

Alexander type of Directions

See that you don't stiffen your neck and that you always have something to look forward to... ~ F.M Alexander

Inhibit your habits and then give yourself **Directions**, cues **without** doing. **Observe** what happens in your self as you direct yourself without doing. **UP!** Ask for Up, **Allow** for Up, **Lengthening**... like a little wish, an idea.... letting go...

My neck is free ... so that

My head moves forward and up, balanced on top of my spine and ever so delicately away from my spine... so that

My whole back (includes whole spine, shoulders, pelvis, superficial back line) lengthens and widens ... so that

My shoulders move apart from each other and sit easily on my ribs (and continues through elbows, wrists, hands, and finger tips) ... so that

My hips move back and my knees move forward and away (little monkey) ... so that

My legs are balanced (and knees are balanced) over my whole torso ... so that

My ankles are free and my weight is easily and evenly distributed over my feet... so that... (back to top)

More Ideas: Here are some more details on these directions.

Neck to be Free

- A O Joint - Occipital Star
- Long neck muscles... sequencing spine... spacious vertebrae...

Head forward and up

- Delicately balanced on top of spine
- Head leads, lengthening & 3D design of whole body... UP...
- Whole back. Superficial back line: across bottom of feet up legs and back of knees, hamstrings, sit bones, back, spine and occipital star, scalp to eyebrows.
- Shoulders move apart from each other, resting on the ribs
- Elbows easy and move away from the back
- Wrists are free, feel ease in joints and in angle of joints.
- Energy through hands (palms open) and fingers tips (sense space in joints) Read Anatomy Trains by Thomas W. Myers

Hips move back - connection of sit bones to heels...

- Small "monkey"
- Ease in joint & socket. Sense potential for dynamic movement
- Huge joint- also the connection, like a buttress.

Knees forward and away

- Balanced (not bent or locked) ...soft knees.
- Knees move out and up & away, space around joints. connection to upper leg bone, femur.

Ankles free

- Weight evenly distributed on feet
- Balanced over arches. Sense your heels, toes, sides and arches - whole foot. Heels lengthen into the ground.
- Space around joints (sense connection to foot and leg).

Listen: Yo Yo Ma, cello **CD:** Silk Road

Look: Yo Yo Ma - Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon Sound Track

Active Rest - Alexander Lying Down Work

Take rest; a field that has rested gives a bountiful crop.. - Ovid

Active Rest or Semi Supine will help to restore balance and ease throughout your body.

It will also help you to recognize and prevent interference with that ease throughout your day.

You may use **Active Rest - Semi Supine** for 3-20 minutes at a time.

1. **Lie** on a firm but comfortable surface with your knees up. Placing books beneath your head will allow your head to align with the spine, rather than tilting and dropping back to the floor.



experiment to find what is right for you.



2. **Allow** yourself to be completely supported by the surface you're lying on.

Allow yourself to just melt into the surface. **It's important not to do anything to make this happen** (or any of the directions that follow); this is about **undoing, letting go** and allowing the activity and tensing that are already happening to stop and **allow your body to return to its natural state.**

3. **Now** use your **Alexander Directions**. Using them is like imagining... imagine a beautiful beach, the sound of the ocean and the color of the sunset... You needn't do anything to imagine this, yet it has an effect on your whole self.

4. **When** you wish to get up, let your eyes lead, continue your **Directions**, allowing your spine to lengthen as you spiral - roll your head, then shoulders, and the rest of you over onto one side and around onto your knees and then come up to standing.

More Ideas: take an Alexander lesson **Listen:** Itzhak Perlman **CD:** all are great **Look:** Itzhak Perlman - Soundtrack to Shindler's List