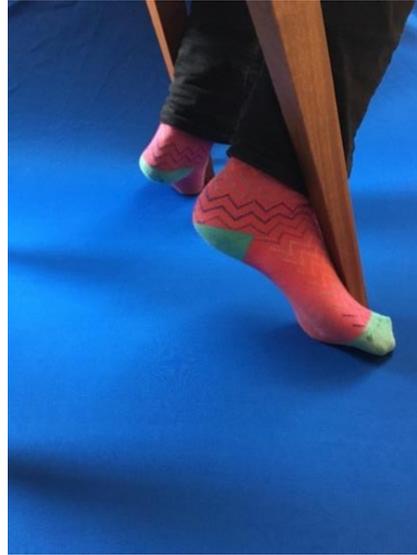


Some thoughts to help with BENDING WHILE SITTING



This eight year old makes it look easy. She's bending from the hip joints while keeping her back lengthened and supple – i.e. not collapsing the spine in any way – AND she's doing something active while sitting cross legged. As we get older it's easy to lose the ability to move in such a healthy and efficient way, and right now while working from home (WFH) continues with no clear sign of an end date, it's good to remind ourselves of some things to avoid while sitting.

WFH for so many will mean sitting at a desk with a monitor or laptop in front of us, and if you've got the basic good ergonomics of having the screen in line with your gaze or slightly below, and the keyboard either in line or slightly below your elbows, you can then turn your attention to what you're doing with your back. When you're practising and learning the Alexander Technique it's the thinking that needs to change, so it's a question of stopping, pausing for a moment, bringing the mind entirely into the present, and letting your thoughts take care of your postural balance.



You don't need to be sitting cross legged for your knees to be directing forward and slightly apart from one another, so make that your first thought. If that means you need to bring your feet forward and let them rest and spread out on the floor in front of you – great! That implies that your feet - before you thought about it - were twisted underneath your chair, maybe

soles turned upwards, maybe heels lifted and balanced on flattened toes, any of which might encourage harmful habits in terms of your lower back: either arching it with a pelvis pushing forward, or collapsing it backwards into a slump.

Now think of your sitting bones releasing into the chair, think of your head directing upwards (don't "do" it, because you'll stiffen, just think), let your stomach relax, breathe, and NOW if you need to bend forward you'll be bending more like the eight year old in the photo. It's a lot of work, but it's worth it!

Finally take a moment to feel good about yourself for taking a few minutes to look after your back.