

„This book is a great resource on how to get and keep your body flexible and agile as well as deal with body aches and issues. The exercises are easy to use and can be done in a few minutes.“ -Deborah D. Miller, Ph.D.

Healing Back Pain

*with Osteopathic
Tension
Releasing
Exercises*

THOMAS SEEBECK



Back Pain Relief Without Drugs,
Surgery or Special Equipment

About the book

A functioning self-healing and immune system can solve virtually any health problem. Therefore osteopathy focuses on activating these oftentimes impaired self-healing powers and thereby achieve a completely natural healing. The cause of impaired self-healing powers is a problem with the nourishing and cleansing of the cells, the muscles, the bones or any other structure. The osteopath achieves this by means of his knowledge of human anatomy and physiology and with finesse of his palpation. The osteopathic techniques are however also wonderfully suited for self-treatment. This is where personal body-awareness comes into play.

In this book, Thomas Seebeck conveys the principles of osteopathic treatment, and a variety of exercises for healing back pain at all areas of the spine. The exercises are illustrated in a detailed and practical manner.

This book is a subset of the book “Osteopathic Self-Treatment” written by the same author.

About the author

Thomas Seebeck, born 1971, has been a physiotherapist since 1995 and has been running his own clinic in Dinklage (Germany) since 2002. In 2006 he received the Diploma in Osteopathic Therapy from the German Society of Osteopathic Medicine (DGOM), for which he has also been a teacher since 2008. He is the chairman of the German Association for Osteopathic Therapy (DAGOT) and academician of the DGOM.

He dedicates his free time to music, amongst other things, classic Chinese medicine, and QiGong and loves windsurfing. He runs mindfulness courses together with his brother, Andreas.

Thomas Seebeck

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Thomas Seebeck
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For Kerstin

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Appraisal for osteopathic self-treatment exercises

It is empowering to have a set of exercises at hand to take care of your body.

Light Within Enterprises

I have used many of the exercises for the head and neck to help with the management of a chronic neurologic disorder. I have noticed that the frequency of symptoms has decreased and discussed this also with my neurologist. He is happy with the results also and has suggested I continue using the exercises[].

Rachael Monaco

... try each exercise. I already feel better!!

Alicia McIntyre

I recommend this to anyone because it helped me control my headaches I usually have.

Tiffany G.

We as a family have tried a few of these and I will tell you they truly work. Thank you so much for sharing the knowledge.

Jennifer

*I have asked a few questions pertaining
to organic action and life, because Nature
is a school of question and answers,
which seems to be the only school
in which man learns anything.*

A.T. Still

Introduction

Sit in an upright and relaxed position on a chair or stool. Take a moment and feel the air flowing through your nostrils.



The three components of the exercises: breathing, movement and awareness.

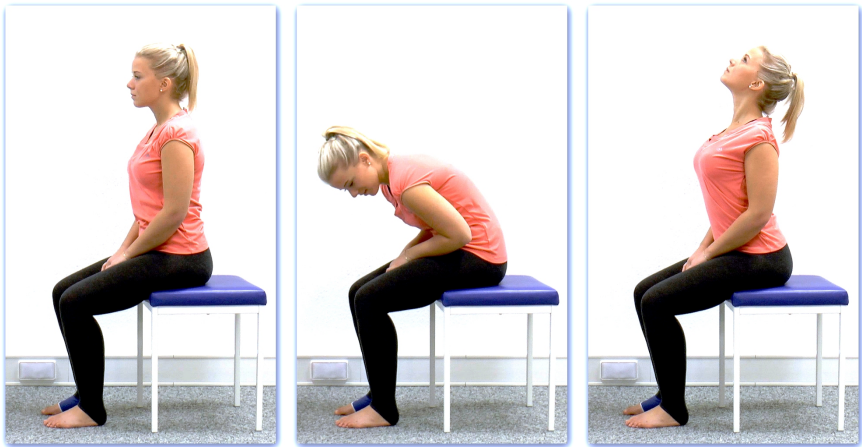
Discern carefully: does more air flow through the right or left nostril or is the difference unnoticeable? Can you feel that the air you breathe out is warmer than the air you breathe in?

Now guide your awareness to your torso and spine. Can you sense that your breathing is connected with a small movement of your torso

and spine? When you breathe in, your spine extends a little, and when you breathe out it retracts a little. If you can sense this, then you are ready for your self-treatment, because for this you will not require much more than a sense of breathing and movement.

Your first osteopathic self-treatment

In the introduction I asked you to feel the connection between breathing in and the slight extension of the spine, and breathing out and the slight bending of the spine. Now please try to find out which direction of movement is more comfortable for you. If you cannot be sure with very small movements, simply make the movements larger. Please remember though, that you are trying to find the maximum relaxation. If you move too far into the more comfortable position, the tension increases again.



Testing: neutral, bending and stretching

Test

Bend forward only as far as it is comfortable. Be mindful of the feel-

ing when returning to the neutral position. If it is uncomfortable, you have moved too far!

When stretching you will obviously reach your movement barrier much sooner. However if you move carefully and mindfully, this could be your more comfortable direction of movement.

Once you have found out which one of the two directions is more comfortable for you, combine this movement with breathing. There are two options.

If **stretching** is the more comfortable movement for you, then breathe in while moving into the comfortable position, and breathe out while returning to the neutral position.

Now switch the breathing around: breathe out as you stretch and breathe in while returning to the neutral position. Which combination feels better? If you cannot feel a difference, pick an exercise randomly.

If your more comfortable movement is **bending forward**, then breathe in while bending forward and breathe out while returning upwards. Then the other way around: breathe out while bending forward and breathe in while returning to the neutral position. Which combination feels better?

Exercise

Repeat your “comfortable combination” of breathing and movement for several breaths. It is reasonable to take a little break after breathing in and then out, i.e. to stop breathing and movement at the same time. The length of these breaks depends on what you feel is comfortable. After a while you will better be able to feel the impulse to continue breathing.

End the exercise after a maximum time of two minutes. Take a short break, in which you perhaps might briefly move your shoulders or shake yourself out a little.

Retest

First test the direction of movement that you exercised. Never mind the breathing now. This movement should at least not feel worse. Now test the other direction. Can you feel a change? Normally, this movement should now feel better than it did in the initial test. If this is the case, congratulations! You have just successfully completed your first osteopathic self-treatment.

If there is no improvement or you could not feel a difference in the movements in the beginning, you probably require a different direction of exercise. The principle of the exercise, however, remains the same.

Basically, if you can feel a difference, exercise the better option. That might seem strange at first, but once you have understood it and successfully put it into practice, it becomes really easy. Sooner or later you will find an exercise after which your discomforts will suddenly disappear. From that moment on, these exercises can become highly addictive, partly because you will suddenly have the feeling that you have recovered part of the responsibility for your own health and that you can do something straight away when you feel an ache or pain.

Crucial to success is that you perform the exercises mindfully, i.e. that you put your mind and heart into the exercises. In the beginning, the movements' amplitude should be large, so that energetic and structural blockades can be dissolved, muscle tensions can be relaxed and the strain hardening and immobilization of the smaller and larger vertebral joints can be mobilized. The movements of the spinal column and its smaller and larger joints have a traction-compression effect on the intervertebral discs. This traction-compression effect has a positive effect on the cartilage discs' elasticity, which can soak up with fluid again due to the movement's stimulus. Their elasticity allows them to better fulfill their buffering function.

Your movements should be

- steady, not abrupt

- round, not angular
- soft, not stiff
- slow, not hectic
- gentle, not forced.

The three planes of movement

The testing of movements is always performed on the basis of the three base planes of space, i.e. the body. The “yes plane” (sagittal plane) depicts bending and stretching movements, like e.g. nodding your head. The “no plane” (horizontal plane) depicts horizontal turning movements as e.g. performed when shaking your head. The “maybe plane” (frontal plane) depicts sideways movements, like e.g. the leaning of your head to the left and right.



The “no plane” and the “maybe plane”

Overview of the exercise sequence

Test

Testing the movement: which is the more comfortable direction?

Testing the breathing: how does the breathing best match the more comfortable direction of movement? Does it feel more comfortable when

- you move in the better direction while breathing in and return to the middle while breathing out? Or
- when you move in the better direction while breathing out and return while breathing in?

Exercise

Repeat the “comfortable combination” of breathing and movement for several breaths or minutes. After breathing in and out, stop breathing and movement at the same time.

Retest

Retest the movement first to the better, and then to the worse side. Be aware of the difference to the initial test.