

BARTENIEFF FUNDAMENTALS: THE BASIC 6

Rocking Preparation

Purpose:

- To bring awareness and encouragement to movement relationships amongst heels, pelvis, spine, and head
- To induce reciprocal actions of hamstrings vs. iliopsoas-heels connected to pelvic floor & sitz-bones

Action:

Gentle rocking motion (legs bent or straight; heels on floor);

Initiate from the heels (hamstrings) or the core (iliopsoas)

- ankles flex - pelvis rocks back
- ankles extend - pelvis rocks forward

Initiation: from the heels or the core (iliopsoas)

Thigh Lift (hip flexion)

Purpose:

- To flex the hip most efficiently with iliopsoas without superficial muscles.
- Encourage deep folding in inguinal area during hip flexion.
- Awareness of subtle pelvic tilt.
- Use hamstrings for grounding in 'standing' leg.
- Use of reciprocal crossed-extensor-reflex between hamstrings and iliopsoas.
- Use of breath abdominal 'hollowing' to promote iliopsoas initiation.

Action:

Pre-Thigh-Lift: On back, legs extended along floor.

- With breath (exhale) stimulating iliopsoas, leg flexes till foot is on floor
- On extension, hamstrings push heels away from sitz-bones (ischium)
- Two legs can alternate flex-extend in a crossed-extensor-reflex.

Thigh-lift: On back, legs bent, feet flat on floor

- With breath stimulating iliopsoas, leg flexes till foot is off floor
- On extension, hamstrings push heels down into floor (away from ischium)
- Two legs can alternate flex-extend in a crossed-extensor-reflex.

Initiation: from core, breath, encouraging iliopsoas

Pelvic Forward Shift

Purpose:

- Mobilise forward & backward transfers of weight.
- Use of hamstrings to shift pelvis forward from the pelvic floor
- Connection between heels and sitz-bones.

Action: On back, legs bent, feet on floor

- Breath stimulating iliopsoas, preparation of torso concaving / convexing
- Initiate with exhale, abdominal hollowing (psoas)
- pelvic floor (sitz-bones) up & towards heels (hamstrings)

- Inguinal area opens with hip extension
- Inhale, sitz-bones reach down & towards heels,
- lumbar lengthens, hips flex, Inguinal area folds

Pelvic Lateral Shift

Purpose:

- Mobilize lateral transfers of weight without any twisting or lifting the hip
- Use pelvic floor, together with hamstrings, to flex and abduct/adduct at hip.

Action: On back, legs bent, feet on floor

- Initiate with exhale, hollowing, hamstrings lift pelvis into small forward shift
- Initiate from pelvic floor; lateral shift of greater trochanters in a straight line
- Lower pelvis to floor (as in pelvic forward shift)
- Repeat, bringing the pelvis back to centre.
- Repeat other side.

Body Half

Purpose:

- Awareness of the vertical mid-line of the body
- Stabilize one half of the body, supporting mobility in the other half.

Action: Lie in 'big X' position

- Initiate with exhale, hollowing for core support
- Supporting side lengthens, stabilizes body (without twisting or rocking)
- simultaneously mobile side shrinks - head & elbow towards knee
- Reverse stable & mobile body sides

Diagonal Knee Reach ("Knee Drop")

Purpose:

- Awareness of lower-body twisting against upper-body
- Awareness of pelvic floor and iliopsoas as connecting upper to lower

Action: On back, knees bent, feet flat on floor.

- Weight shifts to edges of feet, both knees reach to the side, pelvis slightly twists
- Opposite shoulder reaches in diagonally opposite direction along floor
- Initiate with exhale (hollowing - psoas) pulling pelvis & knees back to upright
- Reverse to other side.

Arm Circles & Diagonal Sit-ups

Purpose:

- Awareness of arm-shoulder-scapula-latissimus connecting to lower body
- Awareness of full 3-dimensional graduated rotation in shoulder joints
- Integration of head-eyes with arm movement
- Narrowing and widening across sternum

Action:

Arm Circle: On back, knees bent, feet flat on floor.

- Arm reaches in a circle, over the head, narrowing, over pelvis, to the side
- 'Distal steering' of hand encourages continual gradated rotation throughout
- Track the hand with head-eyes
- Sternum-chest narrows, lifts, widens etc. together with arm circle
- Repeat with other arm

Action: Arm Circle with diagonal sit-up

- On back, knees bent, feet flat on floor.
- Same as arm circle, except full sit-up (slightly twisted torso) as arm circles
- Both arms participate in the circle
- Lower from sit-up on other diagonal, arms leading down diagonal to floor

An alternate version of the last fundamental is the “**X-Roll**” which is more elaborate but also explores the diagonal connection of lower to upper and upper to lower.

X-Roll

Purpose:

- Awareness of arm-shoulder-scapula-latissimus connecting to lower body
- Awareness of full 3-dimensional gradated rotation in all joints
- Integration of head-eyes with arm movement
- Narrowing and widening across sternum, through torso and in pelvic halves

Action: Arm initiates rotation and roll throughout body on a contra-lateral pathway

Arm medially or laterally rotates initiating from hand.

- 'Distal steering' of hand encourages continual gradated rotation throughout the length of the body along the contralateral path
- The head-eyes track the hand
- Torso throughout shapes to allow for contralateral pathway
- Repeat with other arm

Action: Leg initiates rotation and roll throughout body on a contra-lateral pathway

Leg medially or laterally rotates initiating from hand.

- 'Distal steering' of leg encourages continual gradated rotation throughout the length of the body along the contralateral path
- Torso throughout shapes to allow for contralateral pathway
- Repeat with other leg

References:

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