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7/23/1966
Pain/dysfunction in right hip

Symptoms:

- Pain in right hip, mostly around greater trochanter. Trigger points and tightness in hip flexors: iliopsoas, TFL, Sartorius, pectineus. Also in piriformis, glute med and min. Sometimes IT band. Pain occurs when walking/dancing/cross country skiing/tai chi/yoga.
- A deep ache at about a 1-3 in the hip socket is now fairly constant. It eases if I sit or lie down. If I work my hip too hard, it does not let up. I've been using 1-2 doses of ibuprofen per day, drinking 2 glasses wine at night for the pain and try to stay off my feet.
- Low back tightness and aching, chronic recently. In 2012-2015, I had several episodes of back pain and spasms. Low back xrays were taken by my chiropractor. I can usually avoid the painful spasming with Pilates and back exercises, yoga and backing off when it is tight. My sense is the genesis of this issue is my hip, probably exacerbated by slight scoliosis and lordosis. Lately, this symptom is worse, radiates up SI and into QL.
- Knee pain. Intermittent symptom: pain goes down my right leg, across my knee and into the arch of my foot. Better with less activity. Sartorius main culprit?
- I have had groin pain in the past (initial symptom) and in May I developed a painful catch in my groin and very tight pectineus while working with an active release therapist and really challenging my leg. It was worst when I stood up from bending over. I have not had this in about 4 weeks, after taking a vacation where I sat a lot and rested.

Functional Issues:

- Difficulty with walking. Gets worse the longer I walk and if I walk downhill or on uneven ground. Pain occurs when I shift weight onto right leg and attempt to extend it. Stride is shortened (Geisha walk). The muscles seize up and tighten the longer I walk. I have to stop frequently and release muscles and/or sit. Jarring causes pain. As a result, I have reduced my walking to a minimum (this is one of my favorite forms of exercise).
- I do not trust the right leg under me, so I over use the left leg. This is causing imbalances and pain in my postural muscles.
- Trying to maintain stability when a stone turned under my foot during a hike in mid-May caused shooting pain in my hip that didn't release for hours afterwards. I find I'm afraid to do things that may require sudden stabilization of my right leg, e.g. cross country skiing.
- I cannot rotate the leg internally. When I stand or walk, leg is externally rotated and I cannot seem to straighten it. I can do a great peg-legged pirate!
- Rectus femoris and glute max are inhibited, per active release therapist. I have difficulty recruiting the correct muscles to move my leg.
- Hip flexors, piriformis, and glute med and min are overactive. Feels like they are trying too hard to assist in moving my leg. (Related to restricted range of motion?)
- Right leg is shorter and often the SI joint is out per my chiropractor.

- Feels like my femur is not sitting right in the socket, like it is riding high and twisted out. In my yoga poses, my leg and foot feel twisted and abnormal. Poses that I used to be able to do, I cannot do, or they are very out of balance: e.g. Hero, high lunge, single knee stretch. Often feels like there is a rock in my socket—a catch in my getalong.
- Range of motion is very restricted. Cannot extend out in Tai Chi lunges and I notice the whole leg/foot twists with Wise Owl Looks Behind.
- Belly dance moves that were easy are difficult. If I dance too much, it can set me back for weeks. I have not danced in months.
- When I attempt to bend down and pick up a load or carry one, it is difficult and causes pain. I can't seem to get right leg under me and so I over use the left, which causes me to be out of alignment. I am hesitant to hip hinge and bend down, not trusting leg.
- My entire right side feels locked up and I cannot open and stretch my side normally in yoga poses like triangle, extended side angle, prone twists.
- There are deep toe marks in my sandals on the right side—active release therapist found that my glute is not firing on that side, so toes are doing extra work to stabilize me.

Goals:

- To be able to walk, pain free, 2-5 miles at a moderate pace with a normal stride.
- To be able to do a moderate yoga and tai chi practice without pain and such limited mobility and flexibility as I have now, also with more even balance on both legs.
- To be able to hip hinge and bend over and lift without the fear I currently have of injuring myself or causing a back or groin spasm.
- To trust my right leg under me again—be able to do one-legged balances.
- To be able to hike uneven terrain up to 8 miles on occasion.
- To be able to dance moderately, and cross-country ski.
- To be free of chronic pain in my hip.

History:

- I grew up on a cattle/sheep ranch. I was the only kid, so was my father's helper. I did heavy manual labor, ran cattle, wrestled sheep and trained horses from about age 8. I started riding at 1 ½ years old.
- Started seeing a chiropractor as a teen when I experienced pain in my upper leg under the glute and in my low back while running track. Can't remember which side now...
- This was better when I stopped running and began cross country ski racing.
- In my 20's and 30's I was very active. I was always a gym member and co-owned a gym in my 30's—did some heavy weightlifting with our trainers. I was a performance belly dancer from 1996-2006. I spent 15 years (1996-2010) packing people on horseback into the mountains of Colorado and sustained some related injuries (see below).
- In 2004, I was kicked in the right leg by a horse—active release therapist found scar tissue at the site of the kick. This seems to have inhibited my VL and perhaps also contributed to my problems.

- In 2007, I was leading a pack horse and my mount started bucking. I twisted backward on the right side and strained my groin, trying to stay on and keep hold of the pack horse.
- In 2008, I started having groin pain when hiking downhill. I associated it with 2007 injury.
- In 2009, I began seeing a yoga therapist to work with what I called a groin injury. I also worked with various chiropractors from 2009-present.
- In 2010-11, I started teaching yoga. Moves requiring repetitive hip hinging (vinyasa) were causing pain and difficulty with walking afterwards. I was having more pain during long walks where I was trying to maintain a fast pace and long stride.
- In 2012 my first back pain/spasm episode occurred after repeated bending over to pick weeds for hours. These episodes continued off and on through 2015. Began regular work with massage therapist.
- In 2014, I gave up 20 years of being a gym rat. My body just wasn't recovering and I was having issues with tendonitis as well as hip pain. Dancing became more difficult.
- In 2014, I opened my own studio teaching belly dance, tai chi and yoga. I switched my main form of cardio to walking, hiking and using a health rider. This worked well overall, but I continued to have increasing episodes of problems walking due to my hip pain. Pain began to be more localized around trochanter and less associated with my groin.
- In 2015-2016, I had increasing issues with my hip. My partner stopped hiking with me because I couldn't keep up. There were times when my hip/leg would seize up and I would hold up others on hikes. As a result, I have gone on less and less hikes in recent years. I became increasingly fearful that I wouldn't be able to complete a hike over 2 miles due to my hip. During this time, belly dancing started to cause painful setbacks and I cut back significantly. I moved up massage therapy to 2X/month.
- In late 2016, I was helping my mother walk during a trip to Canada. By the time I got home, my hip and leg were inflamed and there was enough pain to motivate me to begin working with a pilates therapist who had helped a neighbor of ours.
- Initially the pilates was very helpful when it was focused on posture and strengthening core muscles. When we started challenging my right leg and hip, I experienced a real flare up in pain and had to stop. I had difficulty recruiting the proper muscles when trying to work my lower body. I worked with Kim Lenzi from October, 2016 to February, 2017.
- In 2017, a massage therapist found an abundance of scar tissue, particularly in my right hip. I found an active release therapist, Tracy Wilson, who I worked with from Feb-May. She worked on scar tissue around my appendectomy, the kick to my VL, and the twisting injury that caused scar tissue in my piriformis, between my piriformis and glute med, TFL, iliopsoas, pectineus. I found the release work helped for about 24 hours and then it would tighten up again. She also helped me with neuromuscular reprogramming—releasing the over-functioning muscles and activating the under-functioning ones. I started (on my own) challenging my leg by hopping, skipping and doing jumping jacks. I thought it just needed more challenge and strengthening. I think I stressed the area and that's what led to the hiking incident in mid-May where the stone turned under my foot and caused me so much pain. I have not walked normally since. The last 8 weeks has marked a significant downturn in my mobility and that's when I made this appointment.