

Posture or Balance? The Six Places of Balance

Balance is dynamic. Allow for movement.



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1. Head Neck Balance at the AO Joint

The head balances at the top of the spine on the Atlas where it meets at the Atlanto-Occipital (AO) joint. This is experienced with a gentle nodding at the AO joint. The “yes” movement.

2. Arm Structure Balanced over the Ribs

The arm structure is balanced over the ribs by means of suspension from muscles and connection from the head.

3. Balance of the Thorax over the Lumbar Spine

The front of the lumbar spine is central to the body-the core of the body.

4. Balance of the Torso on the Legs at the Hip Joints.

The body is balanced through the spine and sacrum, through the hip joints into the legs when standing, and into the sit bones when sitting.

5. Balance at the Knees

The knee joint is located below the knee cap and the line of balance goes through the knee joint into the lower leg bones.

6. Balance at the Ankle and the Arch of the Foot

The line of balance goes through the ankle joints into the arches of the foot, into the floor.

Improve Your Student's Playing and Avoid Injury with Body Mapping MTAC Convention 2016, Sunday, July 3, 2016 Ruth Kasckow

What is a body map? It is the map or self-representation you have in your brain of how you think you're structured and designed to move.

What is an accurate body map? An accurate body map produces movement that is consistent with your body's structure and design to move for free, efficient, and coordinated movement.

What is an inaccurate body map? An inaccurate body map produces movement that is not consistent with your body's structure and design to move, causing limitations and tension, with the potential for pain and injury.

What is Body Mapping? It is the process of identifying your body maps, determining if they are accurate or inaccurate, and making the necessary changes to refine and correct them.

What are the benefits of Body Mapping for my students?

1. Students are receptive and curious about how the body works.
2. Technique becomes easier, musical expression and performance enhanced.
3. Clear, accurate language about the body makes communication more effective.
4. Students learn to be more aware and sensitive to the quality of movement and gain confidence with Body Mapping tools to move more freely and effectively.
5. Prevents the possibility of tension, pain and injury.

How can I help my students with Body Mapping?

1. Get to know your own body maps so you are clear about your own movement.
2. Model good usage because your students are imitating you.
3. Observe your students to look for unnecessary tension. Encourage comfort and ease. Ask questions to train their kinesthetic sense. "How does that feel?"
4. Teach your students basic knowledge about the body and Body Mapping using clear, accurate language. Let them know how important it is to move freely.
5. *Always take pain and discomfort seriously.* Look for solutions that may be movement related but don't rule out underlying problems. Contact a health professional if pain persists.

What tools can I use for my students?

1. Attend Body Mapping workshops and lessons. (contact me with any questions)
2. Look at anatomy books, internet resources, and watch excellent Youtube videos.
3. Explore movement at the joints. Palpate, palpate, palpate! Move!
4. Read "What Every Musician Needs to Know About...." books. Look at www.bodymap.org for more resources and articles.

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