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Episode 4 : Remember to Stretch

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Chair Yoga Script

Hello y'all Mandi from SAS here. Today we are going to talk about movement or the lack of movement. How it affects us and how we can do better for our bodies.

Sitting at a desk for hours on end places unnecessary strain on your whole body. So today I'm going to walk you through some stretches you can do at your desk to relieve some of that tension and strain. Feel free to pause in between stretches if needed or skip anything that causes pain. We want to stretch our bodies, not injure them.

First though let's take a few deep breaths. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Two more times. Breathe in….and out. Breathe in….and out. Keep breathing calmly and deeply in through your nose and out through your mouth.

Now that we're a bit more relaxed, we'll move in to our first seated stretch.

First is the Seated Crescent Moon Pose

The side body tends to collapse when hunched over a computer, contributing to neck and shoulder discomfort. Seated Crescent Moon fixes that so you can return to your seat with a taller spine, a clearer head, and sharper focus.

First put your feet flat on the floor. Lift your arms overhead and stretch your fingers wide. Lean to the right, taking 2 to 3 deep breaths. One….two…..three…. Repeat on the left side for another 2 to 3 deep breaths. One….two….three. Bring yourself back to center and bring your arms back down to your sides.

For the remainder of this podcast I'll be letting you know how long to hold a pose. I encourage you to listen to the instructions and pause to do the stretches.

Next let's do some wrist and finger stretches

Desk work builds up tension in the muscles and tendons in the fingers, hands, and wrists, so extra blood flow to these areas is always appreciated. Try these stretches every 2 hours.

Extend the arms to the sides or overhead and draw 5 to 10 circles inward and outward through the wrists. Next, quickly spread the fingers and close the fists, repeating this 5 to 10 times to shake off any excess tension.

Stretch each arm out and bend the wrist inward then outward, you can apply gentle pressure with your other hand to counterstretch. Hold each side 5 to 10 breaths.

Next is the Chair Pigeon Pose

Crossing our legs while seated, especially when done on one side more than the other, can create imbalances in the hips and lower spine. We can bring balance back with Chair Pigeon pose.

While seated in your chair, both feet flat on the floor, cross your right leg over the left at a 90-degree angle, keeping the foot flexed as to not place pressure on the knee. Maintain equal weight distributed between the sitting bones while staying in an upright seated position.

You should feel a gentle to moderate stretch on the outermost part of the right thigh. Hold 5 to 10 breaths before switching sides.

Next Sit and Stand Chair Pose

When we're seated all day, the underused glutes and hamstrings lose their motivation to help us get back up, and we rely on the upper back and even the neck to hoist the body to a standing position.

This two-part pose helps awaken these leg muscles.

Begin seated with your knees bent 90 degrees and your feet flat. Press down from your heels, trying not to move the feet in toward your chair or use your arms, and make your way up to standing.

From standing, slowly sit straight back down, refraining from leaning forward and/or from shifting the hips to one side or the other. Repeat 5 to 10 times.

Next is the assisted pushup pose

Your desk can support your yoga pushups!

Blasting out a few of these strengthening movements throughout the day reminds the muscles around your neck to relax, while energizing the arms, which tend to go soft during the majority of the day.

Get up out of your chair for this!

Rest your hands about shoulder width distance on the edge of your sturdy desk, and step your feet back so your torso is a diagonal line to the floor. Your feet firmly placed, inhale as you bend the elbows to a 90-degree angle, hugging the elbows in towards the ribs.

Exhale and press your chest back up to the starting position. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Up next Desk Upward Dog Pose

After the previous pose, opening the chest and shoulders is a MUST! You will also reap the benefits of ironing out the rounded upper back posture seen in those of us who spend most of our time seated across from a computer screen.

Set up the same way here as you did for pushups above. With your arms straight, lower your hips toward the desk, refraining from sinking in the lower back by using the strength in your legs.

Stretch your chest between your shoulders and gently tilt your chin upwards while sliding the shoulder blades down the back. Hold 5 to 10 breaths.

For our last pose we have the Desk Plank Pose

PLEASE DO NOT climb all the way onto your desk and start planking! Instead, use your desk to support this spine-lengthening and hamstring-stretching final pose.

Place your hands shoulder width distance or wider at the desk edge. Step your feet back until your feet are directly under your hips as you create a pleasant feeling traction for your spine. Hold 5 to 10 breaths and let this pose help you undo all the negative effects of sitting.

If you can set aside just a few minutes during your workday to take some deep breaths, clear your mind, and stretch your tight muscles, your body will thank you, and you can move through your day healthier, happier, and more stress-free!

Thanks for listening! As always SAS is here to help.