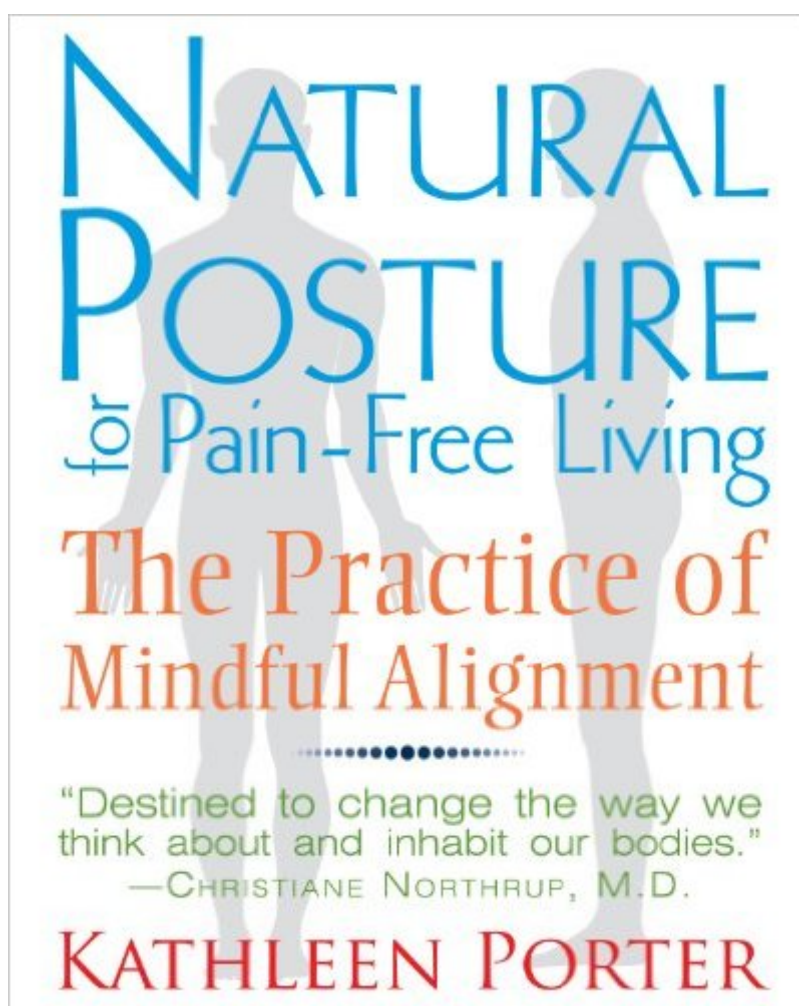


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# Natural Posture For Pain-Free Living: The Practice Of Mindful Alignment



## Synopsis

Restoring healthy posture from childhood for relief from chronic pain, easy flexibility, and enduring strength and vitality well into old age • Offers 12 physical exercises to become mindful of your posture and discover pain-free alignment of your pelvis, rib cage, shoulders, neck, and back • Provides simple yet detailed instructions on how to sit, stand, walk, bend, get up from a chair, sit to meditate, sleep, and practice yoga with proper alignment • Includes full-color diagrams and posture photographs from around the world

Our bones are the framework of support for our bodies, much like the wall studs and beams of a house. Yet the alignment of the skeleton along the vertical axis of gravity is largely overlooked today, even by fitness experts and yoga teachers. In a culture of cocked hips, sauntering models, and slouching TV watchers, where chin up, shoulders back, stomach in is believed to be good posture, we have forgotten what healthy alignment looks and feels like--leading to chronic neck, shoulder, and back pain for millions. Sharing photographs from around the world of gurus of natural posture and authentic strength, such as women in their 80s who easily carry heavy loads on their heads and toddlers learning to walk, Kathleen Porter shows what natural skeletal alignment truly looks like. With insights based on the fundamental laws of physics and detailed full-color diagrams, she guides you through an understanding of the body's naturally pain-free design. She explains that when the body is aligned as nature intended, your weight is supported by your bones rather than your muscles, allowing a blissful release from chronic muscular tension--which you may not even be aware you had. She offers 12 physical exercises to become mindful of your posture and discover healthy alignment of your pelvis, rib cage, shoulders, neck, and your body as a whole. Providing easy-to-follow instructions for mindful alignment during the most ordinary daily activities, even sleeping, as well as a chapter on practicing yoga safely, Porter shows how returning to our forgotten alignment from childhood can offer relief from chronic pain and tension and can provide easy flexibility, enduring strength, and vitality well into old age.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a joint review of *Natural Posture for Pain-Free Living* by Kathleen Porter, and *8 Steps to a Pain-Free Back* by Esther Gokhale (pronounced Go-Kale, according to the author blurb at the back of the book. The Porter book, by the way, is a slightly upgraded version of *Ageless Spine, Lasting Health: The Open Secret to Pain-Free Living and Comfortable Aging* by the same author. I don't see any significant difference between the two versions. I'm reviewing them together because they're basically the same idea: we have so much back pain, and other joint problems, because we don't live right, that is, don't stand right, don't sit right, don't move right, in particular we don't have a natural postural alignment. Both books have numerous pictures of people who DO stand properly, in many cases Africans and other non-Westerners carrying enormous loads on their heads, and young children standing, squatting and sitting with perfect alignment; contrasted with pictures of Western adults and teenagers standing and sitting in various atrocious-looking postures. Also, parenthetically, I want to call your attention to *Move Your DNA: Restore Your Health Through Natural Movement* by Katy Bowman, which I think is a much better book, demonstrating a much deeper understanding of the issues-- although harder to read, and perhaps a little too much discouraging information. My recommendation would be to get the Gokhale book, work with it for a while, and take a look at Bowman. Or learn from all three, and others as well; that's what I'm trying to do. But you have to keep re-examing as you keep learning; you can't just swallow what any of these authors say. There are a lot of experts out there saying a lot of wrong, and/or contradictory, stuff these days.

I really would like to give this book five stars because I agree with and have been helped by so much of what Kathleen Porter says. Unfortunately, though, I can't agree with all the reviews that praise the book's readability. Moreover, when I bought it I imagined I was going to find something like what I read in her interview with Dr. Mercola, one passage from which I quote here because no single tool to good posture has helped me more. "Pretend you're holding a shawl behind you and

you're about to wrap the shawl around your shoulders, but just before the shawl comes into contact with your back, move your back into the shawl. In other words, your breastbone or your sternum slides backwards towards your back. As you do that, you will feel an action through your abdomen. These are your core muscles, primarily your transversus abdominis (TVA) muscle coming into action. This is your real core. The TVA is the deepest abdominal muscle, which acts like an internal corset. Next, wiggle the back of your armpits up towards the ceiling, and feel your spine lengthening. Also notice the position of your chin. By bringing your chin down, the back of your neck lengthens and the cervical spine that goes through in the middle of your neck opens up. When you lift your chin up, you shorten your cervical spine. 'This is one of the most essential basic movements that helps retrain the body back to where it started,' Kathleen says. "I had such an instant response to the shawl idea that I implement it many times a day now and as a result my posture has improved ten-fold at the same time eliminating most of my little back pains and bought Porter's book for that reason.

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