



## Exploration 5

# Develop Cognitive Link through Evenness

Let's develop perfect balance between both sides of the body using intelligence of body (i.e. instinct, feeling) but not just strength. One has to find the median line in each pose so that energy is properly distributed. Is there an equal stretch, an equal spacing, an equal intensity of movement by working with the whole body?

MY NAME IS \_\_\_\_\_

I began this exploration on (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Give a 'tick' on the list below of those that you have completed:

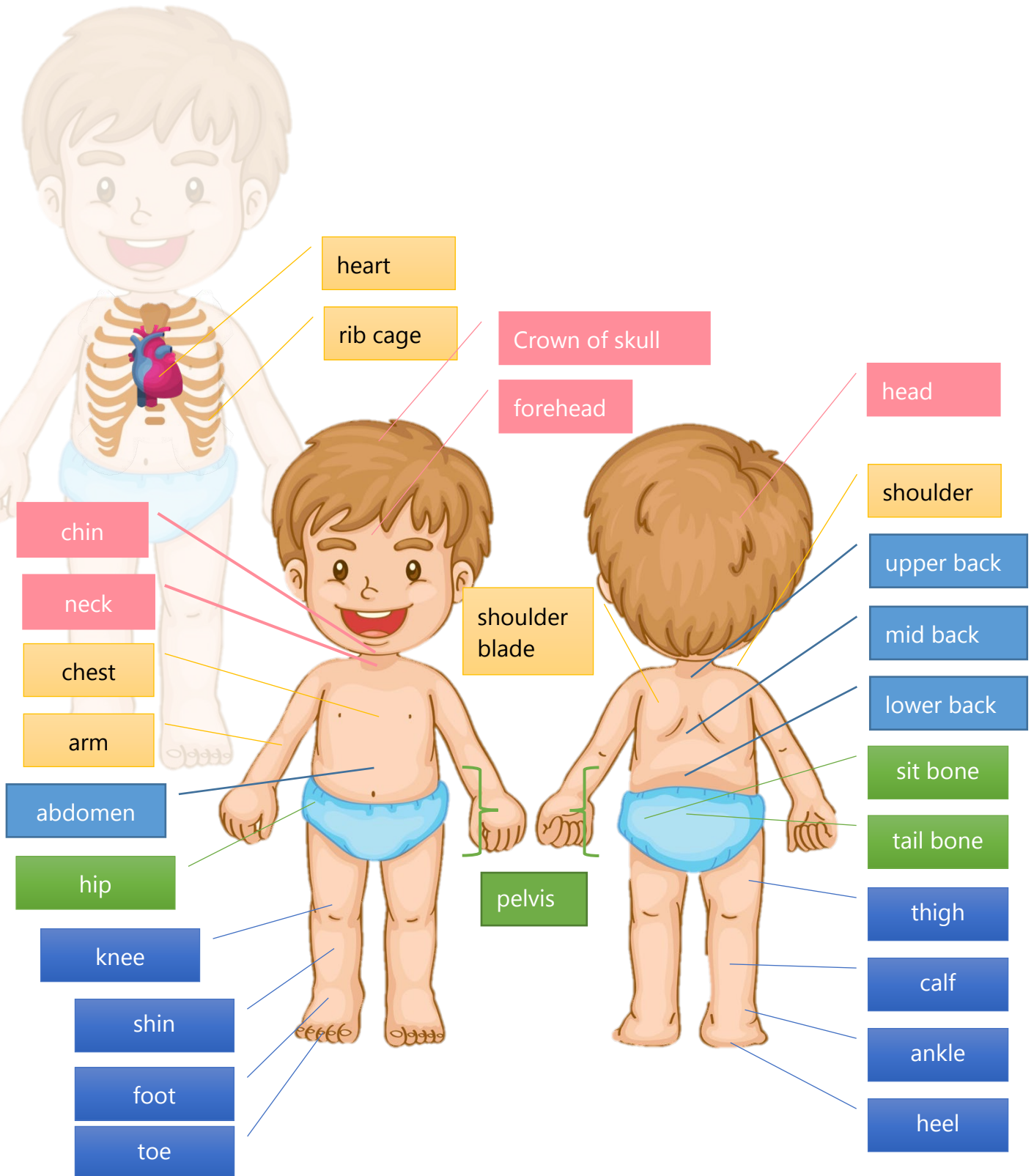
- DAY 1 Matching activity and observing evenness between right and left
- DAY 2 Intensity of stretch from plane to plane
- DAY 3 Observing specifically between back and front
- DAY 4 Observing specifically from top to bottom and bottom to top
- DAY 5 Observing specifically from side to side

Dear Parents,

There should be a mutual understanding between parent and child on this exploration of lightness. The context is elaborated for parent(s) to guide your child into the process of self-discovery. Videos are made available as reference to guide you for better understanding that can be viewed in the members' portal. Also, join our community on the Facebook group page where parents come together to share their involvement, ideas and activities. There could be terms used throughout the exploration which may not be familiar to either one of you, however, you are free to make your own choice of words to describe the actions to improve the communication between parent and child. Enjoy the process of inclusivity, love and self-inquiry.

# My body at a glance

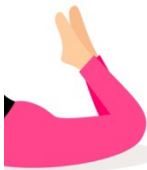
Here is an overview of the parts of our body in which we will be focusing on as we go through a few series of poses in this activity book. Bookmark this sheet as your reference guide, along the way as you discover new poses through the days of discovery.



## Day 1 Matching activity for brain development.

Let us first begin with a simple matching activity that aids in a child's cognitive development, in which it develops a child's problem solving and also encourages one to learn new information, that is to create cognitive link between visual clues and words. Matching and sorting are early stages of math development.

Draw a line to connect each picture with its other half.



## Day 1 Observing evenness between

# Right and left?

Our body is divided into two sides. The left side and right side. In the context of yoga, the right side of our body encompasses the energy of the sun, where 'heat' is mainly dominant, whereas our left side is the energy of the moon, that is, more calm and cool. In any poses that you are doing or any action that you are doing such as carrying a bag or driving with one hand holding on the steering wheel, you would want to be conscious on balancing your action of doing on both sides. If you are only carrying your bag one side most of the time, take notice how you can use your other arm to do the carrying for you instead of repetitively on the same side. We would want our body to develop an equal strength and effort, most of the time.

### Butterfly pose



1. Let's sit comfortably on your mat and bend both knees, so you could bring your feet together. Refer to the picture above for clarity.
2. Let the soles of your feet meet.
3. Interlace your fingers and clasp your feet with your interlaced fingers.
4. Whenever you breathe out, visualized the sensation of pressing your inner thighs down towards the earth.
5. Maintain a relaxed shoulders and neck. Keep your spine lengthen and up right with a normal breathing pattern.
6. While you remain still, observe the sensation all around your pelvis, hips, inner thighs, legs and your feet.

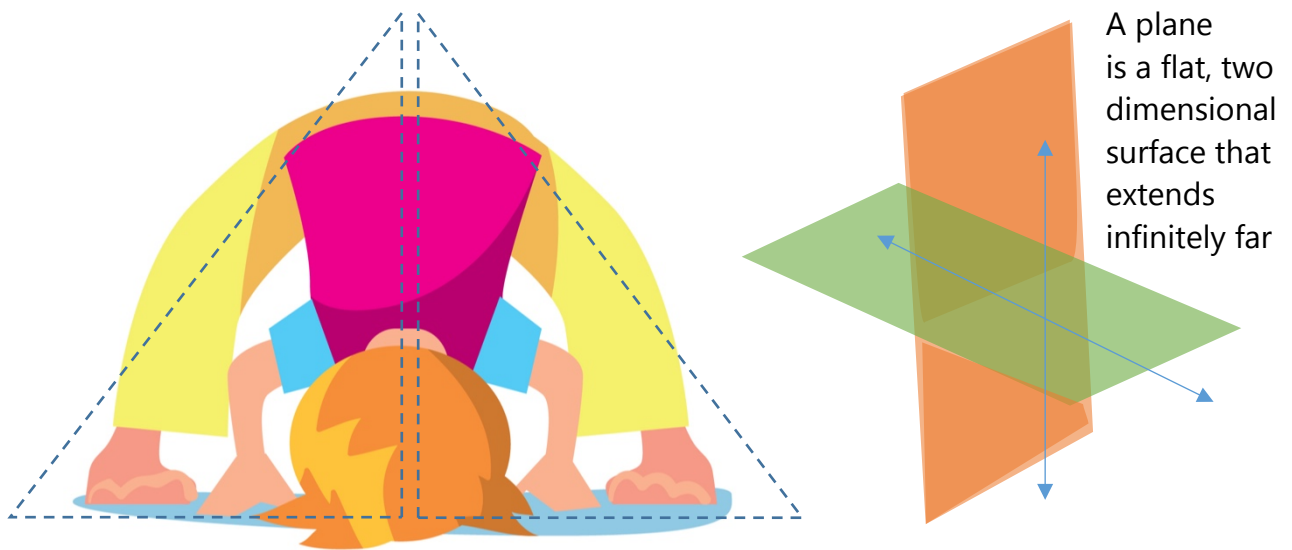
Did you maintain an equal stretch on your right side and left side? Spot any difference? Did you feel that your right bottom is higher than the other side and vice versa? Any tightness sensation on your legs? If you do feel so, which part? Tell us. Please reference to the 'My body at a glance' chart if you are unsure of the body parts.

## Day 2 – Intensity of Stretch

# From plane to plane

As shown in the diagram below on the far right, a plane is a flat, two dimensional surface that extends infinitely far. Picture it in your head the extensiveness of your body that is able to expand and extend from plane to plane. The level of growth is beyond our imagination as the growth of positivity in the cells of our body would develop into multiple folds. The mind is working with the body telling it what to do and where to go.

### Wide stance forward bend



A plane is a flat, two dimensional surface that extends infinitely far

1. As you are standing, bring your feet apart, wider than your width of your hip. Ensure that your heels are aligned with each other. They should be in one straight line. You can use the long edge of your yoga mat as your bearing.
2. Keep your toes turned inwards and heels turned outwards as you straighten your legs, so that your calf muscles are engaged and kneecaps are engaged too.
3. Breathe in, catch your waist with your hands, extend your spine and lift your chest, breathe out, bend forward and place your palms on the floor. Not the elbows. Keep your palms in between your feet.
4. As you breathe in again, lengthen your spine, and as you breathe out, bend forward from your hip joints. Perhaps, have the top of your head rested on the floor in between your legs.
5. Observe the intensity of stretch from plane to plane.

How do you feel on your spine and your legs. Is there equal intensity of stretch? Did you visualize the growth of your muscles and skins stretching from plane to plane?  
Is the theory of evenness in your mind?

## Day 3 – Observing specifically between

# Back and front

Our body is also divided into other two regions, the posterior (at the back) body and the anterior (at the front) body. The posterior body begins from the back of the head, back of your neck, back of your shoulders, shoulder blades, back of your upper back, back of your mid back, back of your lower back, back of your pelvis, bottom, tail bone, back of your thighs, back of your knees, back of your shins where the calves are, back of your heels and the soles of your feet.

The anterior body, begins from the crown of your skull, your forehead, frontal face, throat, chest, sternum, heart, abdomen, pelvis, inner middle pelvis, pubic bone, front thighs, knees, shins, top surface of your feet and toes.

It is fundamentally important to develop great awareness of the posterior body and anterior body when you are in a posture. You would want to expand and contract appropriate muscular parts of the body, to promote growth and changes.

### Arch like a Bridge pose

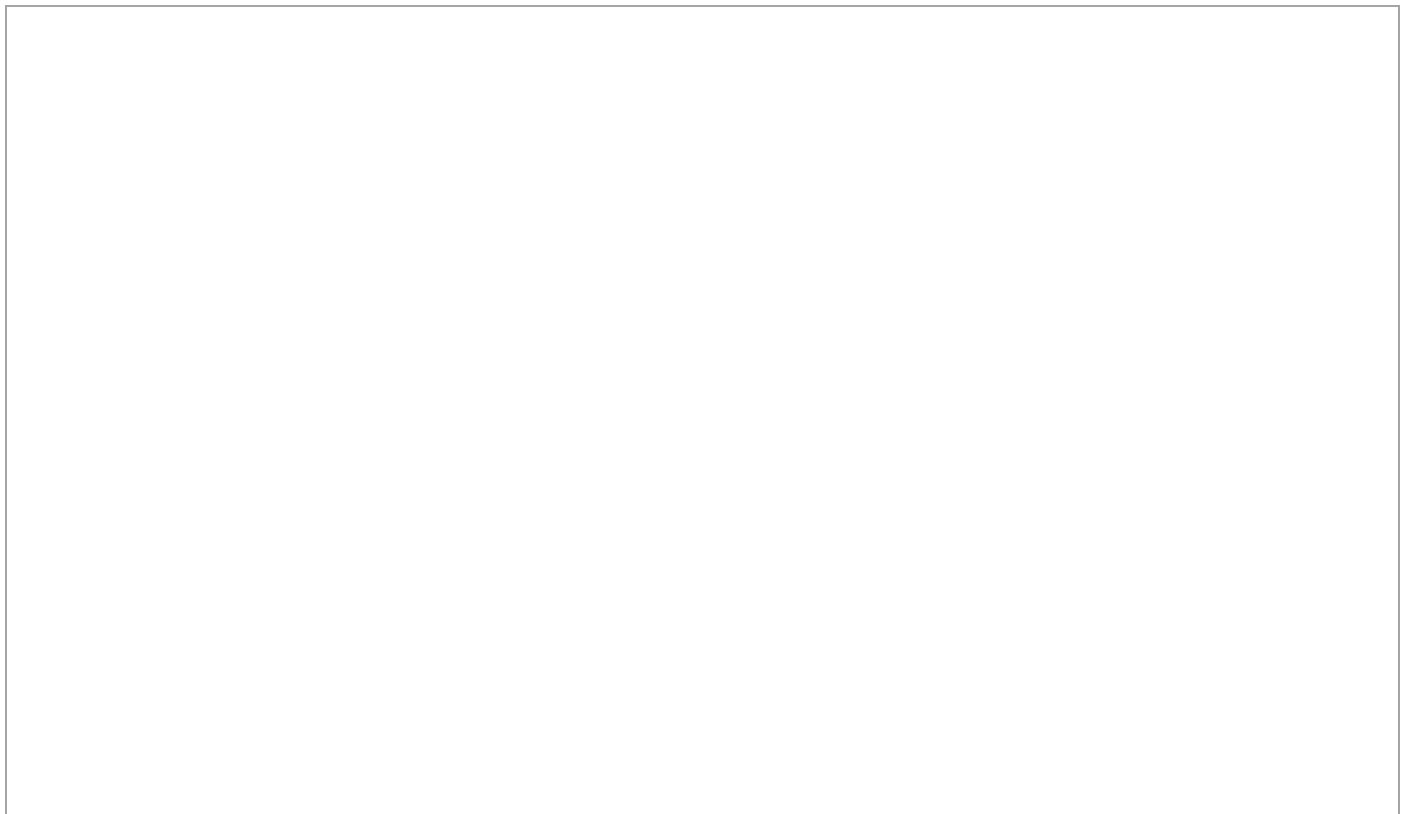


1. Lie down on your back.
2. Bend your knees and bring your feet close to your sitting bones. Adjust the position of your feet by ensuring that they are hip-distance apart.
3. Keep your heels turned out and toes turned inwards.
4. Breathe in, lift your hips up and send your chest to your chin.
5. Engage your glutes (buttock muscles), inner thigh muscles by gripping on an invisible block located in between your thighs. Keep pushing the floor away with your feet.
6. Squeeze the shoulder blades together, so your arms could come closer to each other with your palms flat on the ground. Also, push and press the floor away with your arms.
7. Lead your chest to your chin.
8. Dynamic repetition movement: Inhale lift the pelvis up, exhale lower the pelvis down. Repeat 10 times.

Observe your anterior body. Do you feel the broadening of your chest? Strengthening of your thighs and pelvic muscles?



Observe your posterior (back) body. Do you feel the arch on your back? If yes, which part of your back? Do you feel any strain on your knees or shoulders? Any stiffness on your back? Discomfort on your neck?



## Day 4 – Observing specifically from

# Top to bottom and bottom to top

There is a level of awareness, which is the '**grounding energy movement**', that works closely with gravity pull. This sensation is felt when weight is pulling you downwards, spreading of your skin towards the ground as though you are melting towards the earth, nesting into a comfortable space where you could rest upon and receive all that comes into your body awareness. In this context we term, from top to bottom.

The other context, from bottom to top, referred as '**upward energy movement**', is from the level of the ground growing upwards towards the sky, against gravity. You will experience the gravity pull and it encourages you to develop sensitivity towards body parts in the action of lifting upwards. In this activity, we would like to develop sensitivity towards the space of your pelvis. The action of lifting your tailbone upwards, supported by muscles all around your pelvis. The connection with the space of pelvis derives an understanding of 'energy lock' (termed 'bandha' in the yoga context) which fires the muscles at the core, pelvic floor, gluteus, lower abdominal muscles etc. which supports the motion of lifting.

### Balance on your shoulders like a candle

1. Have a partner or your parent by your side to spot you.
2. Have your mat ready. Begin to lie down with straight legs and arms by the sides of your body.
3. As you breathe in, lift your legs high up and support your hips with your hands by having your palms at the back of your hips. You can also have a pillow behind for support as it is more relaxing. Alternatively, you can rest your legs up against a wall.
4. Strongly extend your legs up to the sky, lifting from your tailbone. Imagine a sloth holding on the branch strongly with its feet, while hanging upside down. Have your parent to hold your legs if you needed support.
5. Keep your arms steady, by anchoring your upper arms and elbows to the floor. The shoulder blades are moving inwards towards the midline of your body.
6. Relax your shoulders and your neck and notice how you feel. You can also do this pose against the wall.



Let's review the pose earlier.

From top to bottom: Did you notice the gravity pull? Observe sensation from your toes travelling downwards towards your shoulders. Are you adjusting your shoulders and arms well enough to support the weight of your body that is working against gravity pull?

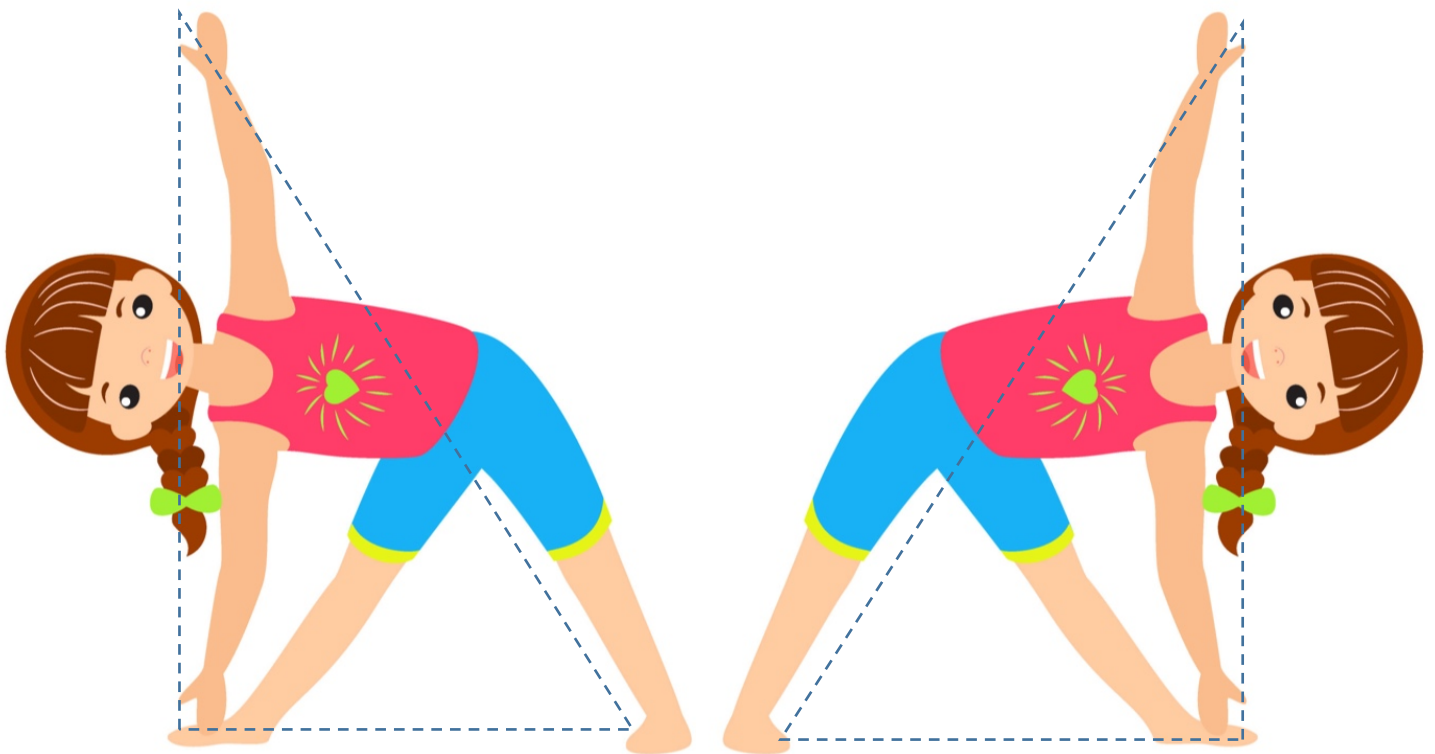
From bottom to top: Are you lifting upwards from your tailbone? Your neck and your shoulders was relaxed? How well did you keep your legs up? Did your inner leg muscles engaged to create the lifting action, upwards towards your big toe?

## Day 5 – Observing evenness from

# Side to side

Every tiny miniscule, singular part of the body has two sides. Your upper arm has a left side and right side, your lower arm has a left side and right side, your single palm also has a left side and right side. Just by observing how the skin spread from one side to another side and vice versa.

### Triangle pose by the wall



1. From standing at the front top of your mat, step out to your right. Keep your heels in one line by pressing them against the wall that you lean on.
2. Open out your right foot with toes pointing out to your right. Ensuring that the heel is aligned with the arch of your left foot.
3. Breathe in, lift your arms up shoulder height. Breathe out, lean to your right and pivot from your right hip joint, lower the right hand down towards the right side of your right foot. Keep your right palm by your right shin or place your palm on the floor for support. You can be on your fingertips.
4. As you breathe in, lengthen your spine, belly in, chest and ribs twist left and torso rolling up to the sky. Lean against the wall. Keep your shoulders glued to the wall.
5. Extend your left arm up in line with your left shoulder, as you lean against the wall.
6. Maintain extending upwards and broadening the left side of your body to receive the lateral stretch on the left side of your body.
7. Switch side once you are done.

Tell us how you feel on each side. Which side was easier? Did you feel that your chest collapsed forward towards the ground? Did you try this pose by leaning against the wall? Where do you feel the intensity of the stretch? Was your arm falling outwards? What was the sensation on your skin?