Unlocking the Pelvic Floor™
Addressing the most misunderstood part of our musculoskeletal anatomy.

Pelvic floor weakness is more often due to pelvic floor tension and can be ineffectively treated with traditional pelvic floor strengthening exercises. Many times issues in this area are a result of the position in which we carry our pelvis which in turn affects how the muscles work. To do your part in making sure your pelvic girdle and pelvic floor are in the correct position, do these exercises on a regular basis!

Work your way up to holding each exercise sixty seconds, and repeat each 2-3 times per day!

Start by fixing the feet...

Foot Alignment
The position of your foot when walking is VERY important! The muscles in your legs and pelvis don’t work correctly unless the feet point straight ahead while walking...like the tires of your car. Use the straight-edge of a mat, a tile or a yoga block (shown) to line up the OUTSIDE edge of the foot.

Calf Stretch
A tight calf will alter your gait pattern, all the way up to the neck!

Use a ½ Dome or thick rolled towel. Keeping the foot straight, place the ball of the foot on the top of the dome. Step forward with the opposite foot as far as you can while keeping your body upright and balanced. Your hips should remain aligned over your back ankle.

If the calves are very tight, your upper body will really lean forward! Shorten your stride by moving the nonworking foot backward until your torso is upright.
A note on tension
Stress can have a direct impact on the tension on our muscles! Relieving stress can be a lengthy process, but start with these simple tips:

- Avoid excessive stimulants like caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, and sugars.
- Reduce stimulation in the evening, such as excessive television, computer use, and fast-paced music.
- Make sure you are getting eight hours of sleep per night. Often we think we don't need a full night's rest. However, observe your stimulant habits during the day - you might be taking in sugar and caffeine just to keep yourself awake!

Foot Stretch
If you have worn heels throughout your life, participated in sports like running, or tend to thrust your pelvis forward when standing, the muscles in the feet are extremely tight. Stand up and reach one leg back behind you, tucking the toes under as shown. If the foot cramps, then take a rest, but return to the stretch right away.

Double Calf Stretch
Do you sit all day? Wear heels? Tuck your pelvis under because it is the “proper” way to stand? However your pelvis has become tucked, the double calf stretch is a great way to see if your pelvis can even move!

Place your hands on the seat of a kitchen/desk chair. Line up the outside edges of your feet and straighten your legs all the way. Your weight should be back in your heels and all your toes liftable. See if you can lift your tailbone up to the ceiling without bending your knees!

These following exercises stretch and innervate the deeper gluteal and thigh muscles that stabilize the sacrum.

Seated “Number 4” Stretch
This is a great stretch for your piriformis, and you can do it anywhere you sit!

Cross your right ankle over your left knee. Try to lower the right knee to the same height as the right ankle. Gently tip pelvis forward, untucking the tailbone.

Pelvic List*
On the ground or on a block (shown)

*If you’ve had a hip replacement, stick with the exercise on the floor.

Try this on the floor first! With both legs completely straight, press one leg firmly down into the ground, causing the other hip to lift away from the ground. Use the outer muscles of the STANDING leg to do the work (as opposed to the using your low back muscles!) Neither knee should be bending... this is an exercise to strengthen your hips!

Add a block (or phone book) under your standing leg to increase the strength (and balance) challenge!

Strap Stretch**
Add a towel or pillow underneath your head if your neck is tight.

Lying on the floor, loop strap around the front of the foot, close to, but not on the toes. Extend your leg up to the ceiling, pulling the toes down toward you, keep your knee straight and the leg muscles relaxed (use your arm strength to hold the weight of the leg). Keeping the hips on the ground, slowly pull your leg across the midline of the body to stretch your outer thigh and hamstring.

**If you have a hip replacement, do not pull your leg across the midline of the body, but enjoy the stretch with your leg directly above you.