Mobility and Stability
The Body’s Way

Key Concepts

The following notes contain excerpts from the book:


**The Body’s Way Principle Four:**

**The Body Demands Simultaneous Mobility and Stability**

Having only Mobility or only Stability is not enough to maintain a healthy and fit body. It is easy to see that the body insists upon Mobility (energy in constant motion) because of the abundant presence of joints in the body, which is one of the ways energy gets moved. When empowered by the adjoining muscles and connective tissues, the 13 primary joints in the body - the wrists, elbows, shoulders, hips, knees, ankles and spine provide various forms and degrees of Mobility. The same muscles, connective tissues and joint designs also provide Stability (stillness, rest). Without Stability, the body could not move safely and would become overly stimulated and unhealthy. Without Mobility, the body could not move at all and would become stiff and unhealthy. The Body’s Way provides us with all the tools we need to achieve the proper balance of Stability and Mobility. The Nia 5 Stages naturally move energy vertically, horizontally and in circles, providing a body with critically important three-dimensional movement capabilities in our three-dimensional world.

Some people have too much Mobility and not enough Stability. This hyper-mobility creates a false sense of Mobility and Flexibility and the need for more stabilizing forces of the joints, muscles, ligaments and tendons. Other people have too much Stability at the expense of Mobility and Flexibility, something common among the vast number of people who sit in office chairs for many hours each day. Their joints, muscles and connective tissues have become stiff and rigid. Either excessive Mobility or excessive Stability can lead to osteoarthritis, forms of subtle and chronic pain, injury and the sensation of fatigue. Balance between sensing Mobility and Stability is necessary to maintain fitness and health.
Every stage of the Nia 5 Stages integrates Mobility and Stability. Practicing Nia 5 Stages in a way where you feel personally connected to the sensation of Mobility and Stability will help you integrate these two sensations in your body. By sensing ease of movement and energy in constant motion and ease of movement and energy in stillness in all 13 joints and in the muscles you can become aware of which joints and muscles need Self-Healing energy of Mobility and/or Stability. As you regain Mobility and Stability in locked and stiff joints and muscles, you will experience more power and relaxation in your whole body.

The Sensations of Mobility and Stability

Mobility

- Mobility is sensed as energy in constant motion
- Mobility is sensed as a continuous energy flow and excitation of the nerves around the joints
- Dynamic Mobility, the perfect balance between excitation and relaxation, is sensed as youthful freedom
- Losing Mobility is sensed as tightness, discomfort, and loss of power

Stability

- Stability is sensed as calmness in the muscles, combined with readiness for action
- Stability is maintained by equalizing muscular contraction and relaxation
- Stability is sensed as a harmony between the muscles and joints
- Dynamic Stability, the perfect balance of opposites, is sensed as powerful peace
- Losing Stability is sensed as weakness and a loss of balance and support

Mobility and Stability – Test Yours!

The Body’s Way reminds us that healthy joints require toned surrounding muscles. Good muscle tone keeps your joints and bones aligned and your muscles responsive to the demands for Mobility and Stability. To check your body’s joint Mobility and Stability, use the checklist below, and use sensation to find out which joints are too tight or too loose. The sensation of too tight means you’ve lost Mobility and can’t fully move the joint the way it was designed to move. This indicates you need to do some Self-Healing by loosening things up. The sensation of too loose means you don’t have enough positive tension, i.e. the kind of tension that provides Strength and Stability. If you lack Stability, you’ll need to do some Self-Healing by tightening things up.

As you work your way through the guide and tests using the chart below, record your results in the checklist that follows. Check both your both your right and left sides, and choose between Full, Moderate or Slight. Full indicates that you have 90%–100% of the ideal range of motion, and your joint is healthy. Moderate indicates you have 50%–90% range of motion. Slight indicates that you have less than 50% range of motion.

Once you’ve completed the checklist, feel free to move on without much concern for joints you’ve marked as Full. For joints you’ve marked Moderate, you’ll need to exercise with greater care. For joints marked Slight, you should move ahead cautiously.

Ankles

Joint Design and Function: I am a hinge joint, designed to flex, point, and circle.

Mobility Guide: Full Mobility means your ankle joint can fully open up in the back and close in the front (to flex your foot up toward your shinbone) and circle in both directions. It can stretch the muscles in the front of your shin and contract your calf muscles (to point your toe all the way forward).

Mobility Test: Lift your leg slightly off the floor and flex your foot up and down. Next, circle your foot in both directions, sensing for Mobility in your ankle joint.
Stability Guide: Full Stability means your ankle joint can support you in rising up and down on your toes, without wobbling in or out to the sides. Instability is the feeling of your feet grabbing the floor, your toes pulling in and overly contracting the muscles of your feet.

Stability Test: While standing, slowly rise onto the balls of both feet, bringing both heels high off the ground. Sustain elevated balance. Then slowly lower both heels back down, sensing for Stability in your ankle joint as you stop moving.

Knees

Joint Design and Function: I am a hinge joint, designed to open and close. When I am healthy you should be able to easily bend and extend your lower leg, and to stop and start without stress.

Mobility Guide: Full Mobility means your knee joint can close enough to bring your heel up and close to your buttocks. It also means your knee joint can open all the way, contracting your quadriceps (front of thigh muscles), and stretching your hamstrings (back of thigh muscles).

Mobility Test: Lift your leg off the floor, so that you can freely bend and extend your lower leg, sensing for Mobility in your knee joint.

Stability Guide: Full Stability means your knee joint can support you in moving and stopping without locking or tensing. Instability is the feeling of your knees pushing back and overly contracting your thigh muscles.

Stability Test: Walk briskly around the room and stop suddenly several times, sensing for Stability in your knee joint.

Hips

Joint Design and Function: I am a ball and socket joint. I am designed to rotate your thighbone and keep your pelvis moving freely.

Mobility Guide: Full Mobility means your hip joint can freely move your thighbone and pelvis. This makes it easy to lift and lower your leg, turn your toes (in, out, or parallel), walk with grace, run with ease, sink and rise effortlessly and move your pelvis freely.

Mobility Test: Stand with your feet wider than hip-width and your knees slightly bent. Circle your pelvis in both directions, as though using a hula-hoop, with minimal knee movement. Next, lift one foot off the floor and circle your thighbone. Then, standing on one leg, turn your other toes in, out, and parallel, moving from the hip joint to assess your Mobility.

Stability Guide: Full Stability means your hip joint can fully support you in balancing, walking, sinking and rising. Instability is the feeling of your hips being out of control.

Stability Test: Walk freely around the room and stop suddenly. Pause, balancing on one foot as you sense the Stability in your hip joint.

Wrists

Joint Design and Function: I am a condyloid joint, designed to flex, extend and to carry the flow of movement from your arm to your hand.

Mobility Guide: Full Mobility means your wrist joint can flex and pull your fingers up and back. It can also extend your palm forward, pointing your fingers down. You can also fluidly circle your hand in both directions.

Mobility Test: Circle your hand in both directions. Next, flex your hand with your palm facing away from you and gently pull your fingers up and back toward you. Next, bend your palm forward, pointing your fingers down. Now gently pull your fingers toward you, noticing the Mobility in your wrist.

Stability Guide: Full Stability means your wrist joint can support you in starting and stopping motions, as in catching a ball and in holding, balancing and bearing body weight, as in a handstand or holding onto a handrail. Instability is the feeling of your wrists collapsing.

Stability Test: Wave your hand aggressively, then suddenly stop your hand and forearm from moving. Sense for Stability in your wrist as you stop moving.
Elbows

Joint Design and Function: I am a hinge joint, designed to bend and extend your forearm.

Mobility Guide: Full Mobility means your elbow joint can open up to extend your forearm in a straight line. It can also close, bringing your hand up to your shoulder. Full Mobility also means you can freely shake the muscles in your forearm and hand.

Mobility Test: With your arm hanging down at the side of your body and with your palm facing front, bring your hand up toward the same shoulder. Next move your hand back down, opening up the inside of your elbow. You should be able to open and close all the way.

Stability Guide: Full Stability means your elbow joint can suddenly stop any hand and arm motion. It can also support body weight. Instability is the feeling of your elbows giving out.

Stability Test: Point out into space with your index finger, and extend your entire arm. Sense for Stability in your elbow joint as you sustain your reach into space.

Shoulders

Joint Design and Function: I am a ball and socket joint, designed to move freely. When I am healthy, you should be able to move your upper arm in all directions.

Mobility Guide: Full Mobility means your shoulder joint can support your upper arm in moving in all directions.

Mobility Test: Freely move your upper arm in all directions - up, down, front, back, and all around. Sense for Mobility in your shoulder joint and notice any resistance.

Stability Guide: Full Stability means your shoulder joint can support your hands and arms in starting and stopping motions, and in supporting body weight. Instability is the feeling that your shoulders are incapable of providing support and power to your arms and hands.

Stability Test: With your hand, throw an imaginary ball up into space. Next, thrust your arm and hand up in front of you as a shield. Sense for Stability in your shoulder joint as you stop moving.

Spine

Joint Design and Function: I am a multi-axial joint, designed to move in subtle and unique ways.

Mobility Guide: Full Mobility means that your spine can support you in moving off your standard vertical alignment – folding, opening, bending, extending and twisting. It can change shape easily and return to a relaxed and powerful state of vertical alignment.

Mobility Test: Bend forward, rounding your spine and hang. Next, stand tall and look up at the ceiling, extending and lengthening your spine. Then, stand tall and twist from left to right. Now bend side to side. Sense for Mobility in your spine.

Stability Guide: Full Stability means your spine can support you from the inside out to lift, lower, bend, twist, push and pull. Instability is the feeling of your spine as weak and vulnerable.

Stability Test: With your hands holding onto an imaginary blanket, shake the blanket several times, sensing for Stability in your spine as you stop moving.
**Joint Mobility and Stability Test Results**

Record your results in the checklist below. Choose between Full, Moderate or Slight.

**Full** indicates that you have 90%–100% of the ideal range of motion and means your joint is healthy.

**Moderate** indicates you have 50%–90% range of motion.

**Slight** indicates that you have less than 50% range of motion.

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<th>Joint</th>
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<th>Stability Results</th>
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DEBBIE SAYS

The 5 Stages is a way to begin Self-Healing, realigning the body, reconnecting the top to the bottom, developing an integration and a symmetrical organization between the physical body and the energy body. They can be practiced while focusing on an individual body part with the desire to self-heal it, such as the hip joint, which is what we talk about in the book. They can also be used to connect to one of the five sensations: Strength, Flexibility, Agility, Mobility, Stability. They can be used to explore the relationship between two sensations, which is what we’re going to do today. The two sensations that we’re going to focus on are Mobility and Stability. Our intention is to increase our awareness of the sensations of Mobility and Stability so that we can activate the two sensations as desired for conditioning.

Introduction to Mobility and Stability

When you look at The Body’s Way, which is the design of the body, Mobility and Stability balance the energy of the body. We have Mobility to move and then we have Stability to rest.

Mobility

When the body is mobile, it is in motion. The conditioning received from working with Mobility is an increase in endurance. We gain two kinds of endurance from working with Mobility. One is that of muscular endurance. The localized muscles being used to perform the movement adapt to the stimulus and, in the future, are better able to keep moving for longer periods of time.

The other type of endurance gained is that of cardiovascular endurance. With cardiovascular endurance, your heart and vascular networks are better able to pump oxygen-carrying blood to where the body needs it in order to keep moving the way it is moving. Mobility leads to endurance.

Stability

To sense Stability, you are going to be asked to sustain a posture in stillness. If I sustain a posture in vertical alignment, it requires that my body rest on the earth in this walking position. It also requires that I have a relationship to what’s above me so I’m not collapsed into my foundation. My body is rising up and out. There’s a connection with where I am supported from inside and a connection to the energy fields outside of me.

If I’m perfectly balanced vertically, there’s less stress. The moment I start to shift off that vertical alignment and move around an axis, there’s stress. We call that positive stress. That means that the wires of the muscles tighten and loosen, tighten and loosen, and tighten and loosen.

If you sit and lean back, you’re going to start to feel that something is grabbing. That’s positive tension. And now if you move around to the side you’ll feel, “Oh, that’s positive tension.” And then if you move forward, “Oh, that’s positive tension.” If you lift your legs off the ground, you’re going to start to feel another kind of positive tension. Now balance on top of the world. The sensation that you feel when you’re on top of the world is something we call Dynamic Ease. Dynamic means you are doing something - lifting your feet off. Now slip into the sensation of ease. What can you do to relax? Slide into relaxed joints. When you balance on top of the world with Dynamic Ease, you are in alignment with your physical body and the energy fields outside of you.

Now balance without Dynamic Ease, without relaxing your joints. This is the cat that stuck the finger in the socket.

Now be dynamic, and balance on top of the world. Now find ease and relax the joints. Bringing in ease increases the engagement of the core. When you’re working with Dynamic Ease, you feel like the tail of your body is loose like a cat, but with posture and architecture. The posture is really coming from a place of support. The 5 Stages is one of the best ways to find and condition the core.

We’re going to focus on Mobility and Stability. And, even though we’re focusing on Mobility and Stability, please know that you’re going to get endurance, strength, flexibility and agility as well. We’re just going to emphasize these two. When I say “Mobility,” you’re going to be in constant motion. When I say “Stability,” you’re going to stop and sense your core.
PART 1: YOUR BODY’S WAY PRACTICE
Welcome
Show & Tell
5 Stages – Your Body’s Way
  • Body Awareness
  • 5 Stages
  • Body Gratitude

PART 2: THE BODY’S WAY PRACTICE
The Body’s Way Lesson
5 Stages - The Body’s Way Script
Body Gratitude
Closing

The Body’s Way Lesson

Look
  • Demonstrate Mobility and Stability
5 Stages -
The Body's Way Script

THE BODY’S WAY PRACTICE 1:

**Embryonic**
Rest into Embryonic. In stillness, connect to the architecture of Embryonic. Lying in Embryonic, imagine you are in the womb. A womb is circular. It's round. The body, in the womb, is folded.

It's the unfolding process that makes it possible for your body to begin to move through the birth canal. In Embryonic, just rest into this folded posture and feel the architecture.

**Stability**
Embryonic. You are sensing Stability. Non-movement. It's quiet. There's no movement. Stability contains the sensation of Ease. Use the stage of Embryonic and the sensation of Ease to connect to your breath, deeply inhaling and exhaling. Sense the flow of breath moving through your body and connecting you to the volume and space inside and outside. When you feel the natural impulse, in your organic way, begin to connect to the energy of Mobility.

**Mobility**
Move. Mobility means that the energy starts and doesn't stop. Your motion will be continuous in Embryonic. Everything you need is provided. Constant motion. Small movements in the womb. The space is limited. The environment is liquid. Your relationship to the space around you is radial - three hundred and sixty degrees of sensory IQ connection. Sensing Mobility, the body is in constant motion. Cooking all four sides, your body connects to earth through your front, back, left and right sides. Your breath, a long exhale and full inhale, helps you to integrate action and relaxation. You are learning to move dynamically with ease. No thinking. Seeking pleasure, your body moves in stage one, Embryonic.

**Stability and Mobility**

**Creeping**
In your own way, in your own time, allow the front of your body to connect to the earth.

**Stability**
Without moving, in Stability, settle into the architecture of Creeping. As if ready to climb a mountain, one knee is drawn up. Your feet are sunny-side up. Your pelvis is
resting on the earth. There is a slope of energy from the base of your spine to the crown of your head. Your hands are pushing into the earth, and your chest is elevated off the floor. Sense the Stability. Sense the Flexibility along your spine. Sense the Strength in your chest and back. As your hands push into the earth, your eyes look forward into life.

**Mobility**

Mobility. Begin to move. The speed at which you move with Mobility is personal. First, witness what you do with your hands. Witness. Do I use all my fingers? Do I use my entire palm? The Body’s Way reminds us to use both hands fully. Witness and notice your head. The Body’s Way reminds us to look forward. The Body’s Way reminds us to keep the head moving forward, up, out and away from the torso. The Body’s Way reminds us to integrate the upper body with lower body and move in our own natural time. Witness your shinbones. If your shinbones rest on the earth, you are developing a stretch in the psoas muscle, the muscle responsible for the integration of the upper body with lower body. Pull with your arms and let your lower body stretch. Witness the distance between your feet. As you creep, if your feet remain closer together, there will be more stretch in the psoas muscle. Feel free to rest at any time.

**Stability and Mobility**


**Crawling**

Your feet are sunny-side up. It’s all about comfort and feeling ease along the spine.

**Stability**

Stable. Sense the architecture of Crawling in stillness. Like a table, you have four vertical supports. Your tabletop sinks. Your belly hangs. Your palms, the base of the table in front, are spread. Your knees and tops of your feet are connected to the earth. Your shoulder blades are hollow. Your eyes look forward. Your jaw is open. Your breath is full. Your eyes continue to look forward.

**Mobility**

It’s a slow motion Mobility. Mobility as a sensation reminds us to continually move. Continuous and slow. Slow motion. Sense and witness your wrists. The Body’s Way reminds us that the wrist joint is meant to open and close like the paws of a cat. Sense your paw and wrist. Imagine the underside of your hand
is a bear paw. Fat paws. Cushioned paws. Eyes look forward. Sense your shoulder blades sliding, the wings of your back bringing rotation to your thorax. And now look around in space. Allow your eyes to be curious about the world around you. Breathe deeply.

**Stability and Mobility**

Freeze in Stability. Sense your core. Notice how your breath massages the core of your body. Recognize how the core of your body is nourished as your lungs fill and empty. Inhale, smell the moment, and notice how your belly fills like a balloon. Exhale fully, more slowly, and notice how the exhale opens the back of your body, creating a sensation of stretch. Mobility. Crawl. Increase the speed of your crawling. Freeze. Stability. Push into any body part that is in touch with the earth and notice the Strength developing. This is the quality of Dynamic. Slip into the sensation of Ease so that the push is receptive. Mobility. Crawl. Hang the weight of your chest. Hang and hollow out between your shoulder blades. Eyes look forward. Begin to look up to the corners of the room as you crawl. Notice how changing your focal point shifts the flow of energy from crown to tail along your spine. Freeze. Sense your breath. Sense your Stability. Find the sensation of Dynamic Ease as you rest. Witness. “What joint can I relax into?” Crawl. Pause and freeze. Return to all fours. Sense the architecture.

For a brief moment, curl your knuckles under like a monkey. Collapse between your shoulder blades. Your spine is lengthened. Your arms are long. Collapse between your shoulder blades - as if squeezing an orange between your shoulder blades. Look out. Feel the monkey-like action.

Now return to your palms. Collapse between your shoulder blades. Crawl. Mobility. Let your breath be full. Let your speed increase. Relax between your shoulder blades. Let your spine hang down. When you feel ready, when your body is impulsed, move from Crawling into Standing.

**Standing**

Slowly, your toes curl under. Stabilize and sense the power of energy running from your foundation. Your feet are like an electrical circuit connecting you to the earth. Sense the energy moving through your body. Inhale and exhale. The crown of your head is up and out. Inhale and exhale. Your spine is vertical.

Return back to Crawling. Shift into Standing. This time, as you shift into Standing, notice the shift of your spinal energy from horizontal to vertical. Notice what happens to your breath. Witness what it means to have gravity pulling down.

Once again, go back to Crawling and notice what it means to have your spine horizontal where most of the downward pull is through your belly. Notice the lumbar curve and cervical curves that have developed. Once again, when you feel ready, push into Standing. Notice how your sacrum is curled and supporting you like a hand from underneath. Notice how the extension of your spine makes it possible to look up and out. If it feels appropriate, one or both hands reach. Feel free to shift your body weight from one foot to the other, or feel free to stay on the balls of the feet.
Stability

Mobility
Mobility in this stage means to shift your ribcage, arms, and hands. Mobility. Shift where your eyes look. Create tiny movements.

Stability
Freeze. Stability. Where is your center? Center is radiating 360 degrees, floating over the horizontal surface of earth. Center is also vertical. You are suspended from heaven and resting on earth.

Walking
When you’re ready, your feet push and you find yourself Walking.

Mobility
Walking Mobility. Continuous walking. No thinking. Move into the sensation of, “Now I am walking, suspended from heaven and earth.”

Stability
Stability. Stop. Notice your breath. Let it be a full inhale and exhale. Sense Dynamic. Dynamic is the pride you feel. Dynamic is the ideal. Dynamic is activated by being here, now, in your body, connected to heaven and earth. Dynamic is you presenting your spirit, who you are, in this moment and time. Ease is the relaxation of resting on earth and rising to heaven. The breath activates ease. The inhale receiving, the exhale giving out – trusting and knowing that there is another inhale coming. There is no need to hold on. Give out. There is another inhale coming. I merely wait for the in.

Stability and Mobility

Notice that when you are given more time, your body has an opportunity to adjust itself. The Body’s Way reminds us that we are a self-organizing system that seeks comfort and pleasure. As we shift our movement, we are adapting our internal pressures – the volume and space – with the external pressures – volume and space. We are dependent upon our movement interfacing with the world around us. Walking. Mobility.
THE BODY’S WAY PRACTICE 2:

**Embryonic**


In your own way, in your own time, please move into Creeping.

**Creeping**


And when you’re ready, stop. Push down on whatever points are touching the earth and see if you can float one or more body parts off the earth. Balance on top of the world. Sense Dynamic Ease. Now back to Mobility. Creeping. And when you’re ready, move into crawling.

**Crawling**

Mobility. Crawling. Faster speed. No thinking. Sensing. And now Stability. Like the pointer, the dog that points, lengthen and extend any body part that is off the ground. Lengthen it and extend it. Where are you balancing on top of the earth? Sense it. Feel the Strength. Feel Ease. And now Mobility. Crawling. Stability. Lengthen it and extend any point that’s off, the ground. Mobility. Stability. Mobility. When you feel ready, you will push yourself into Standing.

**Standing**

Mobility in upper body, arms and hands. Eyes look. Move. More freedom. More breath. Use Mobility to condition your heart and lungs. Push the air with your hands. Challenge your base to stabilize by having more Mobility in the upper body. Feel free to adjust to find comfort. When you feel ready, freeze. Now push two inches and come back down into your base. Push two
inches and come back down into your base. Now push three inches and come back down into your base. Move through three planes and levels. Mobility. Up and down. You are in the Standing stage conditioning your legs and joints. You are preparing yourself to do one of the most amazing balancing acts that we can possibly do. Now, Stability. Find your center. Relax and feel Dynamic Ease. Mobility. Stability. Find Dynamic Ease. Do what you need to do. Shaking muscles is good. Opening your jaw is good. Softening your joints. Relaxing. Remember the heaven above. Remember the earth below. Remember the 360 degrees. Support yourself by breathing. Mobility. And when you are ready, Mobility in Walking.

Walking

Mobility. Five powerful stages. Not only for Strength, but also for Flexibility, Mobility, Agility, and Stability. Sense Dynamic Ease in your body. Walk and touch the earth. Lengthen up and allow heaven to touch you. Breathe deeply. Be energetically connected from the inside out. Now, Stability. If this was the last posture that you were ever going to experience before you died, what would you change? Change it. Find comfort. This is not about you doing it. This is about you experiencing. This is about you being connected from the inside out. Go back to Walking. Mobility.
Body Gratitude
Guide participants to give gratitude to their body by walking around the room and noticing the healing changes that have occurred.

Closing
Guide participants through the Closing of your choice: the 7-minute Workout, a Guided Meditation, or an Unique Step Out of your own.