

More About Svaroopa® Yoga: What's All the Fuss About the Tailbone? (Part 1)

Phil (Krishna) Milgrom, 2019

If you know Svaroopa® yoga, you know that much emphasis is given to your tailbone. In every class, we teach poses that release your spinal tension, *beginning* with the tailbone. Why the tailbone?

Consider the problem of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Construction on the tower began in 1173 A.D. A shallow foundation and the soft, shifting soil underneath were too unstable to support the tower even in the early stages of its construction.

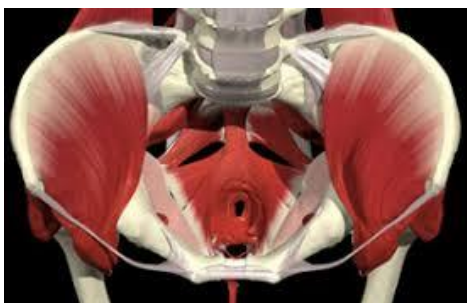


As reported in an [article](http://www.smithsonian.com) on www.smithsonian.com by science journalist Kat Eschner, architects tried to correct the problem in 1275 A.D. by adding three additional floors that slanted in the opposite direction of the tower's lean. (The stories were built slightly taller on the shorter side of the tower to compensate for its lean.) However, the added weight had more impact than intended, and the tower leaned even farther.

“Over the centuries, despite the efforts of many,” Eschner writes, “it leaned farther and farther...” The tower is still slowly sinking and tilting today.

The moral of this story? The foundation is crucial to the stature of the edifice that is built upon it. Without addressing the foundation first, whatever is done above will not be sufficient to resolve the problems arising from below.

And that same principle applies to your tailbone. The tailbone (coccyx) is the attachment site for many of the muscles of your lower pelvis. These muscles form the pelvic floor and act as a support system for the sacrum, pelvis, rectum, bladder, and in women, the uterus. The tailbone



www.ssphysio.com.au/coccyx-pain.html

provides support and stability when you sit, and affects how you stand. In other words, the tailbone – the base of your spine – is a crucial part of your foundation.



Tension and misalignment in the tailbone affect your whole spine, as well as your nervous system, bowels, bladder, sexual organs and more. When the tailbone is injured or is so tight that it becomes

misaligned, the muscles attached to it are affected. Tightness and spasms occur in some of the muscles and weakness in others. This leads to an imbalance that may produce hip and back pain when sitting, standing, walking and performing other activities.



The typical medical intervention for back and neck pain is like that of the architects who attempted to correct the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Insufficient attention is given to the foundation, the base of the spine. Procedures such as spinal fusion and laminectomies are commonly administered to correct spinal instability or degeneration. As the [World Health Organization](#) reports, these medical approaches to lower back pain [and neck pain, I add] are often administered unnecessarily. Other studies have shown that they lead to more complications and often more surgeries. Yet, as the WHO report asserts: “There is no robust evidence of benefit for spinal fusion surgery compared with non-surgical care for people with low back pain associated with spinal degeneration.”

Furthermore, MRIs give doctors much information about the spine but have proven to be poor diagnostic tools nevertheless. What is seen in MRI scans rarely reveals the real problem.

Svaroopa® yoga targets the likely root of the real problem. It focusses on releasing the tailbone before any other part of the spine. Releasing the tension in the tailbone brings more stability to the spine. The poses that follow, which target the sacrum, lumbar, thoracic and cervical areas of the spine in that order, then can do their job more effectively and with a longer lasting outcome.

As the spinal tension releases from the tailbone and up, the beneficial effects radiate throughout your entire body. Your body becomes supple and feels more alive. You feel a sense of ease, relief, inner strength and peace. Your mind is quieter. You feel more like you — the real you! In yogic terms, you experience your svaroopaa. Svaroopaa is Sanskrit for "your own true form" or your "Self."

In addition, given that the tailbone provides important support for sitting, a healthy tailbone is important for meditation, which requires sitting in an easy, upright position. Meditation is the ultimate and most expedient stepping stone for bringing you to Self-realization.

That’s the ultimate reason why we begin with the tailbone. Besides all the physical health benefits, the tailbone release begins the process of opening you to your Self.

Next month, we will continue to explore the importance of the tailbone for all levels of your being: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.