

JOYFUL FEET

Will warm your heart from the sole.

Put Your Feet In Your Hands and Feel What Happens!

... opening, releasing, grounding, presence.

FOOT FACTS

- The intricate bones of the feet are strong enough to support the weight of the entire body, yet light enough to move easily.
- We have 26 bones, 33 joints, and 107 ligaments. The big toe has 2 joints and the small toes have 3 joints. (I might add that there are 7,000 nerves in soles of feet!)
- 19 muscles and 12 tendons...all in one foot!
- 11 muscles cross the ankle from above.
- The feet balance and support the rest of the body.
- 25% of bones in the human body are located in the foot.
- An average person walks 10,000 steps per day. In a lifetime that's approximately 4 times around the planet
- 3 out of 4 Americans experience serious foot problems in their lifetime.
- Improperly fitting shoes & high heel shoes tend to be a lead factor in causing foot problems
- Remember shoes tend to deaden the function of the small intrinsic muscles of the foot and ankle.
- The largest shoe size is 28, belongs to a man in Florida
- A person has 250,000 sweat glands in their feet that produce a ¼ cup of water.

Some foot problems include:

- Plantar fasciitis – inflammation of the connective tissue in the sole of the foot.
- Bunions – big toe points towards the second toe.
- Heel Spurs-abnormal bone growth that develops on the calcaneus, or heel bone.
- Hammer Toes
- Arthritis – inflammation of the joint.
- Flat feet or arches
- Over pronation or supination

The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates once claimed:

"When our feet hurt, we hurt all over.

Note * **Optional: If unable to cross leg:** Use the ball of your choice to massage the sole of foot by rolling it or use any other massage device to get circulation going.

For the other exercises, keep feet on the floor:

Practice lifting toes off the floor one at a time, or use a strap, belt, dyna band of some sort to fit your needs. Place it between the toes and pull up and push down, relax, repeat, one at a time or all together.

This helps aid range of motion and it brings circulation to your feet. ☺

Do each toe 4-6 times and hold for 5 to10 seconds.

Release work: Tennis Ball /Lacrosse Ball Work (to roll on sole of foot)

- **Note:** *When we roll the ball, we are adding an unstable surface to re-educate the body proactively with the core engaged and loading with good eccentric control for gait (how we walk), and activities of daily living.*
- *The unstable (work of rolling on the ball) surface will work to recruit more of the intrinsic muscles of the foot, ankle and lower limb.*

* **Note:** Every one has different levels of sensitivity in their feet. If ball is too hard use racket ball or other softer balls...again to fit your needs and work your way up to the harder balls to get more release.

**Rolling the ball on the sole of foot: (Standing or seated).
Keep good posture and remember to breathe! ☺**

- Begin by placing the ball under forefoot/toes.
- **Roll from ball to heel. Heel to ball.**
(Try to roll ball on center, big and little toe side of the foot.)
- Roll the ball on the Heel/ Arch / Ball of foot:
Roll. Hold. Push down on the ball with your weight; proceed to the arch and ball of foot. **If there are tender areas hold, breathe and release! Repeat as much as you like or can tolerate.**
- Place the ball under the metatarsals-- Anchor the heel on the floor, toes wrapped around the top of ball. Look to see if the metatarsals are white.
- Roll big toe to floor and baby toe to floor side to side. Try to keep your knee still and work from the ankle joint only. Remember to keep body properly aligned
- Ball mound 1st and 5th metatarsal head: (press and stretch all toes, keep toes spread and shift weight forward)
- Spread the toes over the ball with the heel of foot on the floor.
Use your hands to separate the toes if you need to. Take a couple of deep breaths as you press into the ball and hold with each section of the toes.

Stand and feel the difference in your feet! ☺

**Release work: Using your hands:
take one foot and cross it over your thigh.**

- Foot/Toe massage: (For the first 3 exercises hold toes at the base of your toe joint.)
- Scissor toes
- Criss-cross toes
- Spread toes apart
- Wiggle, rotate, circle, and pull toes
- Fingers & Toes intertwined -option to pull toes back and hold/release /x3
- Arch toes to shin holding toes flexed
- Ankle circles-hold the ankle with one hand and circle with the other
- Cup your hand and hit the sole of foot several times up and down.
- Massage the lower leg using both hands.

Plantar Massage: Place leg over knee, with one hand pull toes back to shin, with the other hand massage sole of foot with hand or thumb just in front of the heel or wherever you feel you need it!

- Stand and feel the difference in the feet! ☺

**Strength Work:
(Standing or seated) Remember to breathe!
(Proper alignment/Steady hips. Focus! ☺)**

Both feet

- Press heel and ball of foot down; weight evenly distributed 1st and 5th toe (think of suction cupping through the arch of foot).
- Lift and spread all toes (anchor thru the tripod, lift, spread, and place toes down). Try to lift big toe to little toe and put them down one at a time. Then, little toe to big toe.
- Lift only big toe/ then small toes
Challenge: (brain teaser)!
- Lift big toe of one foot, small toes of the other foot and then switch
- Inch worm forward and back. (Using a towel on wood floor is best).
- Standing toe rise --- hold for 10 seconds and slowly lower the heel to floor.
- Ankle Pump...lift toes up and down to floor to work the shins and calves. Hold/release.
- Point and flex with articulation (seated on chair or on floor, legs extended).
- Stretch calves

When we point the toes think long toes not curled toes. Work from ankle joint.

- Ankle circles with articulation
- Foot waves (legs extended)
- Draw the alphabet with your ankles or write your name, (big case small case letters), try cursive, or texting! ☺
- Toe Pick Ups—pick up things with your toes and place in bowl.
- Dyna Band/Towel Stretch--press to stretch calf (dorsiflexion), hold 30sec.

Close your eyes to awaken proprioception, focus on keeping the knee over the 2nd toes...try to touch your nose with your pointer finger.

Try standing on single leg, eyes closed and touch your nose, head, ear, etc.

Other remedy ideas for the feet:

- Rubber Band --(bands around broccoli at the store) ---for bunions wrap binder around the big and second toe and pull them apart.
 - Roll foot over a cold or frozen water bottle for inflammation
 - Cold or hot bath
 - Add epsom salts, essential oils and /or lotions to help release toxins and increase circulation (therefore healing)
 - Massage, Reflexology, Rolfing, Chiropractic care
 - Get better shoes and/or insoles for your shoes
 - Standing on one foot, notice the tiny little adjustments...try to work your way up to holding for 20 seconds.
 - Then close your eyes/ hold arms out to side/ in front of you/down at your side/open eyes
 - Notice and be aware, be conscious of how you walk sit and stand.
 - Walking is one of the best exercises for your feet.
- If we think of our feet as the foundation of our home, then we get a pretty good picture of just how important they are. If we don't have a solid foundation, the whole structure suffers. We know that when our feet are out of alignment, it can create a situation conducive to many health problems. For instance, if you walk favoring one foot over the other, you almost invariably throw your back out of alignment. Conversely, if the back or spine is out of alignment, you sometimes will walk favoring one side of the body and one foot, which leads to foot problems.*

- Try T'ai Chi Chih to experience shifting of the weight while working on balance and circulation. A principle of T'ai Chi Chih is "focus on the soles of your feet!" You'll be glad you did!

*Roll with the sole and feel the results!
Practice being in the present moment.
Remember to BREATHE deeply!*

Awareness of where the weight is in the sole of my feet is part of my wellness program, body mind and spirit.

*Thank you for coming. Blessings and peace for your soul.
Written & presented by Judy George*