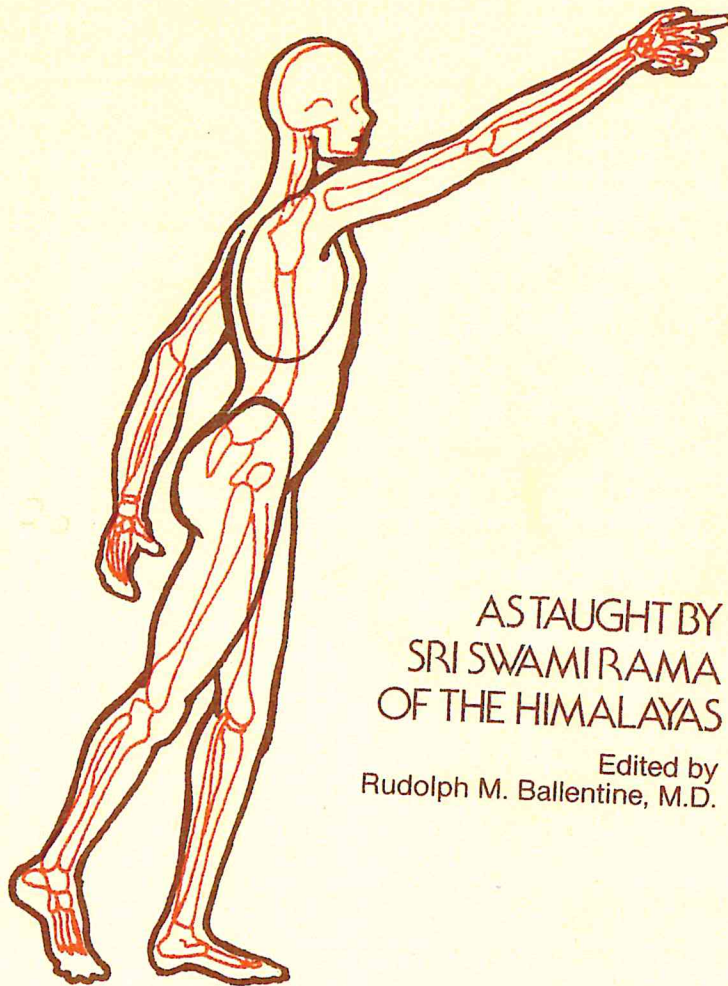


JOINTS AND GLANDS EXERCISES



ASTAUGHT BY
SRI SWAMI RAMA
OF THE HIMALAYAS

Edited by
Rudolph M. Ballentine, M.D.

TORSO & LEGS

STANDING FORWARD BEND

Stand firm with the feet spread well apart. Inhale and raise the arms over the head with the palms facing forward. With an exhalation, begin to bend forward, moving the arms and shoulders imitating a swimming motion. The motion of the arms and the forward bending movement alternately stretch first one side of the body and then the other. Make the movements smooth and rhythmic. Inhaling slowly, raise up, continuing the same motion. Stand erect, lower the arms and relax. This exercise is a preparation for the forward bending *asanas*. It loosens the thigh joints and stretches the muscles of the back of the legs and the back.

TWISTING BEND

Stand with the feet two to three feet apart. Inhaling, raise the arms straight out to the sides level with the shoulders. With an exhalation, bend forward and, twisting the trunk, touch the right hand to the left foot and turn the head and look up at the up-raised left hand. Twist to the right touching the left hand to the right foot and turning the head to look at the right hand now high in the air. Alternate on this twisting from side to side according to your capacity.



LEGS & FEET

LEG KICK

Stand firm and place the hands on the waist. Lift the left foot off the floor and bring it forward slightly, finding your balance on the right foot. Keep both legs straight. With a sharp movement, kick the leg back to touch the buttocks with the heel. Let the leg return to the starting position (slightly lifted from the floor). Repeat with the right leg.

KNEE SWIRL

With the same stance as above, raise the left thigh to a horizontal position and let the leg hang loosely from the knee down. Begin to gently swing the leg at the knee in a circular motion, first clockwise, then counter-clockwise, trying not to move the thigh. The calf, ankle and foot should remain relaxed throughout the rotation. Relax and repeat with the right leg.

DANCING KNEES

Stand with the feet spread slightly. Tense and lift all the muscles of the thigh and around the left knee cap, raising the knee cap (Figure 39). Relax and let it fall back into place. Alternate with left and right knees.

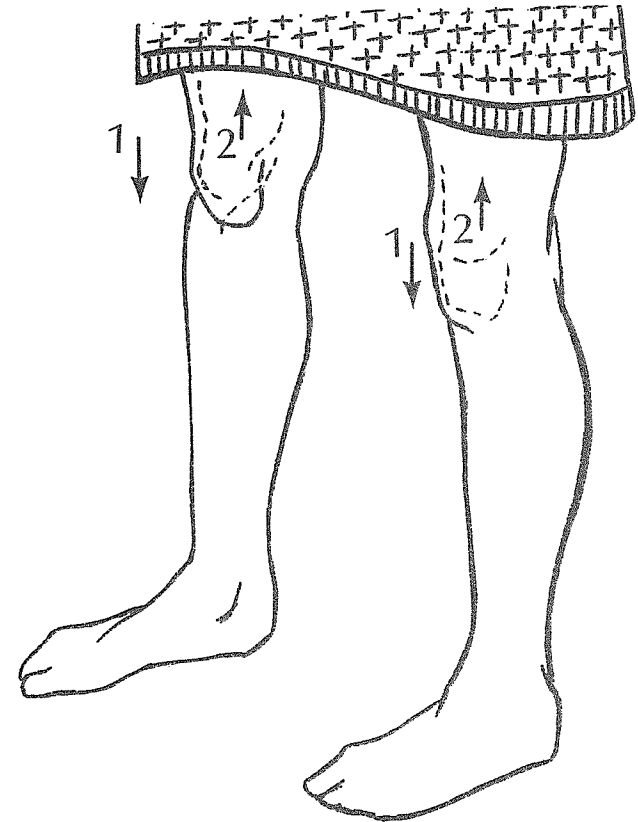


Figure 39

KNEE BENDS

Spread the feet about a foot apart and, keeping the feet flat on the floor, squat down with the buttocks near the floor. Rest the hands on the floor in front of you (Figure 40, no. 1). Inhale and raise the hips up, straightening the legs, but let the hands remain on the floor or close to the floor (Figure 40, no. 2). Then exhale and squat again between the knees. Repeat several times.

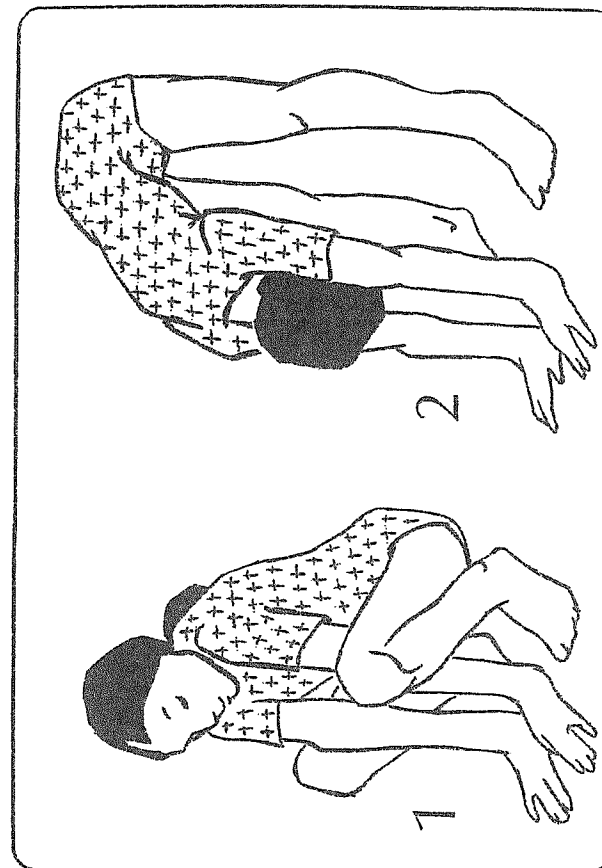


Figure 40

ANKLE SQUAT

Spread the feet about a foot apart and, keeping the feet flat on the floor, squat down with the buttocks near the floor. Become balanced in this position. The arms can rest over the knees or can come forward slightly and rest with the back of the upper arms against the shins (Figure 41). Remain in this position for up to one minute.



Figure 41

ANKLE & FEET

Stand erect with the hands on the waist. Keep the left leg straight and lift it six inches off the floor. Bending at the ankle, lift the foot up, pointing the toes toward the ceiling. Relax the foot. Then point the toes downward as far as possible. Then relax the foot.

Without turning or twisting the leg, turn the foot and ankle to the left, pointing the toes as far out to the side as possible (Figure 42). Return to center. Turn the foot in, pointing the toes towards the right. Bring it back to center position.

Rotate the foot (so that only the ankle and foot move) first to the left, then up, to the right, and down, touching on the four points mentioned above. Rotate three times in each direction.

Bring the foot back to the floor. Relax completely in a standing position, then repeat the same movements with the right foot.

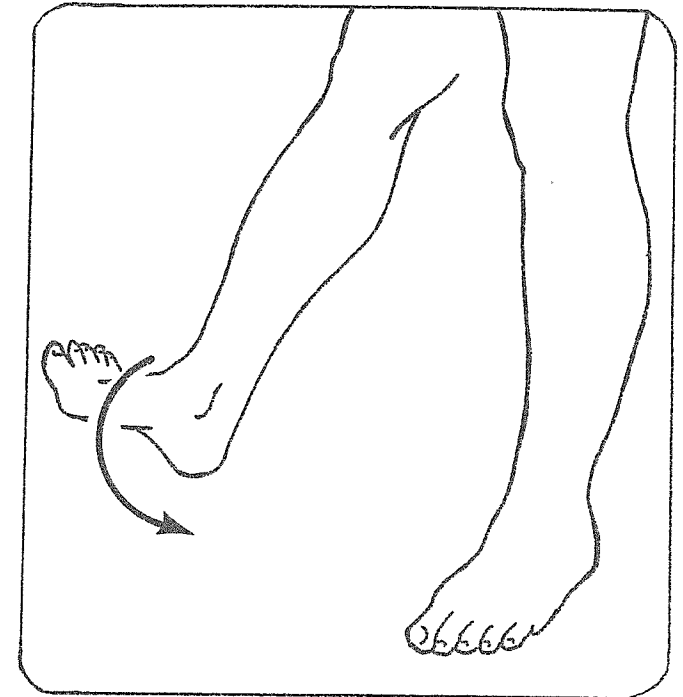


Figure 42

TOE BALANCE

Stand straight with the feet together and the hands on the hips. Inhale and raise up onto the toes (Figure 43). When the inhalation is complete, exhale and lower the heels back to the floor. Repeat several times.

Raise up onto the toes as indicated above and remain in position for thirty seconds or to your capacity. It helps the balance if the gaze is fixed on an object. After becoming steady in this position, perform the same movement with the eyes closed.

Stand erect with the feet close together. Inhale and simultaneously raise up onto the toes and raise the arms straight out in front of you level with the shoulder with the palms turned down (Figure 43).

Keeping the trunk, arms, and head stationary, exhale and turn to the left as far as you can, twisting from the waist and continuing to balance on the toes (Figure 43). Inhale and come back to the center, then turn to the right in the same manner. After proper balance is achieved, perform the above movements with the eyes closed.

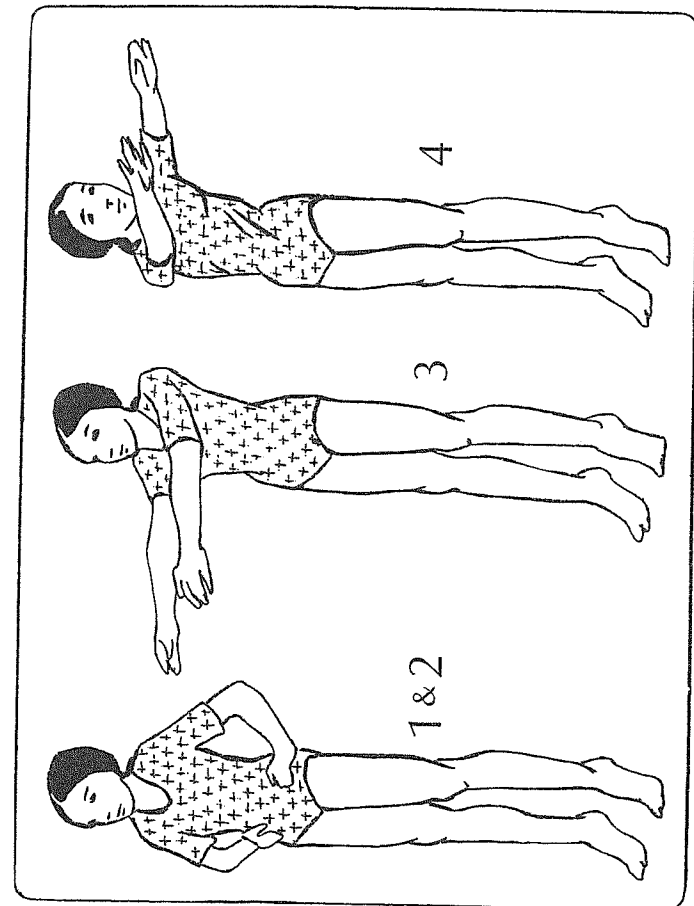


Figure 43