

October 2008

Open Heart Part 2

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Did you know that recovery from Open-Heart Surgery requires patients to limit upper body exertion to less than 5 pounds force for 6 weeks following surgery? This means that the patient may not lift themselves out of a chair, off the bed or toilet by using their arms.

Everyone who hasn't studied the Alexander Technique tends to have a habit of using their hands to press down to get the momentum to get up from a seated position. This is an unnecessary effort and expenditure of energy.

In Alexander lessons, I teach my students how to change this habit by directing their heads up off their spine and allowing their bodies to follow. This greatly reduces the effort and strain of standing up and in fact, can make the movement feel effortless. Physical therapists teach open-heart patients to fold their arms across their chest (to help prevent using them), bend their upper bodies very far forward, and push up with their legs. Mechanically this works, but wouldn't it be nice if the open-heart patient had Alexander Technique lessons prior to surgery?

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