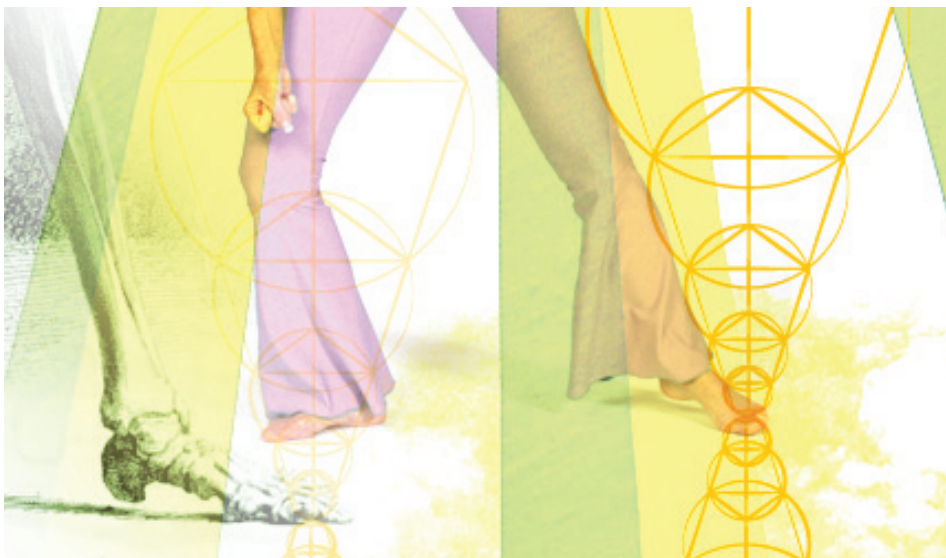


Nia: Dancing Through Life

Tips for integrating Nia into every moment



The Shinbones - Your Living Stilts

Do you think about your shins as you go about the tasks of your day? Do you pay attention to your shins when you walk, dance or run? Quite often, the only time we are aware of our shins is when we bang them on the corner of a table, or when we get shin splints from improper running technique. This is in part because your shins are quiet pillars of support, providing strength and communication between your thighbone and your foot and ankle.

Your shins are your living stilts; they allow you to balance your body over your moveable leg joints. They are made up of the sturdy, straight tibia (the second largest bone of the body) and the gracefully curved fibula bone. The function of the tibia is to transmit

information from the thighbone to the talus, the big bone that forms the top of the foot. The function of the fibula is to transfer weight from the thighbone down into your foot, providing both stability and mobility in your ankle joint.

To your emotional body, your shins are the connection from the earth into your belly, the center that feeds you with nutritional and intuitive energy. To your spiritual body, your shins are ethereal tree trunks, the physical anchors of your spirit as it towers up into the heavens. As you develop trust in your shins and learn to communicate with them, your movement will begin to feel light as a feather, as if you are an angel walking the earth.

Activate Your Shinbones

Connect to your shinbones through awareness and sensation. Use your shinbones like fence posts, vertically planting them with purpose as you move. Sense the two bones in each shin supporting the left and right sides of each foot, the inside and outside. Use the "mobile stability" of your shins to relax your thighs, to relax your feet.

As you stand in line at the store, practice the Nia moves Duck Walk and Relevé. In Duck Walk, lift your toes off of the floor to stretch your calves and strengthen the muscles along your shins. In Relevé, rise to the balls of your feet to stretch your shins and strengthen your calf muscles. Push through whole ball of your foot and the pad of your big toe, and keep your feet parallel as you do this to work the inside and the outside of your leg.

For more information

Ask your teacher for more information and other Nia handouts.

Get the Nia book, *The Nia Technique** (2004, Broadway Books).

Go to NiaNow.com to learn more and subscribe to the FREE monthly newsletter for Everybody!

*Rosas, Debbie, and Carlos Rosas. *The Nia Technique: the High-powered Energizing Workout That Gives You a New Body and a New Life*. New York: Broadway, 2004. Print.