

# **THE ENERGY & WELL-BEING POCKETBOOK**

***2nd Edition***

By Gillian Burn

*Drawings by Phil Hailstone*

"Good health and fitness are often taken for granted – a few simple steps can make a real difference to maintaining a happy and healthy life for the future. This pocketbook gives practical and clear advice, in an easily understood format. A few minutes' reading and following it will reduce the need to meet a doctor in the future."

**Dr Steven Boorman, Chief Medical Adviser, Royal Mail Group**

"This is a surprisingly thorough book, packed with practical advice. It will prove invaluable for anyone who wants to enjoy consistently high energy levels and the simple pleasure of feeling great."

**Clive Lewis, Managing Director, Illumine Training**

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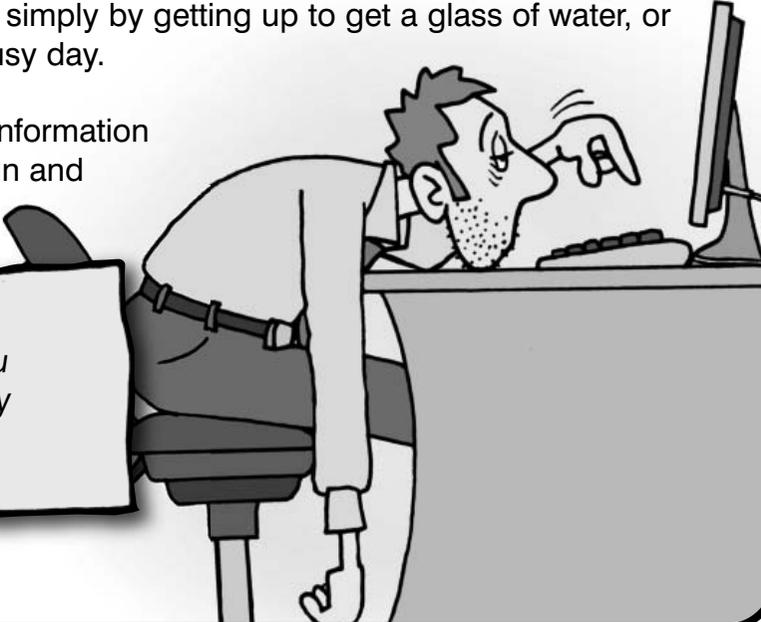
## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY

## ENERGY BREAKS



Our bodies need regular breaks during the day, at least every 45 minutes. This is a time for physical movement and a change of visual field, especially if you sit at a computer throughout the day. You can achieve this simply by getting up to get a glass of water, or taking some 'brain breaks' during your busy day.

Regular breaks help the brain assimilate information by increasing the blood supply to the brain and changing perspective on a situation.

A cartoon illustration of a man with a beard and glasses sitting at a desk with a computer. He has a stressed expression, with his hand to his forehead. A sign is pinned to the desk in front of him.

*'If you exercise your brain you will positively influence your BODY, if you exercise your body you will positively influence your BRAIN'*  
**Tony Buzan**

## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY

### BRAIN BREAK DESK EXERCISES



Try the following exercises adapted from The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy:

- **Executive stretch or elbow flare** – place your hands behind your neck loosely grasped. Keep your head and neck tall. Squeeze below the shoulder blades and take your elbows back, taking care not to press on your neck. Hold for five seconds.
- **Shoulder shrug** – keep your shoulders back and lift them towards your ears, breathing in slowly. Tighten the muscles in your shoulders and hold for five seconds. Breathe out as you drop the shoulders. Repeat three times.
- **Monkey stretch** – lift your right arm up by your right ear and stretch to the ceiling, then gently place your right hand by your left ear, over the top of your head. Repeat on the left side, by gently stretching your left arm up by your left ear and up towards the ceiling, then gently place your left hand by your right ear, over the top of your head.

## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY

### BRAIN BREAK DESK EXERCISES



- **T junction** – stretch both arms out by your sides, level with your shoulders, so your body creates a T position. Move your right arm in a small circle clockwise and your left arm in a small circle anticlockwise and then change direction in both arms.
- **Eye relaxation** – look ahead and imagine a clock face. Move your eyes slowly clockwise keeping your head still, briefly stopping at 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock. Then reverse, moving your eyes anticlockwise, stopping briefly at 9, 6 and 3 and back to 12 o'clock.



## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY

### ACTIVE ZONE

#### FOUR PILLARS



Consider the following activity ideas to create body awareness from the inside out, improve your posture and poise, and increase your flexibility of movement.

#### **Keeping your body tuned – four pillars**

The four pillars to help keep your body tuned are: poise and posture, aerobic exercise, flexibility and muscular strength.

##### **1. Poise and posture**

To maintain correct alignment of the skeletal system.

- Ensures bones and muscles work efficiently
- Maintains muscle balance
- Provides even weight distribution
- Promotes fluidity of movement – watch how a cat or a young child moves!

Three ways to improve your posture:

1. Consider how you stand
2. Try the Pilates relaxation position when lying down to relax (see page 50 onwards)
3. Think about your position when sitting at your desk

## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY



### ACTIVE ZONE

#### FOUR PILLARS

##### 2. Aerobic exercise

Aerobic exercise is an important component to achieve overall fitness. Your heart beats faster, you feel warmer and you will be pumping more oxygen around your body as your breathing rate also increases.

Aerobic exercise can be achieved through gentle jogging, swimming, brisk walking, some sports, etc.

##### What are the benefits?

- Improves size, strength and pumping efficiency of the heart
- Strengthens breathing muscles
- Tones up muscles throughout body
- Increases the total amount of blood circulating
- Promotes physical fitness
- Promotes mental fitness to help with planning, organising, and juggling different tasks and intellectual challenges

## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY

### ACTIVE ZONE

#### FOUR PILLARS



#### 3. Flexibility

This is the ability of your muscles to work through their full range of movement. Pilates and yoga exercises both help to increase the body's flexibility. Flexibility exercises are also a key component during exercise to help stretch muscles gently in the warm up phase and finally to help lengthen muscles in the cool down phase.

By improving flexibility you will:

- Improve the nervous system by increasing the flow of nerve messages
- Enhance oxygen flow around body
- Provide fluidity of movement around the joints
- Create flexibility of mind as well as body

## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY



### ACTIVE ZONE

#### FOUR PILLARS

##### 4. Muscular strength

Muscular strength refers to the ability of the body and muscle system to lift, pull, push and rotate. By maintaining muscular strength we help to:

- Tone muscles
- Strengthen bones
- Improve functional ability

As we get older we experience a gradual loss of muscle, mainly caused by an increasingly sedentary lifestyle. The results are:

- Increase in body fat, decline in aerobic capacity and vitality
- Decline in blood sugar tolerance, increasing insulin resistance interfering with the body's ability to produce energy
- Loss of bone density, increasing susceptibility to osteoporosis
- Slowing of metabolism

The good news is that with exercise and strength training, the decline can be reversed regenerating muscle mass and rejuvenating the body.

## EXERCISE FOR ENERGY

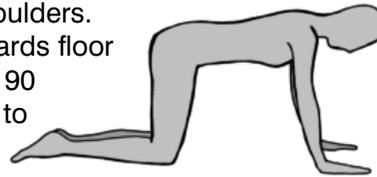
### ACTIVE ZONE

#### ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP YOUR STRENGTH



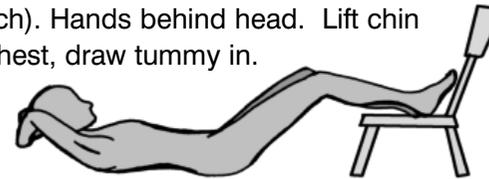
#### 1 Upper body

**Press ups** (to tone arms). Face the floor, hands under shoulders. Lower body towards floor until arms are at 90 degrees. Return to starting position.



#### 3 Mid body

**Sit ups with feet on chair** (to flatten stomach). Hands behind head. Lift chin onto chest, draw tummy in.



#### 2 Lower back

**Angels** (to strengthen back). Lie prone. Lift opposite arm and leg just off floor.



#### 4 Legs

**Squats** (to tone legs). Feet hip width apart, bend knees to 90 degrees, allow body to lean forward until it is at right angles to thighs.



## About the Author

### **Gillian Burn, MSc in Exercise and Health**

Gillian is Director of Health Circles Ltd, providing training and consultancy services focusing on improving health and quality of life for individuals and companies nationwide. Her background is in the health field, spanning over 30 years and covering nursing, midwifery and health visiting. Gillian is a master practitioner in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and Time Line Therapy®.



Her workshops address lifestyle factors to improve energy and performance including exercise, nutrition, stress and time management, communication, creating peak energy and techniques to increase creativity and effectiveness. She is a licensed instructor with Tony Buzan for training in Mind Mapping® techniques and has trained in speed reading and memory techniques, and also runs training courses in these areas. In addition, Gillian is a licensed instructor in Body Control Pilates® with the Body Control Pilates Academy.

Gillian aims to practise what she preaches! She rows on the River Thames and enjoys swimming, walking, yoga and pilates. She has two children.

### **Contact**

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