

## ***Personalizing Pilates / Computer Hunchbacks*** Illustrated Exercises

### **Exercise 1 – Neck, shoulder and upper back stretch**

Sit a bit forward in your chair. Place your left hand underneath your left buttock, palm facing up. Tip your opposite, or right, ear towards your right shoulder to get a good stretch in the left side of your neck (1a). Hold for a few seconds. Switch sides(1b).



### **Exercise 2 – Mobilizes tight muscles high in the back of your neck**

Sit tall with your arms by your sides. Look straight ahead at something on your horizon (2a). Imagine that you are a turtle and that you are going to gently retract your head back into its shell just a couple of inches (2b). Hold and release. This is a subtle movement – look at the distance between the back of my head and the curtain in the two photos.



2a

2b

### **Exercise 3 – Stretches your chest and strengthens your upper back**

Bend your elbows please and tuck them into your waist. Your forearms are forward with your palms turned to face each other. Sit up tall and look at something on your horizon. Lift your heart up and out of your chest (3a). Slowly pulse your elbows back, moving in slow motion (3b).



### **Exercise 4 – Strengthens your upper back and aligns your neck**

Now we combine exercises 2 and 3. Sit tall and bend your elbows. Look straight ahead at something on your horizon. Imagine retracting your head back a couple of inches into its imaginary turtle shell. Hold. Gently pulse your elbows back.



## **Exercise 5 – Stretches tight shoulders, upper back and neck muscles**

Sit tall. Reach both arms forward and interlace your fingers. Turn your hands 'inside out' so that your palms face away from each other. Look forward at something on your horizon. Reach your arms forward at about shoulder height. (5a). Keeping your shoulders heavy, float your arms to the height of your eyes (5b). Float up another few inches (5c). Float them up to the sky, keeping shoulders down (5d).



5a



5b



5c



5d

## **Exercise 6 – Strengthens upper back and aligns your neck**

Clasp your hands together and place them behind your head. Look straight ahead at something on your horizon (6a). Press your head gently back into your hands as if you were retracting your head into its turtle shell (6b). Hold. Press both elbows back just a couple of inches (6c).



6a



6b



6c



### **Exercise 7 - Strengthens lower back muscles & stretches hip flexors**

Stand with your feet wider than your hips. Place your hands behind you in the small of your back, fingertips pointing inward (7a). Lift your heart and imagine doing a back dive over your hands. (7b)



7a

7b

### **Exercise 8 – Stretches your chest, strengthens your upper/lower back**

Lie on your tummy with your forehead resting on your towel, arms by your sides. Roll both shoulders away from the mat (8a). Roll both shoulders away from the mat and float your forehead (8b). Float both arms over the mat as well (8c).



8a – shoulders roll back



8b – shoulders roll back, forehead floats



8c – shoulders roll back, forehead floats, arms float 1 mm