



Foundations *of Movement:*

Pre-Pilates for
Healthy Feet

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Introduction

Welcome to "Foundations of Movement: Pre-Pilates for Healthy Feet," an ebook that delves into the often overlooked yet crucial aspect of overall well-being – the health and mobility of our feet. In this digital guide, we will embark on a journey to discover not only the profound impact that caring for our feet can have on overall health, balance, and movement, but also how to better prepare the foundation for your Pilates practice.

Feet, the remarkable foundation upon which we stand, carry us through every step of our lives, from our very first few steps as babies, up until the end. Yet, they are often taken for granted, enduring the burden of daily activities without receiving the attention and care they rightfully deserve. In the hustle and bustle of our modern lives, we may unknowingly neglect the very source of our stability and mobility – our feet.

But fear not, for this ebook is here to shine a light on the immense potential that lies within our feet. Drawing inspiration from the principles of Pilates, a holistic approach to physical fitness and well-being, we will explore the concept of Pre-Pilates—a series of preparatory exercises and techniques designed to awaken, strengthen, and align the feet, leading to enhanced overall movement and better health.

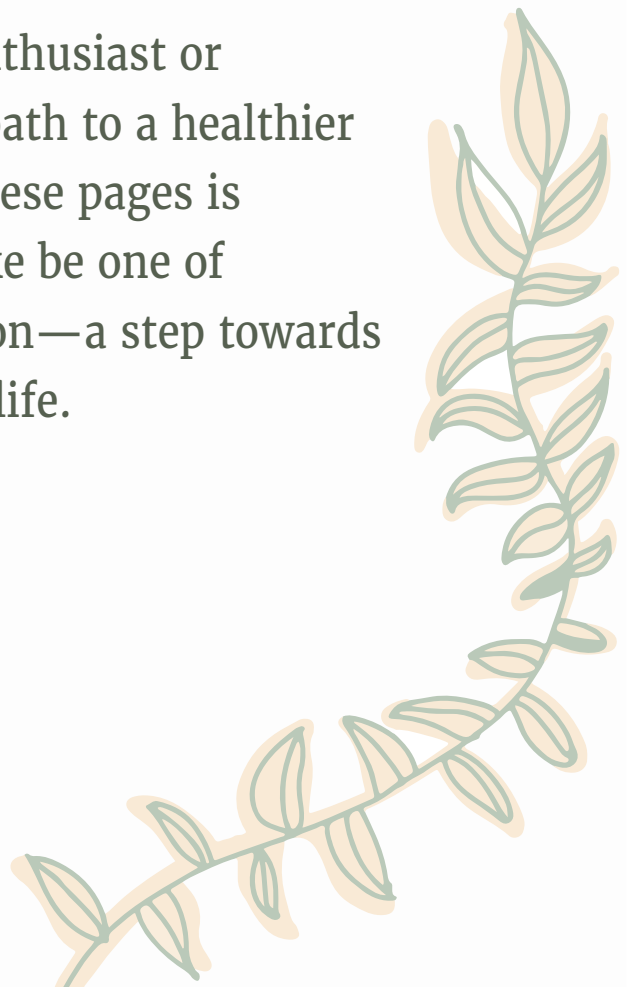


Our feet have a complex network of bones, muscles, ligaments, and tendons intricately connected to the rest of our body. When we prioritize the health of our feet, we unlock a treasure trove of benefits. Improved balance, enhanced posture, increased flexibility, and reduced risk of injury are just a few of the incredible advantages that await those who embark on this transformative journey.

In "Foundations of Movement: Pre-Pilates for Healthy Feet" we will learn to listen to our feet, understand the messages they convey, and respond with care and compassion. From simple exercises to mindful practices, this ebook will equip you with the tools to nurture your feet and, in turn, elevate your overall physical and emotional well-being.

Whether you are a seasoned fitness enthusiast or someone taking the first step on the path to a healthier lifestyle, the wisdom shared within these pages is accessible to all. May each step we take be one of awareness, healing, and transformation—a step towards a more vibrant, mobile, and fulfilling life.

Let us begin!





Waking Up *Your Feet*

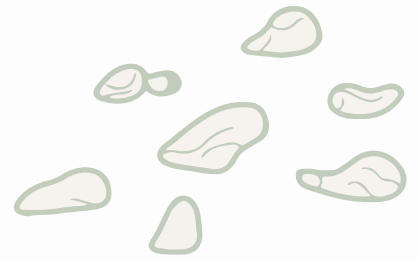
Through a carefully curated collection of exercises, mindful practices, and immersive experiences, we will learn to listen to the whispers of our feet and decode the language of sensation. From the soothing touch of cool grass to the stimulating textures of natural surfaces, we will explore the wonders of the world beneath our feet. As we do so, we begin to unravel the layers of stress, tension, and disconnection that have built up over time, embracing a newfound sense of harmony within. By grounding ourselves in the present moment, we can navigate the complexities of life with greater ease, resilience, and joy.



First Exercise

Experience the simple joy of stepping barefoot in the grass! Besides the blissful connection to nature, this practice offers numerous benefits for mind and body. The grass acts like a natural massage; stimulating acupressure points on our feet, promoting better blood circulation, and reducing stress. Grounding ourselves in the earth's energy, known as "earthing," can boost mood, reduce inflammation, and enhance sleep quality. Furthermore, walking on uneven terrain strengthens the muscles in our feet, ankles and lower limbs. So, kick off your shoes, embrace the earth beneath your feet, and relish in the delightful health benefits nature has to offer!

Texture Walk for Sensory Exploration



Our feet, with their thousands of nerve endings, are designed to experience a vast array of textures and sensations. From the soft caress of sand to the sturdy grounding of rocks, each touch provides valuable feedback to our brains, enhancing our overall sensory awareness.

Texture walks are a delightful way to awaken our senses and connect with nature on a deeper level. Take off your shoes and embark on a sensory journey, allowing your feet to traverse different terrains like rocks, sand, grass, and more. With each step, you open a gateway to a treasure trove of benefits.

The practice of walking on various textures not only strengthens the muscles and ligaments in your feet, ankles, and legs, but also improves balance and stability.

Moreover, it stimulates reflexology points, promoting better circulation and overall well-being. As you engage in this mindful activity, you'll notice stress melting away and a profound sense of grounding taking its place.

Beyond the physical advantages, texture walks indulge your sense of curiosity and childlike wonder. It's an opportunity to reconnect with the simple joys of life and find solace in the embrace of nature.

So, the next time you find yourself outdoors, invite your feet to explore the rich tapestry of textures that nature has to offer. Reawaken your senses, revitalize your mind-body connection, and relish in the beauty of the present moment.

Here are eight examples of different textures for sensory integration of the feet:

- ◆ **Sand:** Walking on sand provides a soft and shifting texture that challenges the muscles and sensory receptors in the feet.
- ◆ **Pebbles:** Walking on pebbles offers a varied and uneven surface, stimulating different points on the soles of the feet.
- ◆ **Grass:** The lush texture of grass provides a refreshing and natural surface for the feet to explore.
- ◆ **Wood Chips:** Walking on wood chips provides a firm yet slightly yielding texture, promoting balance and proprioception.
- ◆ **Smooth Stones:** Walking on smooth stones offers a soothing and massaging sensation for the feet.
- ◆ **Cold Water:** Submerging the feet in cold water provides a refreshing and invigorating sensory experience.
- ◆ **Gravel:** Walking on gravel offers a challenging and stimulating texture that requires focus and balance.
- ◆ **Carpet:** The soft and slightly cushioned texture of carpet provides a different sensation compared to harder surfaces.





- **Wooden Floor:** Walking on a smooth wooden floor offers a firmer texture and can feel grounding and supportive.
- **Bubble Wrap:** Stepping on bubble wrap creates a unique tactile sensation and can be a playful way to engage the feet.
- **Foam Mat:** A foam mat provides a soft and cushioned surface which can be beneficial for gentle foot exercises and sensory exploration.
- **Rough Concrete:** Walking on rough concrete surfaces challenges the sensory receptors of the feet and provides valuable feedback for balance and proprioception.
- **Seashells:** Walking on seashells at the beach introduces a unique and varied texture that can be both calming and invigorating.
- **Rice or Beans:** Placing a container filled with rice or dried beans and walking on them barefoot creates a gentle massage-like sensation for the feet.
- **Wooden Beads or Stones:** Using a foot massage roller with wooden beads or small stones can stimulate acupressure points and promote relaxation.

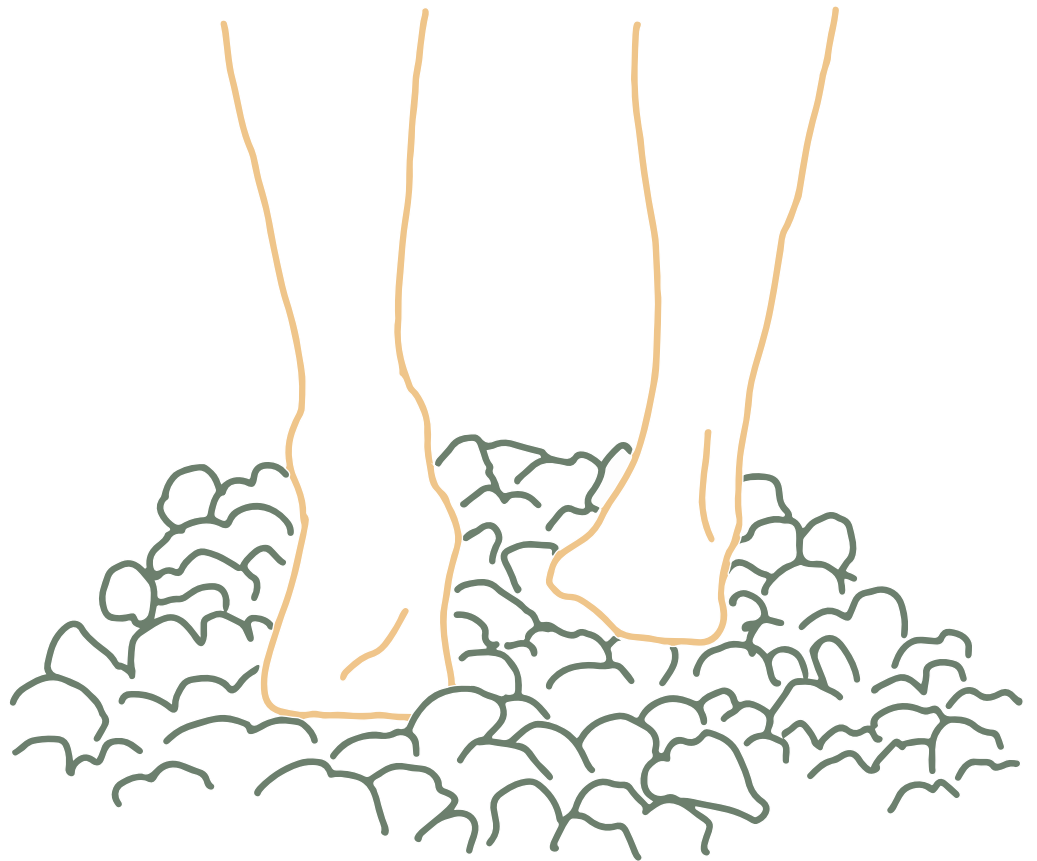




These different textures can be explored through sensory walks, standing exercises, or by simply spending time barefoot in nature.

Sensory integration of the feet through exposure to various textures can enhance foot awareness, proprioception, and overall sensory processing.

Remember to be mindful of safety when trying these experiences!



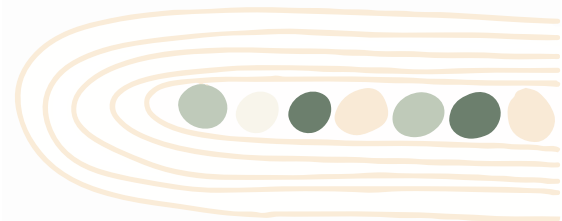
Plantarflexion/Dorsiflexion

Directions for Plantarflexion (Flexion) and Dorsiflexion of the Feet in a

Seated Position: Find a Comfortable Seated Position:

- Sit on a chair or cushion with your spine straight and shoulders relaxed.
- Place both feet flat on the ground, hip-width apart, and keep your knees at a 90-degree angle.
- Flexion of the Feet: Start by pressing your toes gently into the ground while keeping your heels firmly planted. Slowly lift your heels off the floor, aiming to point your toes downward as much as you can comfortably manage. Hold this position for a few seconds, feeling the stretch along the back of your calves.

Dorsiflexion of the Feet:



- From the flexed position, begin to draw your toes upwards, bringing them closer to your shins. Lower your heels back down to the ground as you do this. You should feel a stretch on the front of your ankles and the shins. Hold this position for a few seconds.
- Repeat the Movement: Perform 8-10 repetitions of both flexion and dorsiflexion, moving slowly and deliberately. As you become more comfortable, you can increase the number of repetitions.

Posture Tips:

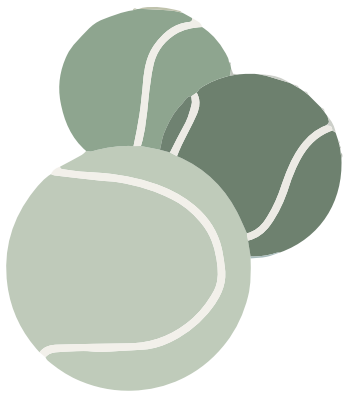


- Maintain a straight posture throughout the exercise. Engage your core muscles to support your spine, preventing any slouching or leaning. Relax your shoulders and keep them away from your ears, allowing for greater ease in movement.

Benefits of Flexion and Dorsiflexion Exercises:

- **Increased Ankle Mobility:** Flexing and dorsiflexing the feet regularly helps improve the range of motion in your ankles, which is essential for walking, running, and various physical activities.
- **Strengthened Calf Muscles:** These exercises engage the calf muscles, leading to stronger and more stable lower legs.
- **Enhanced Balance and Stability:** Working on ankle flexibility contributes to better balance, reducing the risk of falls and injuries.
- **Alleviated Foot Pain:** Flexing and stretching the feet can help relieve tension and discomfort caused by tight calf muscles and stiff ankles.
- **Improved Circulation:** Regular foot movements stimulate blood flow in the lower extremities, promoting healthier circulation.
- **Mind-Body Connection:** Practicing these exercises mindfully enhances your awareness of your body and helps you stay present in the moment.

Incorporate these simple flexion and dorsiflexion exercises into your daily routine to reap the many benefits they offer. Remember to listen to your body and avoid pushing yourself beyond your comfort level. As with any exercise, consult a healthcare professional if you have any existing foot or ankle conditions or concerns.



Foot Massage with a Tennis Ball or Lacrosse Ball

Directions & Benefits:

- Sit comfortably on a chair or cushion with your feet flat on the ground.
- Place a tennis ball or lacrosse ball under one foot.

Apply Gentle Pressure:

- Start by gently pressing your foot onto the ball. Adjust the pressure to your comfort level, as some areas may be more sensitive than others.
- Roll the Ball: Begin rolling the ball under your foot, moving it from the heel towards the toes and back. You can also move it side to side and in circular motions to cover the entire surface of your foot.
- Focus on Tight Spots: As you roll the ball, pay attention to any areas that feel tight or tense. Spend extra time on these spots, allowing the ball's pressure to release tension and knots.
- Breathe and Relax: Take slow, deep breaths as you massage your foot. Relax your muscles and let go of any tension you may be holding in your body.
- Switch Feet: After a few minutes, switch to the other foot and repeat the massage process.





Benefits of Foot Massage with a Tennis Ball or Lacrosse Ball:



- **Relieves Foot Pain:** Foot massage helps alleviate pain and discomfort caused by wearing tight shoes, standing for long periods, or overuse of the feet.
- **Reduces Muscle Tension:** Rolling a ball under the foot targets specific muscles, releasing tension, and promoting relaxation.
- **Improves Circulation:** Massage enhances blood flow to the feet, aiding in the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the tissues.
- **Enhances Flexibility:** Regular foot massage can improve the flexibility of the foot and ankle, contributing to better overall mobility.
- **Stimulates Reflexology Points:** The pressure applied during the massage can stimulate reflexology points in the feet, benefiting various organs and systems in the body.
- **Relieves Stress and Promotes Relaxation:** Foot massage induces a sense of relaxation and calm, reducing overall stress levels.
- **Supports Foot Health:** By massaging and stretching the foot, you may reduce the risk of foot injuries and promote better foot posture.

Foot massage with a tennis ball or lacrosse ball is a simple and effective way to show your feet some love and care. Regularly incorporating this practice into your daily routine can lead to improved foot health, increased comfort, and an overall sense of well-being. Remember to consult with a healthcare professional if you have any foot conditions or concerns before trying this massage technique.

Massaging Your Feet with a Wood Rolling Pin:

Directions & Benefits:

- Find a Comfortable Seated Position: Sit on a chair or cushion with your back straight and shoulders relaxed. Place both feet flat on the ground, hip-width apart.
- Prepare the Rolling Pin: Hold the rolling pin with both hands, ensuring it is clean and free from any food particles.
- Apply Gentle Pressure: Begin by placing the rolling pin under one foot, positioning it against the sole of your foot. Gently press down to make contact with your foot's surface.
- Roll Slowly and Mindfully: Start moving the rolling pin back and forth across the sole of your foot. Use slow and gentle motions to avoid discomfort or excessive pressure.
- Explore Different Directions: As you massage your foot, experiment with different directions – from the heel to the toes, side to side, and in circular patterns. Pay attention to the feedback from your foot and adjust the pressure accordingly.
- Cover the Entire Foot: Continue massaging with the rolling pin until you have covered the entire sole, arch, and heel of your foot.
- Switch Feet: After you finish massaging one foot, put the rolling pin down and switch to the other foot. Repeat the same process for the other foot.



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Benefits of Using a Wooden Rolling Pin for Foot Massage:

- **Relaxation and Stress Relief:** The gentle rolling motion of the wooden rolling pin provides a relaxing massage experience, reducing stress and tension in your feet.
- **Improved Blood Circulation:** The kneading action stimulates blood flow to the feet, promoting better circulation and relieving fatigue.
- **Loosening Tense Muscles:** Helps loosen tight muscles in your feet, providing relief from soreness and discomfort.
- **Foot Flexibility and Mobility:** Regular foot massages can enhance foot flexibility and mobility, improving overall foot health.
- **Mindfulness and Self-Care:** Using the wooden rolling pin for foot massage encourages mindfulness and allows you to take a moment for self-care and relaxation.

Remember to apply gentle pressure to avoid any discomfort or injury. If you have any foot conditions or concerns, it's best to consult with a healthcare professional before trying this massage technique.



Foot Massage with a Frozen Bottle of Water

Directions & Benefits



- Find a Comfortable Seated Position: Sit on a chair or cushion with your back straight and shoulders relaxed. Place both feet flat on the ground, hip-width apart.
- Prepare the Frozen Bottle: Take a plastic water bottle and fill it with water.
- Place the bottle in the freezer until the water turns into ice, creating a cold and refreshing massage tool.
- Apply the Frozen Bottle to Your Feet: Take the frozen bottle out of the freezer and hold it with both hands. Start by rolling the frozen bottle under one foot, from the heel to the toes and back.
- Use Gentle Pressure: As you massage, apply gentle pressure on your foot. The cold temperature might feel intense initially, so adjust the pressure based on your comfort level.
- Roll Slowly and Mindfully: Continue rolling the frozen bottle on your foot using slow and deliberate motions. Explore different directions—up and down, side to side, and in circular patterns to cover the entire surface of your foot.
- Switch Feet: After you finish massaging one foot, put the frozen bottle down and switch to the other foot. Repeat the same process for the other foot.

Optional: To combine the benefits of cold therapy with the massage, you can perform the foot massage with the frozen bottle for 5-10 minutes and then follow it up with a regular massage using your hands or a lotion.

Benefits of Foot Massage with a Frozen Bottle of Water:

- **Pain Relief:** The cold temperature helps reduce inflammation and can provide relief from foot pain, especially if you've been on your feet for extended periods.
- **Reduces Swelling:** Massaging your feet with a frozen bottle can help alleviate swelling and discomfort caused by heat or standing for long hours.
- **Soothes Tired Feet:** The cold sensation has a refreshing effect on tired and achy feet, providing a sense of relaxation and rejuvenation.
- **Promotes Circulation:** The cold therapy can improve blood flow to the feet, aiding in better circulation and reducing the risk of cramps.
Cooling Sensation: Massaging your feet with a frozen bottle offers a cooling sensation, making it an excellent option during hot weather or after intense physical activity.
- **Quick and Convenient:** Using a frozen bottle for foot massage is a simple and convenient way to soothe your feet, and you can do it at home or on the go.

Always be mindful of the cold temperature during the massage, and if you experience any discomfort, stop the massage immediately. If you have any foot conditions or concerns, consult with a healthcare professional before trying this massage technique. Treat your feet to the rejuvenating benefits of a frozen bottle massage and enjoy the refreshing feeling it brings!



Exercise: Standing Chair Lift and Lower



- Stand in front of a sturdy chair with your feet hip-width apart.
- Hold onto the backrest of the chair with both hands, keeping your grip firm and shoulder-width apart.
- Engage your core muscles to maintain a stable posture throughout the exercise.
- Inhale deeply as you bend your knees slightly, preparing to lift your body off the ground.
- Exhale and gradually lift your body off the ground, using your leg muscles to support the movement.
- Straighten your knees and lift yourself to a standing position, but keep holding onto the chair for support.
- Hold the standing position for a few seconds, ensuring your feet are fully grounded.
- Inhale as you begin to lower yourself back down, slowly bending your knees and lowering your body towards the ground.
- Exhale and gently touch your toes to the floor, without putting full weight on them.
- Repeat the lift and lower movement for the desired number of repetitions.



Benefits:

- **Strengthens Leg Muscles:** The standing chair lift and lower exercise primarily targets the quadriceps, hamstrings, and glutes, promoting strength and stability in the lower body.
- **Improves Balance:** By lifting and lowering from a standing position while holding onto the chair, you enhance your balance and coordination.
- **Builds Core Stability:** Engaging your core muscles during the exercise helps in maintaining proper posture and stability.
- **Supports Functional Movements:** This exercise mimics everyday activities like standing up from a chair, making it beneficial for daily life.
- **Low-Impact:** The standing chair lift and lower exercise is gentle on the joints, making it suitable for individuals with knee or hip concerns.
- **Boosts Confidence:** As you progress and improve in this exercise, it can boost your confidence in performing other functional movements that require strength and stability.

Remember to perform this exercise in a controlled manner, focusing on the quality of movement rather than speed. If you have any pre-existing health conditions or concerns, consult with a healthcare professional or a fitness trainer before starting any new exercise routine. Enjoy the benefits of the standing chair lift and lower, and feel the strength and stability grow within you!



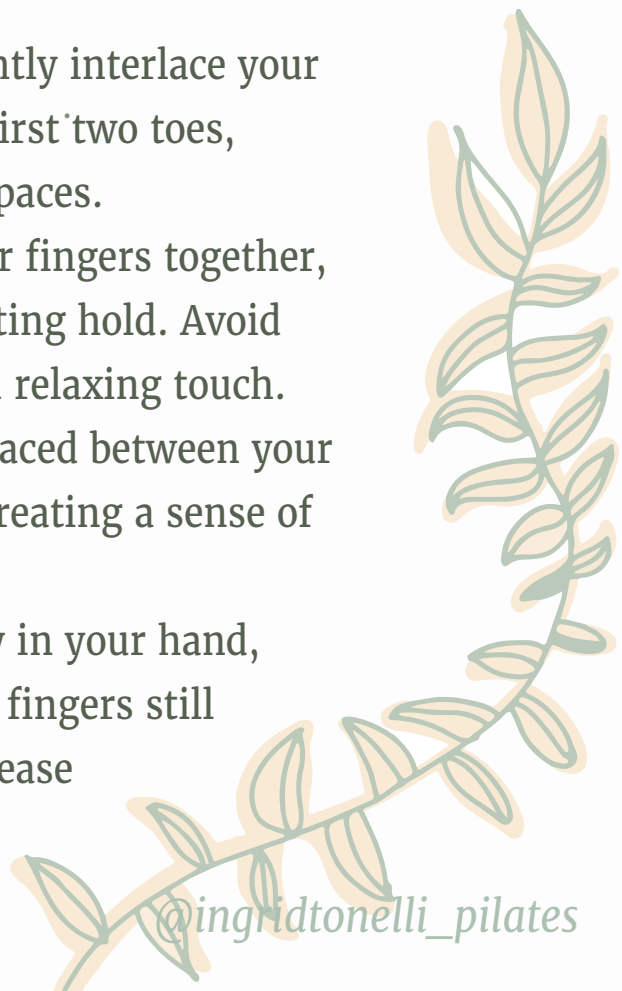
Treat Your Feet com to a Blissful Self-Massage!



Indulge in the ultimate relaxation with a foot massage that goes beyond the ordinary! Introducing the interlace fingers foot massage - a simple yet incredibly soothing technique to pamper your feet and experience a new level of relaxation and comfort.

Directions:

- **Find a Comfortable Position:** Sit on a chair or lie down on a comfortable surface. Place one foot on your opposite knee, allowing easy access to your foot.
- **Interlace Your Fingers:** With one hand, gently interlace your fingers between your toes. Start with the first two toes, gently weaving your fingers through the spaces.
- **Apply Gentle Pressure:** Gently squeeze your fingers together, embracing each toe in a warm and comforting hold. Avoid pressing too hard to maintain a gentle and relaxing touch.
- **Wiggle Your Toes:** With your fingers interlaced between your toes, gently wiggle them back and forth, creating a sense of mobility and freedom.
- **Circular Massage:** Rotate your foot slightly in your hand, creating gentle circular motions with your fingers still interlaced between the toes. This helps release tension and promotes relaxation.

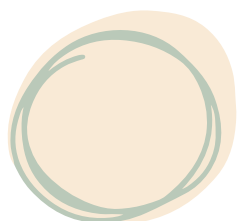




- **Move Along the Toes:** Gradually move your fingers to interlace between the other toes, continuing with the same gentle squeezing, wiggling, and circular movements.
- **Repeat on the Other Foot:** After giving your first foot a lovely massage, switch to the other foot and repeat the same soothing technique.

Benefits:

- **Relaxation and Stress Relief:** The interlace fingers foot massage promotes deep relaxation, reducing stress and tension from your feet.
- **Improved Toe Mobility:** Manipulating your toes gently enhances their mobility, making them more flexible and agile.
- **Enhanced Circulation:** Massaging between the toes improves blood flow, nourishing the foot tissues and promoting overall foot health.
- **Releasing Tension:** This technique helps release tension from the tiny muscles and ligaments between the toes, providing a sense of relief.
- **Induces Sleep:** Foot massages are known to have a calming effect, making them an excellent way to unwind before bedtime and improve sleep quality.
- **Body-Mind Connection:** By taking the time to give yourself this delightful foot massage, you cultivate a deeper body-mind connection, nourishing both physically and emotionally.



As we continue on our life's journey, may we carry with us the wisdom gained from this exploration.

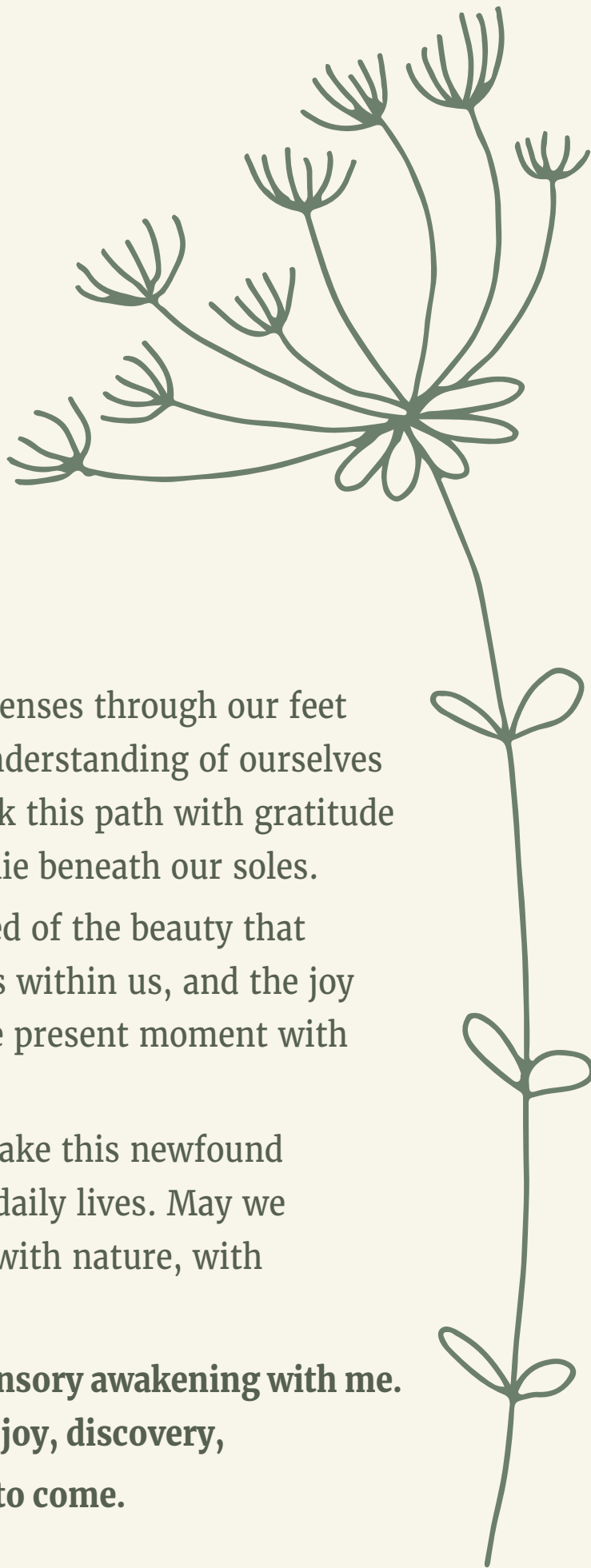
Let us remember to take moments to ground ourselves, to walk barefoot on diverse textures, and to cherish the simple pleasures that nature provides.

May the practice of awakening the senses through our feet guide us toward a more profound understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Let us walk this path with gratitude and reverence for the wonders that lie beneath our soles.

With every step, may we be reminded of the beauty that surrounds us, the power that resides within us, and the joy that awaits us when we embrace the present moment with open hearts and awakened senses.

As we conclude this journey, let us take this newfound awareness and integrate it into our daily lives. May we continue to nurture our connection with nature, with ourselves, and with each other.

Thank you for embarking on this sensory awakening with me. May your feet carry you on a path of joy, discovery, and profound connection for years to come.



*With warmest wishes and abundant gratitude,
Ingrid Tonelli*



Ingrid Tonelli

Born in Brazil and living in the US for over 20 years, Ingrid began her personal Pilates practice and was in awe of the depth of the mind/body connection. Stunned by the amazing results she got from the method, she is now on a mission to encourage others to experience Pilates for themselves. As a mother of three amazing children, Ingrid uses Pilates to achieve a clear mind and a healthy body. As an instructor, she has a great appreciation for Pilates adaptability.

Ingrid is able to meet her clients' individual needs – pregnant mommas, athletes, children, teens, seniors – so they can continue to build a healthier lifestyle with focus, perseverance, and dedication. She enjoys spending time with her family, encouraging them to be active and experiencing the benefits of Pilates in their own bodies. She feels grateful to be able to help others achieve their fitness goals and motivate them to broaden their perception of their own physical and mental abilities through Pilates.

She has completed the comprehensive certification program at the Art and Science of Contrology™ Pilates Instructor Training Program under second-generation Master Teacher Simona Cipriani, from whom she continues to be mentored. Ingrid has founded Body & Mind Pilates Training Studio in Chappaqua, NY, where she teaches and helps students to create a lifelong relationship between physical fitness and mental clarity through movement.

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Site: www.bodyandmindpilatestraining.com

Continuing Education/Workshops/ Professional Development:

2023

Kathi Ross-Nash at the Art of Control - Variations on the Reformer, Injuries & Application, Killer Caddy, The Leg Stretches from the Ground Up

Continuing Education at the Art of Control - Advanced & Super Advanced Mat, Use of Small Equipment & The Guillotine with Simona Cipriani

Mat Experience, Wunda Chair, Spine Corrector with Inelia Garcia
SQUARE 1 System with Shawn Sherman

Pre-Pilates Technique with Deborah Lessen

Certificate Course to Integrate Primitive Reflexes for Optimal Function:
Neurological Approaches from Early Intervention to Adolescence
Training Menopausal and Perimenopausal Women

2022

Advanced Mat and Standing, The Flow of the Cadillac, The Power of the Wunda Chair and Baby Chair, and Pre/Postnatal Pilates Workshop with Dorothee Vandewalle

Return to Life Conference in Brazil - Various Teachers

2021

Contrology Super Advanced Mat with Simona Cipriani

eMANate™ with Simona Cipriani

Barrels Workshop and Standing Exercises with the Mat, Long Pole, Wall, Weights with Jerome Weinberg

Advanced Contrology Program for Certified Teachers at The Pilates Studio® Brasil with Inelia Garcia

Barrels, Pedi Pole and Baby Chair Workshop with Inelia Garcia
The Less Taught Exercises with Mariano Dolagaray
Structuring the Class with Emphasis on Endings with Inelia Garcia
Pre-pilates Lecture, Elderly Populations, Constructing the Body
Through the Basic Repertoire, Constructing the body from Basic to
Intermediate, Spotting and Teaching Techniques, Advanced
Exercises in the Apparatus, Inelia's Signature Alongamento
Consciente Class with Inelia Garcia
Pilates Dynamic Spine™ with Sean Gallagher

2020

Improve your Game! Strength and Conditioning Workshop with
Michael Johnson
Building Skills with Pilates Barrels with Simona Cipriani
Advanced & Super Advanced Mat with Jerome Weinberg

2019

One Day with Jerome Weinberg Super-Advanced Reformer and
Guillotine
Strength and Conditioning for the Male Body with Michael Johnson
Traditional Pilates Small Equipment Workshop with Simona Cipriani

2018

Developing your Creativity on the Tower/Cadillac with Sonje Mayo
The Power of Barrels with Sonje Mayo
Pilates and Spinal Conditions with Sonje Mayo
The Lost Art of Joe's Work: The Ped-o-Pul and the Resister with
Elaine Ewing
Traditional Pilates Small Equipment Workshop with Simona Cipriani
Michael Johnson's Mat Workshops
Archival Pilates with Michael & Ton

Pilates for Athletes with Michael & Ton

Pilates for Gait with Michael & Ton

Session Endings Workshop with Jerome Weinberg

2017

Feet-ness with Ilaria Cavagna

Expand the Possibilities of Ending Sessions as a Final Touch

Good Bones with Sonje Mayo

Pilates Alliance Method Conference in California-Variou Teachers

2016

Initial Studies at The Art and Science of Contrology™ Pilates

Instructor Training Program

Anatomy & Physiology Course for Pilates, with Dr. Joseph Muscolino

