


Birthlight Perinatal 'Funny' Yoga Walks

- Activate and stretch many muscle chains without strain
- Release and undo areas of physical and mental tension, they can be a good counterpose to static standing or sitting asanas (or periods of sitting/standing in daily life)
- Encourage equal function through both sides of the body
- Place gentle repetitive lines of 'challenge' through all the fascia, helping fascia to respond to the changes in load bearing and the increasing stretch of the abdominal area.
- Stimulate the proprioceptive system in a gentle way- (balance and where the body is in space) facilitating adaptation to the slowly changing centre of gravity week by week during pregnancy, and a dramatically changed centre of gravity after birth.
- Create fun and humour for women in the yoga group which in turn releases physical and mental tension (and oxytocin), as well as enabling women to feel more part of a group thereby reducing feelings of isolation
- Taking yoga off the mat in class suggests to women that walks can be easily integrated into everyday life, such as at home or at work so their benefits are felt more often and more deeply
- Therapeutic ways of walking that may alleviate certain common pregnancy symptoms
- Useful ways of moving around the yoga space that can then be intuitively chosen during labour.
- Some are especially useful in late pregnancy and the first stage of labour (labour circuit) for encouraging the baby into a good position and helping the baby to get deeper into the pelvis. Some are also useful releasing areas of tension between changes of position during labour and may help women to let go more deeply.






CAMEL WALK

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start static, and with small scoops, knees soft, bend knees more as you tilt the tailbone up and back and then roll it forwards and under. • Use hands to demo movement, or place 1 hand on sacrum 1 low on belly • If comfortable can increase size of scoops, see what each woman likes. • If pain free walk if not stay on the spot. As you roll the tail-bone under you are rolling through the foot from heel to toe. • Try 1 scoop each step or 2 scoops or more and then step. • Let the whole spine undulate from the scoop of the pelvis to the top of the head. • Enjoy rocking your baby with both hands on your belly when you have found the movement! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Releases the spine, especially relieves lower back and sacral area. • Increases circulation in legs, pelvis and pelvic floor • Good after sitting too long; wakes up feet, legs, spine and Prana. • Strengthens thighs • Gently stretches and releases pelvic muscles, ligaments and fascia including pelvic floor muscles. • Can help baby move deeper into the pelvis at the end of pregnancy and during early labour • Beneficial way to travel around the yoga/labour space. • Good for stimulation the lower digestive tract so may help constipation • Adds soothing rhythm to a woman's repertoire, opens the way to intuitive dance and joint mum/baby soothing through movement. • Mum-Baby connection 	Yes	<p>Yes, good if getting late in due window, combine with drops and shimmies to help baby into pelvis if appropriate.</p> <p>Also use small camel scoops in all fours for more release of tailbone and sacral area. Also use small camel scoops in 'Shiva at the Wall' for same reasons.</p>	Yes- see late pregnancy, also combine with asymmetric positions, e.g. with one foot or knee on support to raise one side of the pelvis to help baby move through the pelvis.	Use Postnatal Camel.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN - release from pelvis to toes

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the legs and upper body loose and free, the pelvis stays level • Take relaxed small steps as you loosely flick out each leg • If you have pain in the pubic symphysis area (SPD) whilst walking try using the Geisha walk instead • You can combine this walk with picking up an imaginary flower, 'scattering', pressing heaven and earth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good release for legs after static standing poses • Releases groins, buttocks and legs all the way to toes • Useful way to travel around the yoga/labour space 	Yes	Yes - can combine with 'baby drops', hanging on a rope, climbing a ladder to ease baby deeper into pelvis if appropriate.	Yes - See late pregnancy for early labour, may relieve pain in groins, good in labour circuit when changing position/station.	Yes- Also may be good after long time sitting feeding.



PINK PANTHER - stealth, release and fun music!

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start on the spot and find stalking panther movement in the shoulders and upper back. Stay static if walking is painful and confine the shimmy to the upper body. To walk co-ordinate opposite arm and leg moving forwards to the pink panther tune; have a shimmy down the torso with the tune and repeat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Releasing tension especially in the shoulders and upper back, - especially good for those with pelvic pain as it often reflects up the body too. Mobilises the upper back and shoulders. Fun to do with older siblings. Helps women to become playful...Laughter! Oxytocin! 	Yes	Yes - good for releasing tension as birth approaches, good for getting baby deeper in the pelvis	Maybe early labour if the woman feels like it!	


GEISHA - delicate small steps, good if walking is painful from PGP

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the feet very low to the ground and take very small shuffling steps that will reduce the transfer of weight to each leg in turn as in a normal stride to help avoid painful walking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding a pain free way of walking for women who suffer from pelvic pain when walking normally 	Yes	Yes	No particular use in labour unless this is how the woman needs to walk to be pain free	Yes - if the pain has not resolved after birth.

ZIPPING THE RECTUS - walking tall to draw the bands of the rectus abdominus muscle together

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As you step forwards take one wrist with other hand. As you step onto the front foot very gently pull the arm down and press the held hand flat and towards the floor whilst you lengthen the whole front body and stand tall without arching the back. Release as you take the next step and swap wrists. You can also do the same thing behind the back. Avoid arching the back. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good for those with diastasis recti from a previous pregnancy- to help avoid it getting worse Good for all women to stretch the whole length of the rectus with a gentle toning action to help improve/protect the resilience of the linea alba (fascia between the 2 bands of the rectus abdominus) to accommodate the growing baby. Promotes better posture. 	Yes	Yes - especially as late pregnancy is a time of the greatest stretch to abdominal fascia and muscles.	No special benefit during labour.	Yes- to help repair and regain integrity of the linea alba after birth.

CROSS BOLLYWOOD - stretch diagonally across the body

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the palms together in Anjali mudra level with the heart. Start static by tracing a smile from shoulder to shoulder, bending the knees a little more each the hands pass the midline. If walking is comfortable take this movement into a walk, the hands go to the side of the front leg and pass the midline as you take your next step. The foot lands slight across the midline and toes can point out a little. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretches and activates muscles, ligaments and fascia diagonally across the front and back, connecting the side of the pelvis with the opposite shoulder. Good for support structures of the pelvis as the weight crosses the midline and these structures work to keep the balance with the pelvis level. Stimulates balance and co-ordination. Good for preventing and alleviating PGP and Diastasis. Remain static or do the movement sitting on a chair if walking is not comfortable. Fun! Can lead into open twists and other dance like movements that can be walking or static. 	Yes	Yes	No specific benefit for use during labour unless it is what the woman wants to do!	Yes, challenges the balance and proprioceptive system to re-find the centre of gravity after pregnancy and birth.

STICKY FEET - focus on your feet for grounding and better posture

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peel the feet slowly off the floor from heel to toes as if walking on a sticky surface. Land feet by rolling heel to toes. Evenly through the centre of each foot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brings awareness to the feet and how you are walking. Stimulates all the joints and blood circulation of the feet and ankles. Good for grounding and standing posture. 	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



WALKING ON HEELS, BALLS OF FEET AND OUTER EDGES AND WALKING MEDITATION

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk around right up tall on the balls of the feet as if wearing high heeled shoes, remembering to bend the knees. • Then swap to walking just on the heels lifting the rest of the foot off the floor. • Then swap again walking on the outer edges of the feet. • NB caution for any foot or ankle injuries! • Then walk consciously rolling the weight evenly through each foot feeling the contact with the floor. • This can lead into a walking meditation counting the number of steps to each breath and using this gradually lengthen the exhalations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings awareness and stimulation to the feet, improves strength and circulation. • Can help combat the tendency for the inner arches of the feet to drop by strengthening the outer edges of the feet and placing more weight there to help with better aligned feet in standing and walking. • On heels stretches calf muscles and Achilles tendon. • Will have benefits for the posture from feet up through the rest of the body. • Helps combat stiffness, cramps and oedema. • Grounding and calming. • The same movements of the feet can be used sitting on a chair at work during long periods of sitting or if standing or walking are not comfortable. 	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

LOW SWEEPING

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a step forwards and with a flat back lean forwards and with the opposite arm make a sweeping movement as if with a small short brush. • Repeat with each new step just leaning forwards to a comfortable angle and straightening up again between steps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening, long stretch of the whole back and a little more on each side in turn-from the shoulder to the Sacro-iliac joint, and sit bone (Ischial tuberosity). • May contribute to relief of SI joint pain and aid rebalancing of action in each side. • Strengthening for lower back and sacral area. • Stretches the muscles and ligaments attached to the sit bones, including the hamstrings and pelvic floor each side. 	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



MARTIAL ARTS - power and grace in flowing movement to stretch and strengthen each side of the back to the sacrum in turn

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the outer edge of your foot to 'sweep' the floor in an arc forwards reminiscent of the movement made to sweep someone off their feet in martial arts! Remember to bend the other leg to help maintain good posture and balance. • Keep the foot low to the floor bending the other leg and landing firmly on the whole foot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilises and tones the deep rotator muscles in the buttocks and pelvis. • Strengthens the muscles and ligaments around each SI joint. • Activates and tones the muscle groups down the outer and inner sides of the legs. • Strengthens the connection and awareness of the outer edge of the foot. • Helps combat tendency for inner arches of the feet to collapse. 	Yes	Yes		Yes

HOOLA DANCE - evocative of Hawaiian dance

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start on the spot and with a small range of movement initially to check all women's comfortable range of movement. With soft knees scoop the pelvis side to side in a 'smile'. • If it is comfortable larger movement can be made and combined with stepping directly to the side and flowing arm movements to the opposite direction. • Use a full circle of the arms to go back in the other direction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle mobilisation muscles, ligaments and fascia of the pelvis in this sideways movement. • Side to side stretch of the Pelvic floor muscles and ligaments. • Increased blood, lymph and prana flow through out the pelvic area. • Alternately activates and releases the lower back muscles attaching to the pelvis. • Activates one side of the abdominals depending on the direction of the arms. • Graceful and fun! 	Yes	Yes	Yes- can help baby move through the pelvis more easily.	Yes- enjoyed by babies watching too!



SHIVA - evoke dancing Shiva

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows on well from Shiva at the Wall practice. The easiest and most stable version is just lifting one heel and pivoting on the ball of the foot to take the knee out to the side. Bend the standing leg and take the arms into any 'dancing Shiva' poses. If this is comfortable women can lift the leg off the floor and flex the foot and change the arms each time they change the leg. Chin mudra with thumb and index finger tips together can be used too or not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gentle balance activating the proprioceptive system Strengthening to each leg in turn Gentle opening of groins with outward rotation of the leg. Another way to access free flowing freestyle dance! 	Yes	Yes		

TOUCHING THE HEELS - stretching the quadriceps and psoas

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without over arching the lumbar curve, bring the weight in one leg softly bending the knee and lift the other foot up behind you towards your buttock and you may be able to touch it or the ankle with your fingertips. Don't hold the position. Take your next step and lift the foot up behind. See if you can touch it. NB if normal walking is painful don't do this walk. Variation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Touching the heel/foot with the opposite hand so there is outward rotation in the thigh. Lifting the foot across in from instead of behind and touching with the opposite hand- again remembering to bend the standing leg. Alternate touching in front or behind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good warm up for Safe Dancer and women who cannot hold their ankle can stay with this option instead. Short, repeated stretches for the psoas and quadriceps muscles. Non static balances lead onto better balance in held balance Challenges balance and co-ordination The variations with rotation of the thigh work the psoas differently providing short gentle hip openers. 	Yes	Yes - some women may find it increasingly difficult to touch the foot as their baby bump grows, this is not a problem.		



SAFE DANCER - combine poise, balance and a gentle psoas stretch

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First co-ordinate lifting the same side arm to shoulder height as you step one foot forwards. • Then add simultaneously lifting the foot up behind you and touching the heel or the ankle with your fingertips. • It does not matter if you actually touch the foot or ankle or not. • Combine with the breath, inhaling to extend the arm and touch the foot exhaling to release and step forwards with the other leg. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows on very well from Safe Dancer at the wall. • Provides a gentle psoas and quadriceps stretch often much-enjoyed provided it does not exacerbate the lumbar curve. • Can release tension from the back and pelvic bowl. • Can help improve posture • Gently challenges balance and co-ordination! 	Yes	Yes	~	Yes - with caution for lower back pain/ pelvic pain.

WALKING TRIANGLE - opening the sides in a flow

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a small stride, lifting the arms to shoulder height, same arm and leg go forwards. • Exhaling bend the forward knee slightly and fold sideways over it you're your hand wherever is comfortable on the leg, possibly looking up along the upper arm. • You can enjoy 1-3 breaths and then inhaling come up to centre again. • Exhaling tip gently towards the back leg, inhaling sweep the back arm down across in front of the body and at the same time stepping the back leg to the front. • Repeat across or around the room. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches and opens the sides for comfort, creating more space for breath and baby without compromising the pelvic joints. • Can help with pain or soreness in the ribs. • Especially stretches the oblique abdominals. 	Yes	Yes	~	Yes, easier once balance has recovered more.



TOES IN, TOES OUT - (nutation/counter-nutation)

Teaching Points	Benefits	Mid- Trimester	Last Trimester	During Labour	Postnatal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start by simply pivoting on one heel and tapping the front of the foot on the floor with toes turned in and out. • Then swap to pivoting the foot on the ball of the foot and tapping the heel in and out. Try the other side. If you have severe PGP you may find it is better to do this sitting on a chair or leaving it out. • Then try pivoting the toes of both feet in and out. If this is pain free proceed to shuffling sideways just by turning toes in and out and alternating the pivoting in the heels and in the balls of the feet. Try coming back the other direction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilises the sacro-iliac joints for better function and balance • Prepares the sacral area for movement (nutation & counter-nutation) to make more space for baby to pass through the pelvis. • Empowers women to know that their pelvis can change dimensions on the inside! • Brings better prana, blood and lymph flow to the sacral area. 	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes - or versions of it, instinctive or conscious, with one leg or both- ie can even be used in side lying to make more space.</p>	<p>Yes - but other practices using the same feet positions will be more stabilising.</p>