

## Stretching

Stretching is not in the language of muscles. Muscles know two things: tighten up and relax.

The opposite of stretching is to get rid of tensions that are in the way.

Stop before you reach your limit. You can continue expanding if you keep your limit fluid.

Move in a safe range and speed. Do not threaten your muscles by stretching them to the point of injury.

If you think of stretching, you will always get stuck. If you think of movement, you will get unstuck.

## Changing

The movement is not as important as the changes that are occurring.

The important thing is the changes that happen, and not whether you achieve the full distance.

Do more than just exercise. Notice what changes, or you will miss the chance of keeping the changes.

It doesn't matter if you change the whole way today. A little step is enough. Reduce your effort and increase the results.

## Resting

Take breaks when you are practicing a movement. Give your brain time to build new synaptic connections.

The body changes while you rest. It knows what you're asking it to do, and needs a moment to figure it out.

Practice a few new moves, then rest on your back and let your brain do its work. When it's difficult, take a break. Changes will happen sooner if you take a break than if you make an effort

## Speed of Movement

Move slowly and pay attention to how you are moving. Later, you will be able to move faster.

When you know what you are doing, then you can move faster or slower as you wish.

There is a big distinction between moving fast and rushing. Rushing leads to mistakes and diminished ability.

Let things happen without forcing. Follow the speed of nature.

## Effort

Effort is the sensation you feel with unskilled action.

Replace your effort with skill, so you can do it with ease because you've done it in the past.

Things are difficult only because you don't know how to do them easily. So focus on making things easier.

Make it easier, and you can do it better. When you get better at it, you can try a more challenging way.

Reduce your effort and increase the results.

## **Forcing**

Don't force a posture or movement. Gently ask your body to move in the direction you want.

If you push yourself to the point of pain, you will be learning only to endure suffering.

No need to harass, hassle and harm yourself in order to improve.

One of the biggest obstacles to improvement is stubbornness – insisting on doing the same old thing.

## **Ease of Movement**

As you repeat a movement it becomes easier because it becomes more familiar.

Adjust everything so it becomes easier to do, so that you feel nothing special.

Feel where you get stuck and back off. Make slight changes until you manage it more and more easily.

Use each opportunity to improve the ease. It is better to do only half the movement and have it be easier.

Make a habit of doing it easier. Even if it takes 10 or 15 years, it's better than having the trouble for life.

Pursue ease on purpose

## **Maintaining Health**

If you can do something more easily, it means you are more healthy.

Those who are healthy can afford to move more vigorously than those who are not.

Health, like life, is not a "once and for all" activity. Take action frequently in the direction of your goals.

Caring for your body is important – at all ages and in all walks of life.

Be kind to your body and it will be kind to you.

## **Movement Skills**

Move only in a range that is comfortable.

Do a few movements and then rest until your body is relaxed and ready to go again.

Postures that you gain through relaxation, which is a skill, can stick with you for life.

You can do any movement art in such a way to ruin your body or in such a way to get great benefits.

Move in such a way that your body will know you are treating it with respect.

Movement is a skill. You can get better at it with experience.

The important thing is not how large the movement is, but how sophisticated it is. Coordinate yourself internally to achieve a specific movement.

Gradually a movement will increase by itself, and this is the best way to bring you closer to achieving the full distance.

Sugi levels of movement in yoga or a fitness routine:

1. Status quo: Do the same amount of action with half the effort
2. To avoid aggravating pain: Do half the amount of action with one-fourth the effort
3. To challenge yourself: Do a greater amount of action with the same effort

## **Improvement**

Success is not necessary for improvement, but improvement is necessary for success.

We get good at what we practice. Practice doing things with greater ease.

Replace effort with skill, and you will continue to improve for the rest of your life.

You can enjoy yourself and improve at the same time.

You know you are improving when the easy becomes natural, the difficult becomes easy, the impossible becomes possible and the unimaginable becomes imaginable.

The essence of progress rests in the ability to accomplish increasingly more complex and demanding tasks with greater ease.

Do postures so the body remains mobile, because as soon as you get stuck you can't improve anymore.

## **Philosophy**

"Beneficial action" is the happy medium between "use it or lose it" and "abuse it and lose it."

"Impossible" is a temporary situation. If you can't do it, that only means you can't do it "yet."

Knowing where you're going is good, but jumping ahead of yourself is not.

Make choices today that leave you with the most options open for the future.

It is easier to improve your life if you feel good about yourself.

Resisting change takes a lot of energy and causes pain.

It is better to stay in half the posture for twice the time than in twice the posture for half the time.

If you focus on just one result, you can miss 100 benefits. With curiosity, you will gain many benefits.

## **Time**

Chronic problems require chronic solutions. Allow beneficial changes to build up.

Take your time and let things happen.

Give yourself 10-20 minutes a day for beneficial exercise.

## **Aging**

You can get older without getting better, but you can't get better without getting older.

Time passes and we get older. We might as well use this "aging" time to generate experience and improvement that we can use to our benefit.

The rate at which the body 'slows down' due to age, can be less than the rate at which we get smarter in using ourselves.

We increasingly tolerate more discomfort in life and ignore it. This escalates the aging process.