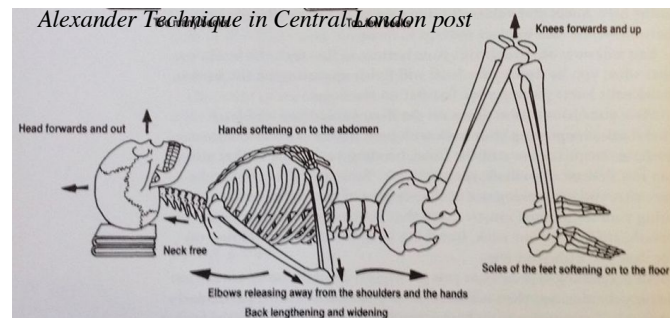


Some of the things we discussed that came up for you in the Constructive Rest Practice

24 April, 2020

- We discussed the importance of making sure that we're comfortable in our body when we're resting in Constructive Rest. If we're not, our mind will focus on the discomfort. If needed, supporting the head on a small pillow or book ensures that head is in line with the spine and throat is softened; if there's too much pressure on the lower back, placing something soft under it can be helpful; using a long fabric (like a scarf) tied around the thighs, close to the knees, or placing a blanket over the legs, will keep the knees from falling out. It's okay to shift from our back into other ways of resting. Rolling onto our side for a while, or even onto our knees with our torso folded over our thighs (in the yoga child position), can give our body a beneficial break. We can continue to focus on our breathing in these other situations. When we then return onto our backs, we might find that our back has opened a bit more, becoming perhaps a little wider and more lengthened, and we're able to rest in Constructive Rest again.
- It's easy for the mind to drift. Sometimes, even just arriving is difficult, as many monkey thoughts get in the way. Trying to push these monkey thoughts away doesn't work. Accepting what is; shifting our focus to our breathing – breathing connects us to the present moment; not trying to be good or do too much, but instead, letting what needs to happen, happen, are more effective ways to still the mind. Resting in Constructive Rest is such a simple, yet profound, practice. Understanding that we don't have to achieve anything, or be perfect allows us to sink into a more total restfulness. We can dive from the surface into the depths of our body, into ourselves.
- It's possible that, initially, we might fall asleep. However, if we continue to be consistent with our practice, we might find that, in time, we can sustain a state of calm alertness, that allows us to be present and aware, yet quiet and peaceful. Our tranquility gives us space to be able to notice the smallest seeds and ripples of movement and change happening inside of us.
- When we stay focused on tension, we often become more tense. When we notice ease, and keep returning to ease, generally we become more easeful and internally spacious. Movement becomes more accessible. It's more beneficial if we notice ease, so why not focus on that?
- It takes time to let go, to drop deeper. When we give the process time, we're giving time for change to be able to happen – weight becomes more accessible, places of holding can let go, and our body can release into the floor - we can feel our body from the inside. There is a difference between feeling that something is easy, and experiencing ease happening as our body sinks and spreads, and becomes more at one with the floor.
- Images are helpful. We can use them to enhance our experiences. For instance: watching the belly button rising and falling, and imagining that we breathe from there, helps make the movement of breathing more tangible; imagining the bones of our legs as sticks can take away unnecessary effort from our muscles. Using images we connect with is important. We can make up the images that work for us.
- Our attention is generally pulled back to the places in our body that are most familiar to us. Taking the time to be able to notice details, gives us the opportunity to discover those places that are new and unfamiliar. We need to remain curious, and be open to entering the as-yet-unknown.



The ongoing practice of Constructive Rest

The Constructive Rest Position is a constructive way to rest.

In Constructive Rest, we lie on our backs with knees bent, feet either flat on the floor, or lower legs resting on a low couch or chair.

To make sure that the head is not falling back, we can place a book or small pillow under the skull, making sure to give the neck space, so it can lengthen.

From the head, we can breathe along the length of the spine, all the way down to the tail – spine, like a string of pearls, resting.

Arms can rest on the floor or on the belly; we can let the shoulders fall open and breathe along the length of the arms, beyond the fingertips.

We can watch the rise and fall of the belly on each in and out breath,

Letting thighs and lower legs hang from the knees, we can let the thighs sink deep into soft hip socket,

and watch heels drop as the front of the feet open, like fans. We can let our feet feel the support of the floor rising.

Support rises from the floor into the whole resting body, so we can let go of weight and spend some time, observing our breathing.

Tasks to add this week

1. While observing your breathing, place your hands on different parts of your body to sense the movement of your breathing.

Make sure you place your hands high up, around your shoulder area, to feel the movement created by the expansion and softening of the upper lobes of your lungs;

make sure you place your hands over the middle and lower parts of your rib basket,

to feel the movement created by the expansion and softening of the middle and lower lobes of your lungs;

make sure you place your hands over your belly and pelvis, to feel the movement of your breathing in the lower areas of your torso;

make sure you place your hands around your head, to feel the movement of your breathing in your head and jaw.

You can have both hands in a similar area; you can place one hand high and the other low; and you can contain your 3-dimensionality in your hands.

Remember the sides of your body.

2. When you're ready, add a gentle hiss to your outbreath.

Make sure you take a few normal in and out-breaths after each long hissing out-breath.

Be sure to empty yourself as completely as possible at the end of your hissing out-breath. This might entail a gentle push to get even the last little bit of air out.

3. When you're ready, add the image of a balloon deflating to your hissing outbreath.

You can place your hands over your heart and belly to help you monitor this softening of your body into the floor.

As your resting deepens, begin to scan through your body, asking yourself the question:

Where do I seem a bit easy? when you locate a place, spend a few moments breathing into this place;

then, when you're ready, scan through your body again, asking yourself the question:

*Where **else** do I seem a bit easy? when you locate another place, spend a few moments breathing into this place,*

Do this a number of times. You can say the question out loud, you can whisper it, or you can say it silently, to yourself.

When you're done, take a moment before rolling onto your side and, if you're doing the practice during the day, push yourself into sitting.

If you're doing it at night, you may even have fallen asleep.

(The wording of the question, 'Where do I seem a bit easy?' is inspired by The Cycle, the initial daily practice of Primal Alexander, the teaching system developed by Mio Morales.)

Continuing with the daily practice of Constructive Rest

Spend at least 10 minutes a day exploring Constructive Rest. Choose when and where you do it.

Good times are before falling asleep at night, or on waking up in the morning - it's an excellent way to end or begin the day.

You can also do it as the beginning of your warm up before training, or at the end of a period of moving.

Keep track of the times you spend in Constructive Rest by recording when and for how long you do it each day, and add a short comment.

If you would like to send me thoughts and questions before we meet, you can email me at: karczag.eva@gmail.com

Please make sure to put your name both inside and in the title of any document you send me.

We'll discuss your observations and questions when we meet online on May 8th.

See you at 09:00 on May 8, 2020

Constructive Rest Diary	27 April – 7 May, 2020
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	when	where	comments
Monday April 27			
Tuesday April 28			
Wednesday April 29			
Thursday April 30			
Friday May 1			
Saturday May 2			
Sunday May 3			
Monday May 4			
Tuesday May 5			
Wednesday May 6			
Thursday May 7			