

# **Dyslexia with Chronic Neck Tension**

Structural Yoga Therapy Course

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## **1 - Case study**

JFK is in her late 50<sup>th</sup>, working mother of three with chronic neck tension and Dyslexia, diagnosed later in her life. I met her 2 years ago at a local synagogue where I teach a Structural yoga class. When I first examined her she had chronic tension and limited ROM and strength in her neck and shoulders area. Also, following movements (right, left, up, down) were confusing to her due to dyslexia. She would have more pain all over her neck and shoulders area when she had to do cooking or cleaning due to holidays. She takes Tylenol to deal with the pain. However, she said that paralysis like sensations with lots of pain could happen any moment.

In addition to almost 2 years of Structural yoga classes once a week we worked privately together for almost 4 months. During the first 6 sessions we worked on having daily routine of JFS (head, shoulders, and arms only), adding variations for movements of arms and hands that helped her with sense of direction. Then we started with neck strengthening exercises adding eye exercise by request. The eye exercise helped her to be constantly aware how easy her body especially, neck area, get tense and deal with the tension immediately. As a result the neck mobility and ROM were improved significantly and close to average. Also she noticed significant decrease in stress while driving and dealing with everyday activities.

### **a – Initial intake –**

JFK is a slim build (less than a 100 lb) and beautiful looking woman of Iranian descend. Her mother died due to childbirth complications, leaving her husband with three children. JFK was growing in a big family of five sisters and a brother with help of her stepmother whom she respects very much. “We learned how to always behave” recalls JFK.

Since her teenage years, she felt that she was born in a different place (eventually she left her country to live in America). She was attending an American missionary school for a few years. When she reached college age, she moved to her uncle’s house in NJ. She graduated college with BS in Political Science. JFK got married at 26 to her husband who is a doctor and who loves and respects her very much and who is also working almost 70 hours a week. She lived with her mother-in-law for 5 years and it was and still is not an easy relationship. Together with her husband, they have three children, two boys and a girl. All children were born by C-section. During the years of taking care of children, she had no time for any kind of physical activities, except being busy mom, which was a lot. Also having dyslexia that was diagnosed later in her life when she was in her early 40’s, prevented her from joining any dance or aerobic class for she knew she has difficulty to follow directions.

She remembers the first time she had neck pain when the family was on vacation about 25 years ago. She turned her head and a very sharp pain penetrated her neck (“it is so painful that you feel the whole body is like going into paralysis just to handle it” says JFK) so she could not stay to the end of the diner. The pain was gone in a few hours. With the time, JFK learned how to manage her pain by going into immediate stillness and patiently wait until it is over. The pain could be gone in a second or could linger for a minute or so. She says it can come at any moment, more often when she has to prepare a house for holidays when she cleans and cooks a lot. The shoulders and neck area gets extremely sensitive and tense, and she takes Tylenol to handle it.

JFK works at the same place for the last 12 years. “I like my coworkers” she says, “Why look for something else?” She is very active at the synagogue, especially with the synagogue’s Sisterhood Club. She was excited about the opportunity to start a yoga class (and later joined Pilates and Belly Dancing as well also taught by me) at the synagogue for as she describes “she was getting extremely weak all over the body (“could not pull her trousers on if standing”) and she noticed progressive stiffness all over the body in addition to already chronic neck stiffness. It was

difficult for her to bend down to pick something from the floor or simply squat even though she grew up in a house where western type of the toilet was unheard of. Driving a car became such a difficult and hazardous task for the head needs to be turned quite often.

I asked if she had any type of therapy, she said no, for the pain comes and goes and she learned to handle it and does not want to bother her busy doctor husband with it.

We have such a great rapport since I started teaching structural yoga classes at the synagogue. She was very excited at the opportunity to have more classes with me for her neck because her neck is much better and she got stronger since she started the structural yoga classes where the main attention is Pavanmuktasana.

**b – Physical assessment** and posture body reading

The ROM and MT assessments are done in two sessions.

JFK weighs less than 100lb at 5'1". Body reading reveals head 7° forward, with slightly round shoulders. She has a fair muscle tone all over the body except neck area, which is limiter in ROM and strength. Even though her ROM is better since she started yoga class, she states there is still a lot of room for improvement of her ROM and muscle tone.

Range of Motion Assessments							
Joint Action	ROM	March	10	June	2	August	2
	Norm°	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right
<b>ANKLE</b>							
Inversion	45°	30°	30°			40	40
<b>KNEE</b>							
Flexion (Supine)	150°	140°	135°			145	145
<b>HIP</b>							
Flexion (Bent Knee)	135°	80°	80°			105	105
Flexion (Straight-Leg Raise)	90°	65°	65°			80	80
Flexors-quad/psoas restriction	NSS						
External Rotation (Supine)	45°-60°	40°	40°			45	45
Internal Rotation (Supine)	35°	30°	32°			30	35
External Rotation (Prone)	45°-60°	55°	50°			55	55
Internal Rotation (Prone)	35°	30°	35°			35	35
Adduction (Side Lying)	30°-40°	35°	35°			40	40
Abduction (Side Lying)	45°	45°	45°			45	45
<b>NECK</b>							
Lateral Flexion	45°	40°	40°	35	40	35	45
Rotation	70°	60°	65°	60	65	65	67
<b>SHOULDER</b>							
Abduction	40°	20°	20°	30	35	35	37
Adduction	130°	120°	125°	125	125	125	130
External Rotation	90°	75°	82°	74	82	80	85

Internal Rotation	80°	72°	75°	74	77	80	80
Flexion	180°	170°	172°	170	172	173	175

### Muscle Testing Assessments

Joint Action	March	22	June	2nd	August	2
	Left, 1-5	Right, 1-5	Left, 1-5	Right, 1-5	Left, 1-5	Right, 1-5
<b>ANKLE</b>						
Inversion	3	3			4	4
<b>KNEE</b>						
Extension	3	3			4	4
Flexion	3	3			4	4
<b>HIP</b>						
Hip Flexors & Abs (Supine)	2				4	4
Trunk Flexion (Supine)	2				4	4
Hip Flexors - Bent Knee (Supine)	2	2			4	4
Iliopsoas Isolation (Supine)	2	3			4	4
Sartorius Isolation (Supine)	3	3			4	4
Abduction (Side Lying)	3	3			4	4
Adduction (Side Lying)	3	3			4	4
Quadratus Lumborum (Seated)	3	3			3.5	3.5
<b>NECK</b>						
Extension	1		2		2	
Flexion	2		2		3	
Lateral Flexion	1	2	2	2	2	3
Rotation	1	2	2	2	3	3
<b>SHOULDER</b>						
Abduction	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
Adduction	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
External Rotation	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
Internal Rotation	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
Flexion	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
Extension	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
<b>ELBOW</b>						

Extension	3	3	3.5	3.5	4	4
Flexion	3	3	3.5	3.5	4	4
<b>WRIST</b>						
Flexion	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
Extension	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
Radial Deviation	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
Ulnar Deviation	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5

**c – Summary of findings**

**What is tight                      What is weak                      Needs Release**

SCM	SCM	upper trapezius
Upper Trapezius	upper trapezius	
Scalenes	middle trapezius	
Pectorals	semispinalis capitis	
Anterior Deltoids	posterior deltoid	
latissimus dorsi	infraspinatus	
anterior deltoid		
teres major		

**d – Recommendations for loss of tone and flexibility**

Because JFK was familiar with JFS we concentrated on importance of not rushing through the movements and the practice itself. She likes the grounding and centering part of the routine, showing me the way she does intention setting and a prayer part. We added abdominal breathing after it with one hand on her chest and another on the belly, to be aware of chest lift and expansion of the belly (Mukunda Stiles big book Ch#7) up to 12 breaths. After breathing she will do the neck and shoulders portion of Pavanmuktasana. She asked about number of repetitions and I recommended to do three to each side if she had limited time or to do the movement until it feels complete if she has more time. She also was concerned about some days when she would have no time (See Q. and A. from Yoga forum portion of my paper)

**1. April 25, 2008 (Intake)**

We met at a coffee shop and talked about her life and her condition. She expects to get better ROM, less frequent and painful episodes with her neck, also developing her own yoga routine. To work further on improving her sense of direction and “maybe a peaceful mind”- as she said.

**2. May 3, 2008**

JFK was assessed with ROM. She has symmetrically limited ROM of her joints all over the body, except neck and shoulders area, which are tense and weak. The left side of her neck and shoulders has less movements and weaker compare to the right. She will continue with the JFS and breath awareness exercises (Yoga international "Simply Breathing" Rolf Sovik)

### **3. May 22, 2008**

MT showed improved tone of muscles all over the body except neck and shoulder area, she stated that her neck ROM is improved and driving is much comfortable now. She is less stressed on the road for she can turn her head now! Based on these we added cat bow and neck strengthening (see Mukunda's big book Chapter #18) to her JFS routine.

### **4. May 31, 2008**

JFK was upset about difficulties with her daughter's behavior. "When I don't think about my children I am happy," she said. The thoughts about what kind of bad things could happen with her 21 years old child who is still in college were overwhelming her making her heart beat faster and feeling very anxious. I used Sutra 16, Chapter 2 in response to her concerns: The suffering form pain that has not arisen is avoidable. (Mukunda Stiles *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali With Great Respect and Love*) (Also see Q and A. of Yoga forum on this matter) .We tried breathing with Yoni Mudra on her belly (Mukunda SYT Training, 2008) to bring her vata home. She stated that this practice calms her mind and body. She said she would remember to use it when she is upset.

### **5. June 2, 2008**

She fell a few days before trying to mount a box to a shelf and bruised her left upper arm and thigh badly. Fortunately, there were no fractures she said. She did not practice due to fall. As we talked she said that she is constipated often. Recommendation was to sip a big glass of tea-hot-like water on empty stomach in the morning. In addition, I called her with recommendations from yoga forum on what to food avoid (see yoga forum Q and A). We did hands on neck tension lessening techniques (Mukunda's SYT Training, 2008). She asked me "what was it? I felt so relaxed and peaceful in that place". She will continue with her practice as before.

### **6. June 23, 2008**

She feels fine. The bruises are almost gone. The second assessment of ROM and MT of neck and shoulders are done. The MT is at stable two and her left side rotation is less maybe due to fall. She has difficulty finding the right position for her forearms movement when upper arms parallel to the floor (JFS cactus arms). We corrected and brought awareness to these areas by using a wall and a floor to find the position for her forearms that will keep her wrist neutral and feel "sthiram sukham asanam"-Yoga Sutras, Patanjali Chapter 2, Sutra 46, while moving the forearms up and down. Also, we added variations for arms and hands so the mind can build a pathway to work with her difficulties in directions due to dyslexia. (See appendix for variations).She was reminded to check her posture often; bringing shoulders toward the ceiling, back, and toward the floor (this kind of wording works better for her due to dyslexia) and relaxing them without collapsing the spine.

### **7. July 2, 2008**

JFK shared that her daughter was talking to her and agreed to see psychologist. They had a nice time at a mall and the main thing was that JFK told her daughter that she

loves her very much and would always be available to help her no matter what. We added a McKenzie head retraction-chicken tuck (see Appendix). She mentioned that her eyes get tired during her work at the computer .I recommended eye exercise (see Appendix).with Pran mudra (see Appendix). She would close her eyes between changing the direction of eyes movement, take relaxing breath and notice if the rest of the body is relaxing.

#### **8. July 9, 2008**

JFK signed up for the next session of a dance class that I teach at a local studio. She said it helps a lot to “find herself in space”. She continues with JFS and breathing. She takes 5 minutes breaks almost every hour to do her eyes exercise at work. The neck and shoulders area are benefiting from that as well she said. Also, to get in a habit to drink warm water in a morning is not an easy task. However, she pays attention now to how she hydrates herself during the day.

#### **9. July 16, 2008**

JFK has her morning routine by now.

\*Starts with intention setting and her prayer.

\*Breathing with her hands on a belly with Yoni Mudra

\*JFS for neck and shoulders with McKenzie chin tucks

\*Neck and shoulders strengthening exercises

\*Shavasana 5-10 with more breath awareness.

We added a Triangle pose at the wall so she is aware of mostly her neck alignment and simple twist. Both asana should benefit her neck and shoulders.

#### **10. August 2, 2008**

The third assessment of ROM and MT was done. There is an improvement in muscles strength and ROM. She states that the breathing helps her to deal with an anxious mind.

I recommend continuing with the present routine. Also, JFK continues to come to my yoga classes weekly and we have regular correspondence by email.

### **e – Results of your recommendations**

**JFK** reported that driving has become comfortable now as she was turning her head right and left with a smile. She is paying attention when she needs to signal before a turn. She feels toned and stronger through out her body. She surprised her sister by squatting easily one day when they were together and JFK proudly said “I do yoga. Maybe you should do too.”. Breathing and positive thinking make her be less tense and helped her to relax her busy mind. Change of the

way she eats is still in progress. She hydrates herself better though trough out of the day and working on having class of warm water in the morning.

## 2.a – Name and description of the condition

The source of information is from Dyslexia Adults Link - [www.dyslexia-adults.com](http://www.dyslexia-adults.com)

Dyslexia: Test If you answered yes to 5 or more questions you might have the condition. JFK answers yes to all of these questions. However the degree of the condition is not debilitating. She graduated from college majoring in Political Science. The most pronounced difficulty is with the sense of direction. Her mom was left handed and she re-taught her second child to be right handed.

If you answer 'Yes' to **five** or more of these questions, then you may be dyslexic

- When writing checks do you frequently find yourself making mistakes?**
- When using the telephone, do you tend to get the numbers mixed up when you dial?**
- Is your spelling poor?**
- Do you mix up dates and times and miss appointments?**
- Do you find forms difficult and confusing?**
- Do you find it difficult to take messages on the telephone and pass them on correctly?**
- Do you mix up numbers like 95 and 59?**
- Do you find it difficult to say the months of the year forward in a fluent manner?**
- Do you have difficulties follow right, left, up, and down directions?**

However, dyslexia can be a positive advantage.

Dyslexia is usually associated with average, above or high intelligence. Although it creates difficulties in particular areas, dyslexia people frequently enjoy above average physical co-ordination skills, lateral thinking abilities, empathy and can be creatively gifted

There are some famous dyslexics: To name just a few.

### **Tom Cruise**

Tom Cruise is an American actor and producer

### **Steve Jobs**

Founder of Apple Computers, CED of Apple and Pixar, the Academy Award-winning animation studio

### **Cher**

Cher is an American actress and singer

### **Thomas Edison**

Thomas Alva Edison (February 11, 1847 – October 18, 1931) was an inventor and businessman

### **General George Patton**

George Smith Patton, Jr., was a leading U.S. Army general in World War II

### **Nelson Rockefeller**

Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller, an American politician, was Governor of New York

### **Pablo Picasso**

Pablo Picasso, Spanish painter, was one of the recognized masters of 20th century art

### **Lewis Carroll**

British author of 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' and 'Through the Looking Glass'..

### **Leonardo da Vinci**

Leonardo da Vinci was an Italian Renaissance architect, musician, anatomist, inventor, engineer, sculptor, geometer, and painter

### **Thomas Jefferson**

Thomas Jefferson was the third President of the United States and an American statesman, ambassador to France, political philosopher, revolutionary, agriculturalist, horticulturist, land owner, architect,

### **John F. Kennedy**

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, often referred to as Jack Kennedy or JFK, was the 35th President of the United States (1961–1963)

### **Mohammad Ali**

Olympic light heavyweight boxing champion

**Babe Ruthi** Often called the greatest of all baseball players

The greater barrier to success is the lack of confidence experienced because of problems with writing and correct spelling.

A Washington University report showed that dyslexic children's brains have to work five times as hard as non-dyslexic children when working at rhyming puzzles. However, musical puzzles are not a problem for them.

The dyslexic has a nice collection of capabilities, which are in fact advantages when used in the right context.

"I have no special talents, I am only passionately curious: -said Albert Einstein,

It is ok and even necessary to use the imagination as a scientist, entertainer or inventor. And these capabilities are present in dyslexic children; they just need help to become fully developed. When advantages are nurtured they boost self-confidence.

The ordinary ways of learning such as repetition or drill does not work. Dyslexic thinks in pictures instead of words. Non-dyslexics have verbal thoughts, which are thinking in words and have a linear process that occurs with a speed of about 150 words per minute. Dyslexics have non-verbal thoughts thinking in pictures, where the picture grows as the thought process adds more concepts. Therefore, it is much faster, possibly thousands of times faster (a picture is worth a thousands words.) Because of its speed it happens in the subconscious mind. However when there is no mental picture for a particular word, it causes disorientation.

While reading, dyslexics have a mental picture of the context. This way they will read words that aren't there. For example, they will read cat instead of kitten. Why? Because they already have a mental picture with all the details. They are in a hurry to proceed so they do not pay much attention to the exact phrasing, which they consider superfluous ballast. End result; they see kitten and say cat.

When communicating some thoughts it could be hard to order them for there is too much information in the head, and they do not know where to start. They feel the words are coming too slowly in comparison with the thoughts that are going through the head. Therefore, they skip words or sentences to be able to follow their own thinking process.

Dyslexics receive the whole picture in a glance, not only using their eyes but all their senses. This could give some problems with speaking and reading for when they start the page, they want to be at the end of the page at the same time, taking the whole page in one sweep. They do not read the whole word just parts of a word or the beginning and the end the rest is a guess.

The perceiving and pronouncing words could be difficult. It seems clear in the head but somehow the word will not come out.

Disorientation is also happens without dyslexic awareness. Temporary confusion while listening, reading, writing or play cause lost of focus, attention interest, and being clumsy. The states are not constant; they come and go unconsciously.

The overall picture is that dyslexia can be caused by inherited factors, and /or hearing problems at an early age.

Dyslexia is frequently found in families that are left-handed.

The brain-scanning research has been used for examination of the brains of dyslexic people and found bunches of the cells beneath the surface of the brain which lie on the surface in the brain of a non-dyslexic person. It seems that these groups of cells haven't moved to the brain's surface at the time when the brain was developing in the fetus. These entopic clusters of cells are mainly found in the left and the front of the brain; the areas which are important for reading and writing. Another area of the brain, which deals with our ability to see moving images, is smaller in the brains of dyslexic people. This makes reading harder, where the brain has to quickly interpret the different letters and words which the eyes see as they scan words and sentences. In addition, the

brains of dyslexic children show an unusual variation in left and right side activity. Research has found that where as non-dyslexic children use the left side of their brain for language work, dyslexic children have to use the right side as well. This is not the side of the brain that is wired for language work, and as a result the brains of dyslexic children and adults have to work about 6 times harder. This may be why dyslexic becomes fatigued by language work and dealing with text.

Learning strategies to overcome the difficulties associated with dyslexia can make huge difference to the performance of a child or adult. In particular a 'multi-sensory method where language learned not only by hearing and saying the sound of the letters but also by using their visual and tactile memories by writing letters in the air, making them with clay or write on big sheets of paper. This gives their brain visual and tactile memories of the word as the memory of hearing the sounds of the letters.

### Chronic Neck Tension

The source of information is from <http://www.thepain.net>

Neck problems are a modern epidemic, especially with office workers. When talking to people who work at computers, it is rare to find someone who has never had neck problems. The busier and the more stressful the job the more problems there seem to be. The neck muscles were made for work where they contract and then relax. This happens for instance when chopping wood. It is remarkable how well the neck supports this type of activity after prolonged practice. However, while working at a computer the neck muscles only have to support, in addition to the head and arms, maybe the weight of a sheet of paper. Despite this, neck problems crop up. This is caused by prolonged tension of the neck muscles, which they do not handle well. The most common cause for neck pains is the so-called tension neck. Its symptoms are fatigue, stiffness, numbness, and pain in the neck muscles. The symptoms usually get worse at work, where the muscles remain contracted, especially if the work is stressful and deadline-oriented.

Examination shows that the cervical spine is mobile, but that the neck muscles are sore. An x-ray usually shows only a straightening of the cervical spine that is due to increased muscle tension.

First aid consists of anti-inflammatory medication, and the problems usually are alleviated with heat treatment, massage, and relaxing physical therapy. Mild symptoms can be treated at home by exercising the neck and shoulder muscles and using cold or hot compresses.

If the symptoms are strong, exercising may worsen the pain. Strengthening the muscles and being in a good general condition are the most important long-term remedies, and these can be started after the acute pain subsides.

If normal treatment is not helpful, a more thorough analysis is needed. Checking work posture and other ergonomic factors, levels of stress, condition of the muscles, hobbies and pillows used for sleeping on may be necessary.

Using bifocals may cause repeated nodding movements, which can make the neck muscles sore. Take this up with your ophthalmologist.

Often those who suffer from a tension neck are perfectionists by nature. It is hard to change one's nature, but having a long-term self-care plan might be useful.

If general nervousness is combined with neck tension, hypnosis or using biofeedback to help relax the muscles could be considered. These methods help observe how the muscles get tense and how that tension can be reduced. It is usually easy to adjust for instance the height and position of office desks and chairs.

Those who have neck tension may have hobbies that cause neck stress. Knitting may be one of these, and while doing it one should take short breaks, have the elbows supported on a surface and reduce the number of hours spent knitting.

Swimming, using the breaststroke while keeping one's head above water, is not a great idea for someone suffering from neck tension. It is advisable to swim with the face under water and keeping the neck straight and relaxed. Switching between swimming styles and using crawl and the backstroke would be good. Stretching the neck muscles after swimming is advisable.

Check what kind of pillow you are using if you experience neck pain at night or in the morning. While sleeping on the stomach the cervical spine often locks in a position and may cause pain. Whatever position you sleep in, ideally the neck should be straight and supported. There are plenty of pillows that will help achieve this, although they don't always correct the problem. During the night we shift positions many times, and thus do not remain in the ideal position.

Over-the-counter anti-inflammatory can be used as a self-treatment for a few days to treat neck problems.

Over-the-counter ointments may be used for muscle pain. If the pain is new and strong, cold compresses may help. After a few days, heat treatment may alleviate the pain better.

Light exercise such as stretching the neck and shoulders, moving the head forward and back and tensing and relaxing the neck muscles is helpful.

Harder exercises should be avoided until the pain has subsided. Exercise with weights and other exercise that increases muscle strength and stamina can be beneficial.

It is necessary to implement correct work postures at the office and at home if neck tension is a problem. Take several short breaks during the day, and do light neck and shoulder exercise during the breaks.

Those who work with computers should make sure that there is space in front of the keyboard to rest the hands on and that the monitor is not positioned too high. Sit facing the computer and support the lower back.

Avoid long stretches of work without pause, as well as long drives without stops. While driving, hold the steering wheel at its lowest point and relax the shoulders.

Check periodically while working to see whether the muscles are tense and relax them. If you have a tendency to push the head forward, check and correct your position several times a day.

Keep your neck straight while sleeping.

Practice a sport where the muscles are tensed and relaxed to counter continuous muscle tension and take care of your general health. Adequate relaxation is a must.

## **b – Gross and subtle body common symptoms**

Chronic neck tension brings lots of stress to everyday activities. The symptoms include neck and shoulders and upper back pain, reduced neck mobility. Also, forward head with the neck in front of shoulders is common. The shoulders might look elevated and chest could be slightly sunken, and the whole torso is turned just to take a look around the shoulder.

Dyslexia has no visual symptoms (except left-handedness). However, uneducated dyslexic might have low self-esteem. Learning about the condition and people with dyslexia reduces stress and gives a chance to rediscover uniqueness of his or her brain.

### **c – Related challenges – lifestyle, diet, limitations on activities**

She is a mother of three children; working and being an activist in her synagogue, taking care of a big house and having lots of relatives make her life hectic especially during holidays. She eats coffee with something a little sweet for breakfast and fruit for a snack. Something little for lunch and main food is a dinner that she cooks for her husband and herself and they eat sometimes later at night 8-9pm, Multiple responsibilities brought stress to her life and contributed to accumulated tension in her neck and shoulders area as well as constipation. It seems that she is trying to take care of every possible problem in life of her family by herself.

### **3 – Ayurvedic assessment and Ayurvedic based yoga recommendations**

Chronic neck stiffness limits mobility that bring Kapha element up. JFS -for neck and shoulders, and having gentle massage done to relax tight muscles. During the days when she had to cook and clean a lot due to guests and holidays, pain all over the neck and shoulders indicate increase in Vata element. Rest with breathing into the pain area could help pain reduction (Hands in Yoni mudra to invite vata home). Constipation is Kapha imbalance as well. Also it is a vata imbalance as well for the bowel movements are not regular. The Kapha element requires cleansing practices. Daily hydration, avoiding foods that cause constipation, JFS, and breathing exercises would be the treatment. The weakness of her body is cause by decreased Kapha. Recommendation is JFS and Yoga asanas

### **4 – Common body reading**

Body reading reveals neck slightly in front of the shoulders with shoulders rounded and chest sunken. ROM of neck and shoulders will be below normal. Primary movers (SCM and upper trapezius most of the time weak)

You can spot dyslexic in a class if a person does the same side movements when you go to the right they will go to there right. And of course on the road if person signals to the right and turns to the left it is usually not because she or he would like to confuse you,; they are simply have trouble with directions. I realized that there are many students in my class who has direction related dyslexia.

### **5 – Contraindicated yoga practices and general activities to modify or eliminate**

No asana that put weight on the neck (headstand, full plow, shoulder stand, fish)

For dyslexia, a person needs to educate herself about the condition and using positive set of mind work with what they have.

### **6 – General recommendations for the condition**

#### **a – Therapeutic/free of pain**

Teaching dyslexic yoga requires a slightly different language. For example: instead of saying lift your arms to up say lift your arms to the ceiling. Also breaking movement into parts also helpful and slow down and break it apart when show what the movement is.

Reduce neck tension and pain by using the techniques that Mukunda teaches at SYTT. He recommends using more than one technique for pain is vata qualities and changes all the time. Options are:

1. Ask to describe the pain, and then breathe into the painful area. Allow your body to exhale, but keep the prana there. Keep your attention on the pain and watch what happens.
2. Breathe below the navel consistently for 2-3 min being supine with hands on belly or Yoni Mudra
3. Feel endpoints of the breath. Put your hands on the endpoints and observe
4. Do JFS coordinated with the breath/

**b – Stabilize situation** including lifestyle recommendations

Dealing with dyslexia is a life long experience. The main thing is learning more about how to use the condition to your advantage. However, sense of direction is learned as any other skills with some creativity, dedication, and a smile. Dancing helped JFK a lot and modifications on JFS as well.

The chronic neck tension JFS done breathing into the tense area. Sternocleidomastoid need to be strengthened by doing Triangle, Camel and Spinal twist. Upper trapezium strengthening by doing Cobra, Locust and Camel and stretched in bridge

She needs comfortable pillow to sleep, and maintain proper posture throughout a day.

Hydration of the whole body is also important.

**c – Maintenance** and long term considerations

Continue with her JFS routine plus variations and asana she learned during the therapy, and breathing exercises.

**7 – Questions and answers on Yoga Therapy from [www.yogaforums.com](http://www.yogaforums.com)**

**Q. JFK said that sometimes she is busy and it could be a problem sticking to the everyday routine.**

**Self discipline**

Self discipline (tapas in the Yoga Sutras II, 1 and 43) and is generated in baby steps until Grace comes along and shows you another way. Just do what you can for now. Baba Muktananda said, "Whatever you do on your spiritual path never goes to waste." That is the bottom line.

Being regular and doing some practice every day increases your capacity to love. As your heart gets stronger than you can do more and make a bigger commitment to Self-love. Doing sadhana at the same time, place do built the Shakti (energy of Spirit), which in turn increases the likelihood of Grace happening. Keep all this in mind and above all be gentle in your persistence to love.

**Q. Constipation**

A. Contraindicated are foods that slow down digestion. Also avoid chocolate, heavy animal protein, and excessive carbohydrates. Poses done with awareness of breath begin to balance vata. For pitta aspect increase Agni, digestive fire with pranayama like Agnisar dhouti. This is done by exhaling retaining breath and pumping belly back and forth as many times as possible before inhaling. Concentration and visualization on building digestive fire is secret to it working

### **Q kapalabhati pranayama**

A: That depends on how it is taught. Kapalabhati as I have seen taught at Integral Yoga stimulates pitta; as I teach it is a kriya, purifying kapha. In either way it would not be contraindicated unless over done. For vata nadi shodhana or other gentle calming pranayama would be more indicated. Namaste.

**Q.** I am a working adult and started practicing yoga since 1 1/2 years ago. I took up yoga as I have neck and shoulder pain due to work stress (I am a stressful person anyway)

**A.** First of all, be careful what you say (I am a very stressful person) it becomes your reality. Nicole posted a nice quote on how our thoughts become our reality. Yoga can help you, but yoga is a slow process

**Q** My belief was that with daily stretching, I would get more limber and the body would be less stiff (upon waking).

**A.** In the act or process of sleep the front body falls very deeply into the back body, the being falls deeply into the past. Those things behind us represent the past.

There is a large web of connective tissue in the back body referred to as fascia. This fascia runs from the occipital ridge down to the big toe (it may in fact be two sheaths rather than one). It obviously encompasses the entire back body.

When we wake we are coming out of sleep, out of the past, and waking into our present (some into their future). The fascia of the back body needs to be gently awakened from the depth of its rest - typically 6 hours or more. It is for this reason Purna Yoga has a Morning Series designed specifically to release and awaken the fascia of the back body.

As we age we have a longer past, more behind us. So it would be logical to expect that over time as we age this awakening might be more involved, especially with unresolved issues from the years behind us.

I am not a Bikram practitioner or teacher. I am familiar with the practice and, absent of high heat and intense "doing", I do not find the practice to be therapeutic. If you do in your body then that is perfectly fine. We all have a unique path and it is "your hundred years" to spend as you see fit. **No matter, the practice one chooses should be one that serves the student's life.**

### **Q Asanas lowering shoulder**

**A.** Ahhh my friend, I think you might need some cat bows in your life!!

Do you have Mukunda Stiles', *Structural Yoga Therapy* book?

If not, search for **cat bows** here and follow Mukunda's instructions very closely. Let me know if you have any questions.

Keeping your shoulder joint safe is better accomplished by moving the scapula down and back rather than thinking about trying to move the shoulder joint in any way. When bringing up the hands over head as you described from Tadasana or Samasthiti, try beginning with palm up--in

anatomical position--gently leading with your pinkies; this drops the scapula down and back properly by activating the glen humeral motor pattern in the proper sequence. Try that and see if that helps your

### **Q shoulder and neck pain & JFS**

A. I would suggest you do the JFS very slowly and learn to focus attention on the currents of sensation in your body. They are likely to be pronounced not just the specific joint you are addressing but at diverse regions. So encourage that awareness. As long as your body is having a discharge of strain, pain or spontaneous motions (kriyas) keep doing whatever you are doing. Just be gentle. If this is the way your body is healing

If you fatigue while doing JFS then you simply need persistence to build muscle tone. In that case follow guidelines in SYT book chapters 17 & 18 if tone is not coming by being progressive then it is a sign that rest is appropriate. Often rest is needed when injured tissue is recovering from physiological changes of stress leaving your body. The joints are often where pre arthritis changes are stored. If that is the case then search this site for arthritis diet 10 day cleanse.  
namaste m

### **Q. Stress**

A. For those unfamiliar with the concept of our multidimensional anatomy, the koshas, refer to Structural Yoga Therapy, chapter 6.

Stress has not changed. The ways in which we respond to it have changed. There are many studies on the changing of epidemics, heart disease, cancer, and more recently environmental toxicity. When one looks at ancient medical texts death came much earlier and often due to traumas from wars and the malnutrition brought on by loss of crops during wartime.

The two subtlest koshas vijnana and ananda are indicators of spiritual stress, not being connected to wisdom and higher power. Much of our wisdom has needed to survive the test of time thus; we seek wisdom from those texts that are highly revered for thousands of years. That which is available as contemporary insights would rarely survive such a test. We need the help of a thorough investigation into this human condition and what has been of help in the past. By seeking historical ways of dealing with stress we can see how wise people of our era have adapted these teachings for this modern life.

In looking at Classical Yoga of the Yoga Sutras II, 4 we see that Patanjali viewed all stress as originating from avidya, ignorance which is the fourth kosha. When we misidentify ourselves to be merely our physical body we tend to not listen to messages that come from a subtler level. Then there are others who are more "in their heads" who do not listen to messages coming from a grosser kosha. So it depends on where you conceive yourself to live that is the source of your perspective of stress. Namaste.

### **8 – References and websites**

**Stiles, Mukunda Structural Yoga Therapy. Adapting to the individual.**

**Weiser Books Boston, Ma/York Beach, ME 2000**

**\*Stiles, Mukunda Yoga Therapy for knees and shoulders**

**Yoga International magazine**

**.Mukunda Stiles The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali With Great Respect and Love**

**Weiser Books Boston, Ma/York Beach, ME**

**\* Rolf Sovik Simply breathing**

**Yoga International magazine [www.yimag.org](http://www.yimag.org)**

\*Professor Dirk Bakker "The brain and dyslexia"

\* [www.dyslexia-magazine.com](http://www.dyslexia-magazine.com)

\* [www.dyslexia-adults.com](http://www.dyslexia-adults.com)

\* [www.dyslexia-test.com//](http://www.dyslexia-test.com//)

**\* Gertrud Hirschi Yoga in your Hands. Mudras.**

**Weiser Books Boston, Ma/York Beach,ME 2000**

**[SYTT Whiplash by Willem van Poelje July 2007, London](http://www.yogatherapycenter.com)  
[http://www.yogatherapycenter](http://www.yogatherapycenter.com)**

## **9 – Appendix**

### **Eye Exercises (Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy, Mukunda Stiles 2007)**

#### **Vertical Eye Movements**

Moving eyes vertically up and down as far as you can, 4 times.

Close your eyes and rest for a breath or two.

#### **Horizontal Eye Movements**

Moving eyes from a focal point to the far right and far left without moving head, 4 times

Close your eyes and rest for a breath or two.

#### **Diagonal Eye Movements**

Moving eyes from the upper right corner to the lower left corner, 4 times. Then from upper left to lower right corner 4 times.

Close your eyes and rest for a breath or two.

#### **Circular Eye Movements**

Slowly roll your eyes clockwise, then counterclockwise 4times to each direction.

Close your eyes and rest for a breath or two.

Remember to remain in the posture with a straight but relaxed spine hands on knees, head straight and motionless through all movements.

At the conclusion, rub your palms together, feel the heat, then cup the palms up over your eyes. Breathe

### **Hands Mudra ( from book by Gertrud Hirschi “Yoga in your Hands. Mudras”)**

With each hand: Place the tips of the thumb, ring finger and little finger together. The other fingers remain extended. The Pran Mudra generally increases vitality, reduces fatigue and nervousness and improves vision. It is also used against eye diseases. Clear eyes are also a sign of a mental outlook emphasizing clarity and a clear mind, which means clearly structured thoughts and ideas

**McKenzie head retraction-chicken tuck (McKenzie, 2001)** Sit in a comfortable position. Look straight ahead. Keep looking straight ahead for the duration of the exercise. Allow yourself to relax completely and note that your head will protrude a little. Slowly move your head backwards as far as it will go. Keep your chin tucked down and in: in other words do not look down or look up when your head is pulled back as far as it will go. This is the retracted head position. Maintain this position for a few seconds and then relax this will automatically allow your head to protrude. Inhale while retraction the head and exhale while relaxing. Include this exercise after neck flexion/extension(JFs#19) McKenzie recommends 10 repetitions per session and 6-8 sessions per day (once every two hours) to alleviate neck pain. For yoga therapy purposes, once or twice a day should be enough. Chickens do this exercise all the time! (SYTT Whiplash by Willem van Poelje)

### **Variations of JFS to improve sense of directions:**

1. Wrists flexion/extension(Mukunda's variations)
2. Bring 4 fingers together and thumb is out(both hands)
3. Thumb and pointy finger together and 3 other fingers together
4. Middle finger joins thumb and pointy finger and 2 other together
5. Ring finger joins n middle finger joins thumb and pointy finger and pinky is apart
6. Spread your fingers wide as you flex your wrists
7. Repeat

2. Cactus arm: after JFS movement of forearms up and down, start with forearms up (language is important for dyslexics .Avoid using up or down, but toward the sky ...etc)

And move them in circular motions toward middle line of the body x 3-6

Then move them in circular motion away from the middle line x 3-6

Next the same circular motion where one arm chasing another after x3-6 reverse direction

3. Also for the forearm: starting position one arm stretched to the side with palm up, another in cactus position with palm open to the front

The stretched arm palm touches shoulder and the cactus arm goes up and down with neutral wrist afterx3-6 switch position of arms, repeat x3-6

More difficult variation: while cactus arm goes up and down the other arm is making circles x3-6, then switch.

4. If you would like variations for feet and hands contact Marina Bardash for details.

## 10 – Biography

**Marina Mukhtadevi Bardash** was born in former Russian republic Uzbekistan. She immigrated to USA with her husband and two daughters almost 17 years ago. She has a Master's degree in computer science, RN and Structural RYT. She is also AFAA certified Fitness Instructor, teaching Yoga, Pilates and Dance classes around Bergen County, NJ with enthusiasm and a smile .