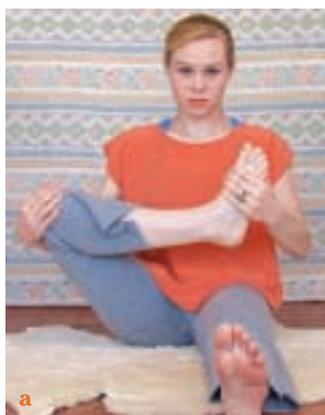


### Pigeon Pose Stretch

The following stretch is a modification of Pigeon Pose (Rajakapotasana) that I have found to be very effective in helping to loosen up the hips and stretch the hamstring and sciatic nerve. This can make sitting in Easy Pose much easier.

Sit with both legs stretched straight in front of you. Bend your right knee, taking the right foot in your left hand and the right knee in your right hand (figure a). If you have the flexibility, put your right foot in the crook of your left elbow and wrap your right arm around your right knee so the right knee is in the crook of your right elbow. Then cradle your right leg in front of your chest with your hands clasped together around



the leg. Sit with your spine straight and slowly pull your right leg up towards your chest, stretching your buttock and hip (figure b). Make sure to keep the spine straight and raise the leg to the chest, rather than bend the upper back

towards the leg. Hold the pose for 1 minute with Long Deep Breathing. Then change sides and repeat the stretch. Practicing this stretch daily will give you great benefits for sitting in Easy Pose.

### Challenge the Ego in You

Working the hips and thighs is also excellent for developing a comfortable Easy Pose. Here is a kriya called Challenge the Ego in You.<sup>3</sup> The benefit of this set is to align, strengthen, and stretch the hips, thighs, and legs to keep the sciatic nerve healthy. These exercises help create a proper flow of the energy in the first three chakras which are called the lower triangle. When this triangle is balanced, we establish an excellent physical foundation through the pelvis, which makes sitting easier.

In practicing this set, imagine in exercises 3, 4, 5, and 6 that you bend from a point three finger widths below your belly button, trying to keep the spine straight. This way, as you move the pelvis will adjust, which will help keep the pressure off the lumbar vertebrae.



1. Lie down on your stomach, bend your knees, and grab your ankles from the inside. Keep your chin on the floor. Use your hands to push your ankles out to the sides (1a), and then pull them back in towards each other (1b). Do not let your knees slide. Move quickly. Continue for 2½ minutes. This exercise may hurt if your liver is not clean.

2. Still lying on your stomach, bend your knees and place your hands on the outside of your ankles. Use your hands to open (2a) and close (2b) your legs by sliding your knees out and in. Continue for 2½ minutes.

<sup>3</sup> This set can be found in the manual, **Self-Knowledge**, from *Ancient Healing Ways* [www.a-healing.com](http://www.a-healing.com)



3. Sit on your heels in Rock Pose\* and interlock your hands behind your back (3a). Exhale as you bow your forehead to the ground bringing the arms up as high as possible in back (3b). This is called Yoga Mudra. Inhale as you rise back up into a sitting position. Continue for 3 minutes.



4. Repeat exercise 3 in Celibate Pose: from Rock Pose, spread the knees apart slightly and sit on the floor between the ankles (4a and 4b). You may need to build up to this gradually. If you are unable to sit in Celibate Pose, you can sit on a cushion to keep the pressure off the knees and ankles, or continue in Rock Pose. Continue for 3 minutes.

5. Sit with your legs stretched out in front of you and spread them wide apart. Keep the legs straight and hold onto your toes. If you can't reach your toes, grab your ankles. Stretch down to the left side bringing your torso towards your left knee. Rise up and stretch down to the right side bringing your torso towards your right knee. Continue for 1 minute.



6. Come into Frog Pose (6a). Keep your heels together and off the ground in both movements (modified Frog Pose). Inhale as you straighten the knees and bring the head down towards the knees (6b), exhale and come back down into Frog Pose. Start with 26 repetitions and as you build your strength and stamina, increase up to 108 repetitions.

7. Lie down in Corpse Pose (on the back, legs straight, arms by the sides with the palms facing up) and relax completely for 19 minutes.

\* See Glossary, pages 85-86.

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