Welcome to 21st century life. It's very fast.

Result: our systems get overwhelmed.

Modern life also presents us with psycho-social stress in many forms.

Perhaps, I need to try yoga...

Result: chronically stressed and exhausted people end up on our yoga mats.

If anyone is in a chronic stress state, this is what's going on:

BODY:
- tight
- constriction
- hard
- everything squeezes small
- shut down

MIND:
- agitated
- ruminating
- hard, stuck thoughts - often unkind 😞

ORGANS:
- Not enough room for me
- sad blood cells
- I'm starving for some decent oxygen...
- Not enough room for me

As teachers, our role is transformative. We can offer an alternative path of:

STILLNESS
- Slowness
- Slowness
- Slowness

Here's how: CREATE SPACIOUSNESS

Slow things down.

Focus on the pause between the breath. The length of the exhalation.

A fast life encourages fast, shallow breathing and an overstimulated nervous system.

Use me to breathe.

Otherwise, you'll engage secondary muscles like me and end up with tight shoulders.

The diaphragm

The shoulders

In our busy lives, the head leads the way

It's time to redress this and BEFRIEND THE BELLY

Touch me.
Rub me.
Let me soften. I am where your sense of safety comes from.
As embryos, our brain and belly grew from the same tissue.

Go for a walk and let your belly take the lead.

Move from the belly during poses

Our psoas is the first muscle to contract when we are stressed and is something of a ‘warehouse’ for trauma. Let it have 15 mins of expansion per day in **CONSTRUCTIVE REST POSITION**.

Message from body (gut) to mind: “You are safe!”

Other stress-holding spots to release with breath, softening and micro movements

Tight shoulders and a tight jaw are ways not to feel.

Dive below gross muscle movement to the fluidity of fascia

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Experiment with moving small-scale movements at a time

Our connective tissues have more ability than muscle to sense and feel what’s going on.

And for all that’s been mentioned so far, apply it with great kindness to self and others

As Tarn Brach so wisely says: “Once we have held ourselves in kindness, we can touch others in a vital healing way.”

Fascia is a gateway to:

- undoing and unravelling holding patterns
- creating inner space around joints and organs
- feeling our true selves
- occupying our space

If we’ve not found that sense of love, opening and safety in ourselves, subconsciously our students will pick it up on this.

Our job is to hold space where people can feel safe enough to slow down, drop in, feel, heal, unwind.

**AHIMSA: WORK IN PROGRESS**

A deep thank you and namaste to teachers Charlotte Wells and Leah Barnett for sharing their toolkit with us.

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