

Ep. #345 - From Choreography to Awareness with a Practice of Goddess, Warrior 3, Lunges



Full Episode Transcript

With your host:

Susi Hatelly

[From Pain to Possibility](#) with Susi Hatelly

Introduction (00:00.00)

You are listening to From Pain To Possibility with Susi Hatley. You'll hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain, and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hatley.

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Susi (00:25.07)

Welcome and welcome back. I'm really glad that you're here because today is part two of a three part mini series, which is designed for the yoga teacher who's trained at a 200 or 500-hour level, and they wanna become an excellent yoga therapist, and they're noticing that there's some limitations that they've had in their training.

I've outlined how one of those limitations can be in the choreography – that really is the staple of a lot of TT 200-hour courses. Now, there's benefits to choreography. It provides a structure. It provides a place for a teacher to teach shapes, but there comes a point where it becomes a limiting factor because it's so easy to actually train compensations in the process of teaching shapes, and it looks at poses as a noun as opposed to a movement process.

Susi (01:17.72)

All in all is that choreography doesn't really tell you a lot about movement, and that is inherently one of the key limitations.

So we're getting into part two now. In part two, I'm baby-stepping you toward awareness, more specifically, away from choreography. But we're gonna do this, as I mentioned, in a step by step way. This episode is going to give you an example of teaching through choreography in order to build awareness. And to do that, I'm actually going to share with you an episode or a sequence, rather, that I recorded during the pandemic in a Facebook Live where I teach Goddess Warrior Three Lunges, and you can hear the nuances that I'm utilizing to help people move through these positions.

This might give you an idea of the way that I engage my students with interoception and proprioception to move them toward awareness and to feel their bodies move. So I hope you enjoy this practice.

Susi (02:27.62)

So with this sequence, we're gonna play around with some hamstrings and some hips, a little bit of strength. You're gonna need a couple of blocks for when we're in the lunge, and as you play with lifting the knee off the floor. So have these two blocks handy. They don't need to be wood. They could be cork, they could be whatever foam that you've got, but have 'em handy on your mat.

All right, let's get going. So from here, let's begin in Tadasana. And feel your feet and your legs and your pelvis just globally, your body and how your torso feels.

And then connect into your feet. So the center of the heel, the ball of your foot, and the base of your pinky toe.

So that you're standing on a tripod, and now with that awareness of the tripod, notice your legs and your pelvis, notice your pelvic floor. Feel the bowl of your pelvis and your rib cage, and your breath.

Feel how your arms connect into your rib cage and your head on top of your neck, and feel how your day has been with you and you have been with your day, or if you're seeing this in the early morning, how your night and you have been together. So feel the context of what you're bringing to your practice.

Susi (04:30.29)

All right, let's begin with arms. So we're gonna take the arms up over the head. Palms are gonna touch, and then you're going to bring those arms back down. Arms are gonna come up, and then palms touch, and then arms come down. So it's going to be an inhale as the arms come up. And then exhale is the arms come back down.

Good. Nice. And let's take a step wide and let's rotate those leg bones and come into goddess. Feeling those center of the heel above the foot and the base of the pinky toe. Something to pay really close attention to is that as you're lowering down, do you feel any increase of strain or tension further up or in your knees or in your toes, does your breath start to catch?

Those are all the quiet signals to let you know you're probably going a bit too far in this moment. So find a place where those aren't happening. Those are distinct from muscles working. There's a distinction between that. So find that place where you can have a feel of ease. Now we're gonna come up and we're gonna rotate and then down...

And take it on the blocks, we're gonna start to move into a little bit of forward and back. So I've got my back toes under. I've got my front foot on the floor, so we're going to keep that orientation. If your toes of your back foot are really bothering you, you can always take them here.

But think about the movement of your hips and your knees and your ankles. Watch that your spine doesn't round a whole bunch when you do it, keep the motion as much as you can in through your legs. Good.

Susi (06:42.42)

Okay now, from here, hands onto the front of the knee, stretch through your elbows. Watch that it's not just a back bend, but think about stretching the elbows a little bit straighter.

And then come back down, hands onto the blocks. Begin to press that heel back, lift the knee, press that heel back, but we're staying hands heavy in the blocks, staying down low, front leg hasn't changed. Bring the knee down. Let's do that again. Lift the knee, press that heel back. Good. And then drop. And let's come back to forward and back. Good. And then up. You can let the toes go if you'd like. Hands come together, middle finger underneath your chin. Let's take a rotation.

Easy twist, and then come back and then do a side bend. Good. And come back. Now from here, hands come on, let's go forward and back again. Toes come under. Lift the knee, press that knee back. Okay, you ready here?

Now we're gonna add a little strength, take a bit of weight out of your hands and into your front leg. So we're not lifting through the front leg, just a bit of weights coming off of your hands, so the load's gotta go somewhere. Good. And then drop your knee back down again.

Let's do that again. Press the heel back, lift the hand slightly off. Maybe even bringing yourself up into a lunge. High lunge. Good. And then back. And let's come back into Goddess here. Rotate and then drop. Good. Notice what that feels like now. Good. And then up. Bring the blocks over as you come over and drop down into your lunge. Good. And from here, start to move forward and back.

Susi (09:03.48)

Good. Hands come in the front of the knee, stretch through those elbows. Make it more of a pressing back, hands to knee, as opposed to a spinal back bend or spinal extension. Come back down and then forward 'em back. Okay, lovely. One more time. Hands in front, elbow starts to straighten. Good. And then back.

Now here, we start to press that heel back, knee lifts. So the weights through the blocks to begin with. Then we drop it down. Okay. And then lift that knee again. Good. Now take a little bit of weight out of the blocks, and as you do that, your front leg is probably gonna take more load. Just get a feel of what it's like. Okay, good. Drop it and let's come back. So we're doing a little bit of forward and back, thinking about hips and knees. Good job.

Okay, now from here, take those toes under, press that heel back, lift that leg. Good. A little bit of weight out of the hands. So a little bit more butterfly pressure on the blocks. Notice as you take the weight out of the hands, it's got to transfer to your body somewhere. Try not it being your breath. Or your rib cage. Let it be that leg. Let the leg become stronger, and then maybe even more and more and more coming up into a high lunge and then up into goddess. Good. And then drop. Nicely done. Good. Grab the blocks.

Come back over, and press that heel back. Take the hands here and bring into a twist and into a side bend.

Press that heel back, lift the knee, come up a little bit, straighten through that front knee, come back. Little bit of weight out of the hands. A little bit more out of the hands. Take it in that front

leg. Not so much in your breath. High lunge with arms up overhead. Good, up you come and into goddess. Good job. Okay, grab the blocks over we go and whoop, lower down.

Press that heel back, lift the knee, drop the knee, come on up, take a twist, and then come back. Good job.

Now let's take a side bend, and come on up. Perfect. All right, now press that heel back. Bring a little bit more load into that leg. Hands come butterfly pressure, even a little bit less, take more through that front leg if you can. Maybe the legs, the arms come up, press that heel back. Good job. Come on up, and into goddess.

Susi (13:01.20)

Nice, stepping the legs back together. Come into Tadasana and notice what your legs feel like. Arms come up overhead, pull down in towards your heart and up overhead. Pull back towards your heart. Bring the legs wide again. This time, we're gonna rotate one leg and then rotate the other. If you want the back leg, come into a warrior two.

Good. Now from here, let's take a side bend. Good. And then come back. So now we're feeling through the legs, side bend. And then come back. Okay. Let's bring the arms into it. So here we are into Warrior Two and side bend, and then back. Now, do your best to let your arms just be really light on that front leg and then back up. Good. Lovely. Okay, up. Other side, rotate and into warrior two, so the hands are not involved yet, and then over you go, and then back up, and over you go. Good.

And so now bring those arms into it, and here we go into a little bit of an extended side. See if you can keep this more in your legs and lessen the arms, like, using that as a crutch on the leg. Lovely. Okay. Now from here up, you come, and coming back into Tadasana. Right now, notice what you feel. Feel the bottoms of your feet on the floor. Center of the heel, ball of your foot, base of your pinky toe. Notice your body and the experience of doing those two pieces – the lunge work on the floor, coming up into standing to Warrior Two, an extended side.

Now, let's take a turn from here. Bring one leg back behind you, and lift that leg up a little bit and then drop it down. Lift that leg up a little bit and drop it down. So I'm just extending that leg in my hip socket. Okay, now from here, with the extended, now I'm moving into hip flexion on that standing leg.

Susi (16:06.62)

So the idea is your pelvis stays square as you move forward over that standing leg. So we only need to go as far as that happens. So watch the desire for that pelvis to go into a dog at the fire hydrant position and really only move as far. Feel it, place your hands in the pelvis as you go forward. Good. And then other side. Leg reaches back, extend through the hip. Feel it as a leg bone motion in the pelvis, and then hold that gently and move through your standing leg. Pelvis on the leg bone. Moving as far as the breath remains easy.

There you go. Lovely. And then from here, stop and stand. Bring the legs wide and come into your goddess. And then back up. Come into your goddess, and back up.

Feel yourself here. Center of the heel. Ball of your foot. Base of your pinky toe.

Be aware of that standing work all through your body and how it feels like to stand now with your legs having done that work. A well-functioning body surrenders upward. There's not a need to hold or to grip to keep yourself in standing.

That's the aim, greater ease, better function, and as a result, more strength and more stability.

Enjoy that practice. Enjoy the fruits of it and we'll see you next time. Take good care.

Susi (18:57.53)

Well, welcome back. I hope you enjoyed that practice of lunges, and Goddess, and warrior three, and some of the nuances that I was utilizing to support the growth of awareness through the practices of interoception and proprioception, and how that can help with really downregulating the system. I've put in the show notes where this video of the audio is, so you can actually go out and watch the video now on Facebook and on YouTube.

Now next week, we're gonna come back. We're gonna talk a bit more about when awareness really matures and what that looks like and feels like in a student's body. Now, if you're also interested in learning how to do this for yourself with your students, the best place to begin is any of my **Power of Pure Movement** classes, and those are over in the catalog at **functionalsynergy.com**.

You can also send us an email through our website at the 'contact us' form, and if you wanna go even deeper in April, we're open for registration is the Therapeutic Yoga Intensive, and you can read all about that over at **functionalsynergy.com/intensive**. See you next week.