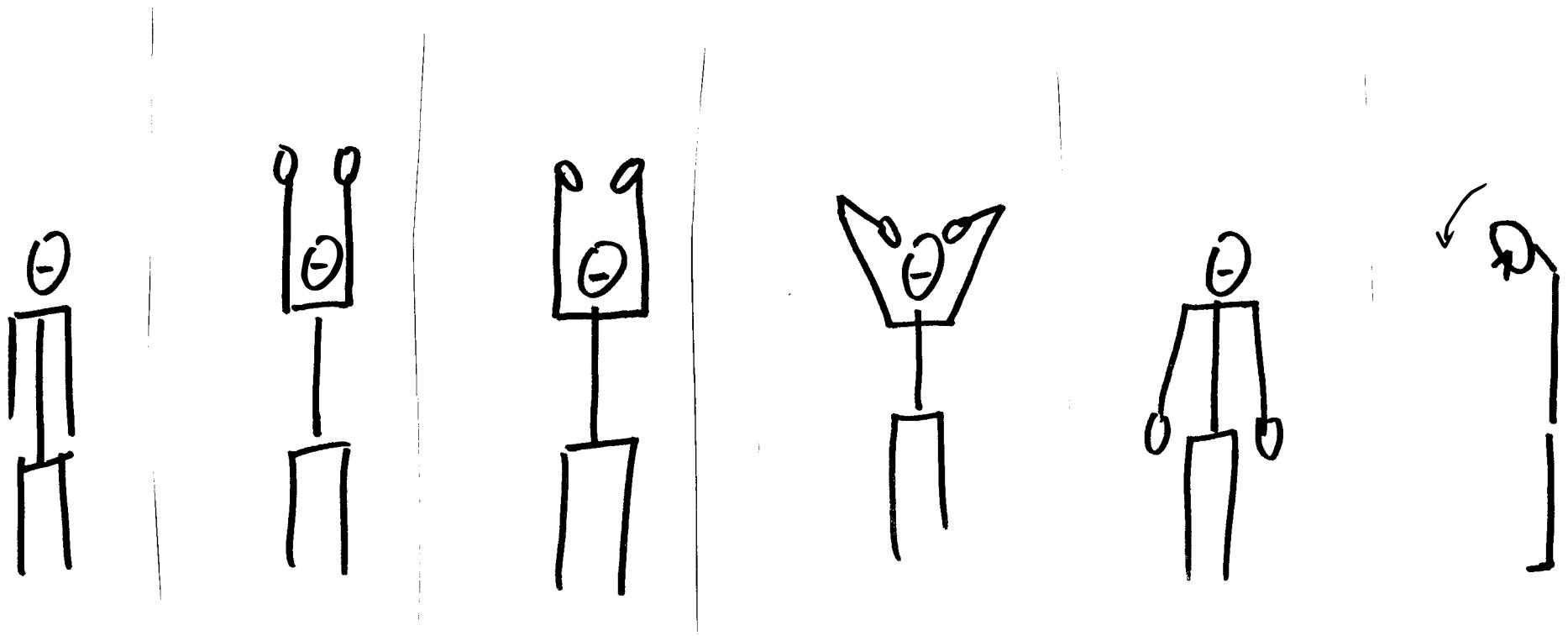
9. Place your hands on your knees and flatten the spine until it is flattened as you exhale -now inhale arching spine upwards then exhale and flatten. Repeat four times and on the fifth, roll up through the spine to neutral



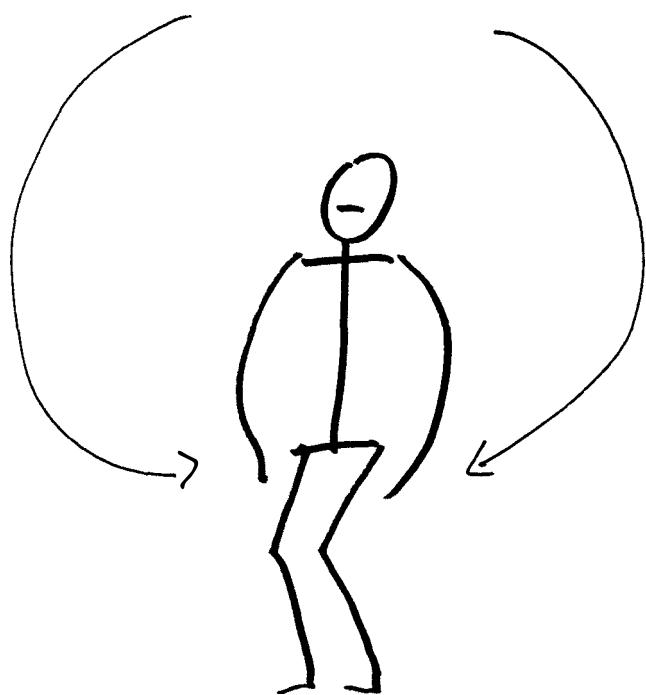
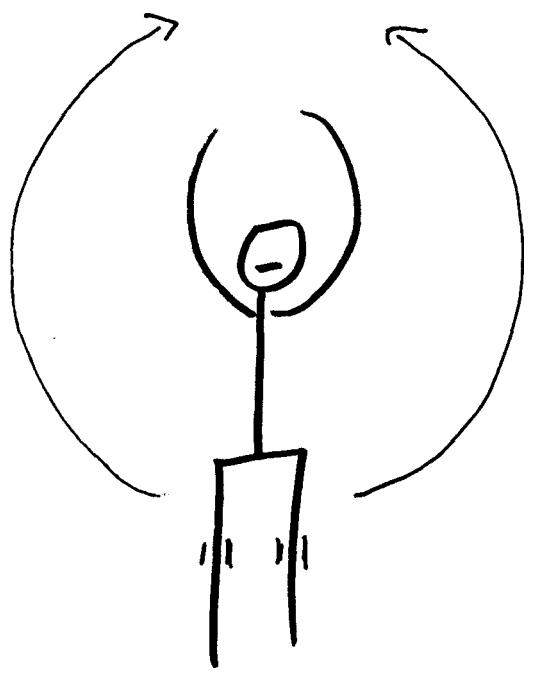
10. From a standing position rotate your hips in a circle rotating the hip from the waist and the knees -inhale as the body swings right and then exhale as the body swings to the left. Rather like a old fashioned hula hoop. Inhale as the body swings right and exhale as the body swings left again repeat five times Return to neutral position



11. Reach up to the ceiling, stretch as far as you can - then let the hands, elbows, shoulders, upper arms, head, and upper torso drop as we did in the "Rag Doll Exercise" as you exhale. Drop your head on your chest and roll down as you exhale. Hanging from the base of the spine come up slowly, vertebra by vertebra ,to a standing position with the body in alignment.



12. Let the hips drop into a sitting position, bring your finger-tips together, exhale now inhale and bring the arms up in a wide circle above your head, this bring your rib cage up with you, keep rib cage elevated and bring arms down on a slow inhale.



13. Stand in neutral position with your upper torso elevated over your lower torso with your pelvis under your and your weight on both feet. Hold focus. Inhale turning the head to the right - exhale turning head to left - inhale again to the right, -exhale to the left. Inhale and return head to center - a hold focus straight ahead as you inhale and exhale.



Illustrations done by Clare Hane