

R'4

**FIX THE SOURCE
LIVE THE LIFE**

**REAL-LIFE STORIES ABOUT HOW TO
OVERCOME MUSCLE AND JOINT PAIN**

**NELSON
CHONG**

Acknowledgements

I am standing on the shoulders of generous teachers, steadfast friends, courageous clients – and the family who shaped my heart. Thank you for lending me your wisdom, your time, and your trust.

My parents – Thank you for blessing me with unconditional love. To my mother, a devoted Chinese **Tuina Shifu** who quietly treated people with chronic pain for two decades: your hands healed and your humility taught. Even as cancer crept in, your example continued to guide me. The R`4 Method carries your legacy of careful listening, patient practice, and service.

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To my **clients from ages 6 to 96** — thank you for trusting your fragile, brilliant bodies to me while I was still refining R`4. Your patience, questions, and victories became the fabric of this method.

Carol Fusek — A dear client and friend. You saw a seed in me before I did, and your encouragement in 2009 helped birth the Functional Training Institute. I will never forget your faith.

To my beloved **wife and co-founder, Karen**, and our children **Justin, Charmayne, and Oliver** — thank you for believing in my dreams, for living the R`4 principles at home, and for the many evenings and weekends you sacrificed so I could serve others. This book is as much yours as it is mine.

To every teacher, colleague, and reader who shares this mission to help people live a pain-free, active life — thank you.

The R`4 Method is a community effort; I am honoured to play my part.

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Prologue – The Day Pain Became a Teacher

The message usually arrives at 2 a.m.

“I’ve tried everything. Nothing sticks.”

If you’re holding this book, you’ve probably done the tour: pills, needles, taps, cracks, massages, miracle gadgets. You get relief, then the pain comes back – sometimes louder.

I’ve been there. I’ve had the full collection – neck, shoulder, back, knee, groin – while raising three kids, coaching clients, and running a gym. I still remember the evening my youngest asked me to play on the floor and I said no, because getting down and up cost too much. That was the moment pain stopped being a complaint and became a teacher.

What pain taught me is simple: **we fix symptoms everywhere except the source.** We rub where it hurts. We rarely change what’s feeding it.

That’s why this book exists. It’s built on the **R`4 Method**:

1. **Review** – find the daily habits, postures, and tools that are feeding your pain.
2. **Release** – free the tight tissues that drag joints into trouble (10 minutes).
3. **Retrain** – realign the body back to neutral with two or three drills (2–3 minutes).
4. **Results** – lock gains with small environment tweaks (straps, screens, shoes, sleep).

You'll meet people like you:

- A business leader whose “slipped disc” started with bed-Zooms and a banana-shaped spine.
- Megan, who slept through the night once her chest and lats were released and her scapula learned to move.
- A doctor who regained the use of her hands when we stopped stretching the “tight” side and strengthened the *low* side.
- Ailian, told never to squat, who squatted to the floor after we freed her ankles and feet.
- Richard, pain-free shoulder once he swapped his cross-body bag for a waist pouch.

You'll also see how I moved from bodybuilding cues and crowded-machine training to a two-by-two-meter “sweet spot” that gave clients results without chasing equipment. Out of that pressure and a lot of engineering-style problem solving, **R`4** was born.

This is not a lecture. It's a **story-driven field manual**. It borrows the clarity that made million-copy pain books resonate—human stories first—then gives you a **checklist and a drill** at the end of every chapter so you can act immediately.

How to use this book:

- Read Chapters 2–4 for your pain region (neck/shoulder, back, knee/foot).
- Do the **10-minute block** daily for 14 days (Chapter 11).
- Change **one lever** (bra/strap, bag, screen, pillow/bolster, footwear).
- If you stall, open Chapter 9 (plateaus). If you're ready to build strength, use Chapter 12.

Before you turn the page, try this 30-second test: place your right hand lightly on your head and shrug your right shoulder blade up and down five times. Smooth? Or stuck and jerky? That little signal will make Chapter 2 come alive.

Source first. Symptom last. That's how you leave pain behind – and keep moving forward.

– **Nelson Chong**

Founder, Functional Training Institute

Creator, **R`4 Method**

Fitness Best Asia, Regional Personal Trainer of the Year (2021)

Chapter 1

The Tissue Paper That Broke a Back

If a straw can break a camel's back, why not the harmless tissue paper?



When Laura bent down to pick up a stray tissue, her spine screamed. She had a “slipped disc” as diagnosed by her doctor.

Two weeks later she limped into the gym with a walking stick and a face full of fear. Business trips cancelled. Sleep fractured. Painkillers dulling, never fixing.

I didn’t start at her lower back.

I asked one question:

“From the moment you wake till you fall asleep, what do your days actually look like?”

That’s **R`4 Pillar 1 – Review**. We don’t chase symptoms—we audit the 24-hour loop that keeps feeding them.

By minute three she confessed the habit that quietly twisted her life into a C-shape: **four hours of Zoom calls a day... in bed**. The soft mattress felt “comforting,” but her spine bent like a banana—morning, noon, and night. Movies on the sofa? Banana. Phone on the beanbag? Banana. Side-sleeping with the wrong pillow and no bolster? Banana again.

Same story, different day, same disc under pressure.

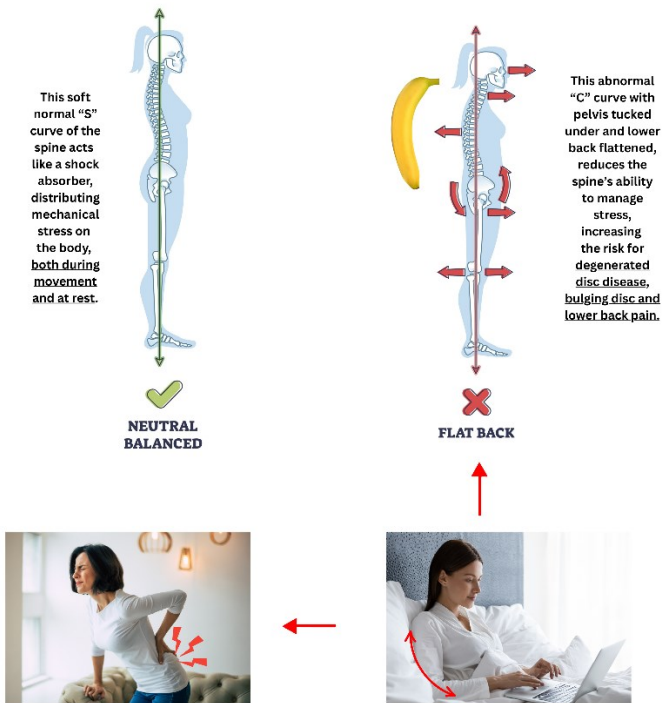
When she finally stooped for that tissue, the disc didn’t “suddenly go.” It had been nudged, hour after hour, until the sciatic nerve had no room to breathe.

So, we ran the R`4 play:

- **Review:** Bed is for two things: **sleep** and **making babies**. No Zooms, no scrolling. We fixed her workstation height at eye level, feet grounded, lumbar, thoracic and cervical spine supported, elbows resting—not hovering.
- **Release:** 10 minutes on hip flexors, front core, side glutes, and erector spinae muscles—the tissues tugging her spine into flexion.

- **Retrain:** Neutral-spine drills; glute med activation (“cowboy soldier” band work); hinge patterning so her hips, not her back, drive the bend, bird dog, side plank.
- **Results:** She walked out upright. She slept that night. The walking stick stayed in the corner.

Watch next: 3 Simple Truths That Fix Your Chronic Back Pain (you’ll never unsee the banana).



Chapter 2

What Your Mama Didn't Tell You About Bras, Bags, Neck & Shoulder Pain.

You can't out-massage a bad habit.

If your straps, screens, and sleep set-ups keep **dragging your shoulders down and your head forward**, your neck will keep complaining – no matter how many rubs, needles, or pills you try.



✗ WRONG SITTING POSTURE

This chapter is about a surprisingly simple truth:

Most neck and shoulder pain start in your chest and lats, not in your neck.

Tight **pecs** (especially the muscle fibres right under the collarbone) and overworked **lats** pull the shoulder blades down and forward. Your neck muscles (upper trapezius and friends) are left to hold your 5-kg head at the end of a long lever. Picture yourself holding a 5-kg bowling ball with an outstretched arm. Hello, headaches. Hello, tingling hands. Hello, “why does it keep coming back?”

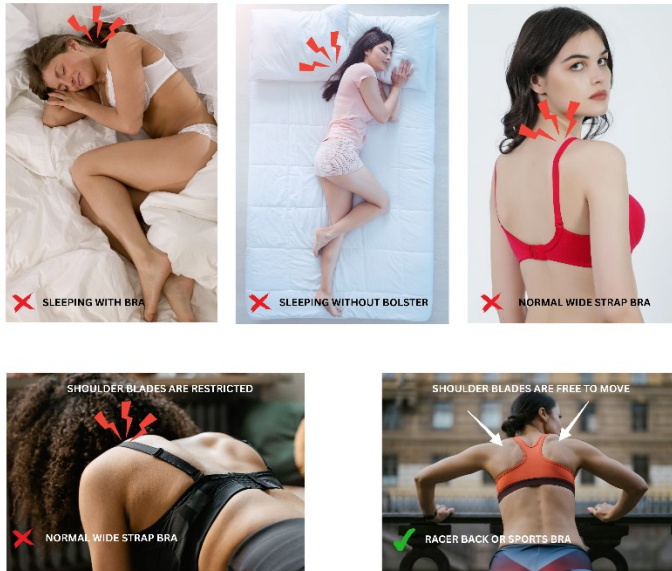


We’ll prove it with stories, then give you the exact **R`4** steps—**Review** → **Release** → **Retrain** → **Results**—so you can fix the source and keep the gains.

Elaine’s Lesson: The Wrong Straps Can Load the Wrong Muscles

Elaine wore the same kind of bra for years: a wired, double-strap style with thin straps that sat wide on her shoulders. She also slept in a bra “for support.”

Every week, the same cycle: neck tight, shoulders aching, migraines flaring, expensive massage, two days of relief, pain returns.



R`4 Review: We looked at load and levers.

Thin, wide-set straps sat far from her midline. That creates a **long lever arm**—like holding a 1-kg water bottle with your arm straight out. The farther the load from center, the more your neck and upper traps must grip. Sleeping in a bra “clamps” the shoulder blades and ribs, stopping them from gliding through the night.

R`4 Release: Ten minutes on the pec fibers right under the collarbone (**pec clavicular**) and on the **lats** along the side rib cage. Within minutes her neck could move further with less bite.

R`4 Retrain: Two simple scapula drills (you’ll learn them below) taught her shoulder blades to **lift and rotate** again instead of sitting depressed and pinned.

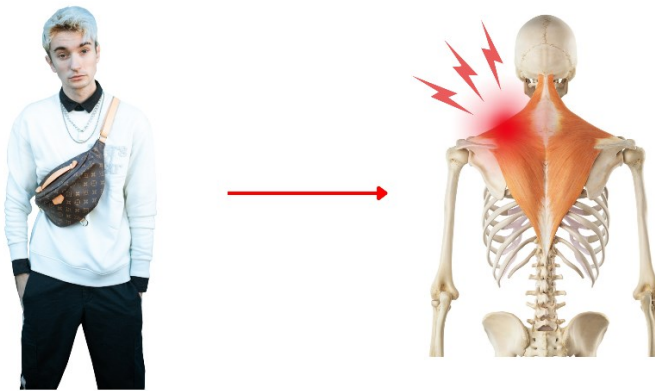
R`4 Results: She swapped to **racer-back sports bras** (Y-shaped straps closer to center, thicker, supportive), stopped sleeping in a bra, did her 10-minute releases and two drills daily. Days later: headaches quiet, neck free, sleep restored.

One swap, one habit, one practice. That’s the R`4 way.

The “Half-Bra” Man: When a Cross-Body Bag Becomes a Pain Machine

Richard runs long distances and trains race horses. A physio’s tape on his shoulder blade gave instant relief—until the tape came off three days later.

He walked into my studio wearing a **heavy cross-body bag** strapped from his left shoulder to his right hip.



R`4 Review: The strap had been **depressing** his left shoulder for months, holding the shoulder blade down like a tent peg. When I asked him to place his left hand gently on his head and shrug the shoulder blade **up and down**, it barely moved. (Do this test yourself in a minute.)

R`4 Release: Chest, lats, triceps, rhomboids, forearm flexors, and the side of the neck—brief, targeted work to restore tissue glide.

R`4 Retrain: Two banded drills (below) to restore the shoulder blade’s **upward rotation and posterior tilt**.

R`4 Results: Pain-free in a session—and it stayed that way because he changed the cause: he ditched the cross-body bag for a waist pouch. Tape treats the symptom. **Habits decide the ending.**

R`4 - Step by Step (Neck & Shoulder Edition)

Step 1 – Review: Find What’s Feeding the Pain

Use this 3-minute audit. Tick what’s true for you.

A. Straps & clothing

- ☐ My bra straps are **thin** and sit **wide** on my shoulders.
- ☐ I sleep in a bra.
- ☐ I carry a **cross-body bag** > 1+ hour/day.
- ☐ My backpack/handbag hangs off **one** shoulder.

B. Workstation Ergonomics

- ☐ Screens are **below** eye level; I look down.
- ☐ My elbows **float** (no armrest support).
- ☐ My keyboard/mouse are **too far**, so I reach.
- ☐ My chair does not have **neck support**.
- ☐ I use my devices from **sofa/bed** multiple hours weekly.

C. Sleep Ergonomics

- ☐ Side sleeper with **soft/low pillow**; shoulder collapses.
- ☐ I use the pillow instead of a **firm bolster** to support the top arm (it hangs and tugs).
- ☐ I got woken up with **tingling** hands/fingers.

D. Posture Tells

- ☐ In the mirror, my **palms face backward** (not inward).
- ☐ One shoulder **sits lower** than the other.

The more boxes you tick, the more likely your neck is paying for tight chest/lats and depressed scapulae.

E. Two 10-second Self-Tests

1. Scapula Shrug Test

Sit or stand tall. Place your right hand gently on your head (elbow out). Shrug your **right** shoulder up toward your ear, then slide it down. Five smooth reps. Repeat on the left.

- ☐ Is one side **barely move** or **jerky**? That shoulder blade is likely stuck down/forward.
- ☐ Do you feel **discomfort** or **pain**?
- ☐ Is your **elbow moving** instead of your arm?



2. Shoulder Flexion Test

Stand against a wall, heels about half a foot forward, low ribs stacked (don't flare), palms facing inward. Raise your arms up towards the wall.

- ❑ If your lower back is arching more as you reach higher, your lats are protesting.
- ❑ If you can't keep your elbows straight when lifting your arms, your chest and lats are holding you down.
- ❑ If you feel pain, discomfort or pinching at your rotator cuff muscle (supraspinatus), your chest/lats are stealing motion.

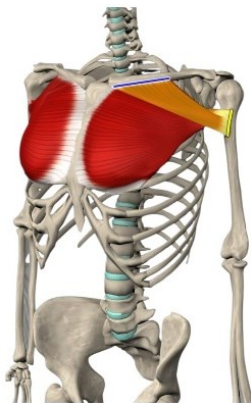


Step 2 – Release: 10 Minutes to Free the Tight Tissues

- **Tools:** R`4 Massage Ball (comes with 3 densities), R`4 Mini Vibe (pocket vibrating roller), R`4 Yoga Block, a floor/wall.
- **Rule:** Mild-moderate pressure (5-7/10).
Numbness/zinging that doesn't ease? Move off the spot.
Breathe slowly.

(1) Pec Clavicular (the game-changer for “can’t look up” necks)

- Stand against a wall.
- Place the ball **just under the collarbone**, beside your sternum.
- **Glide slowing** towards the shoulder; search for tender nodules.
- **2 mins per side**, slow breaths.



(2) Lat (side body) & Serratus region

- Lie on your side over a roller/ball, just below the armpit on the rib area.
- Sweep the arm from hip to overhead while breathing.
- **2 mins per side**, slow breaths.



(3) Triceps (for elbow/shoulder pain)

- Ball/roller against the back of the upper arm near the armpit; straighten/bend the elbow. Find a few spots.
- **2 mins per side**, slow breaths.



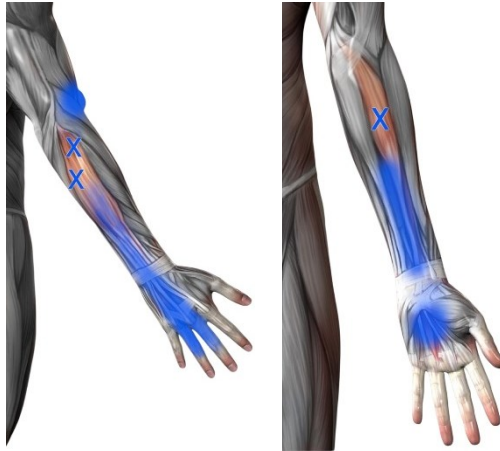
(4) Rhomboids & Middle Trapezius (must-do if you can't look down or scratch your shoulder)

- Ball/roller between shoulder blade and spine; move the arm up and down
- **2 mins per side**, slow breaths.



(5) Forearm (for night tingling/grip fatigue)

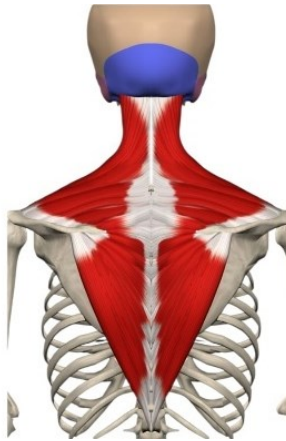
- Ball/roller on the floor; roll the forearm from elbow to wrist.
- **2 mins per side**, slow breaths.



(6) Upper trap/Levator (gentle only, after chest/lat work)

- Ball/roller between shoulder blade and spine; move arm up and down gently.
- **60 seconds per side** (less is more here).

Order matters: Front first (pec), then side (lat), then secondary helpers. Free the lines that pin the shoulder blade down and forward; the neck will stop over-gripping.



Step 3 – Retrain: Teach Your Shoulder Blades to Move

You need **upward rotation** (blade turns and lifts) and **posterior tilt** (top of blade tips back) when the arm goes up. Two drills, 90 seconds each, done well, beat 20 scattered exercises.

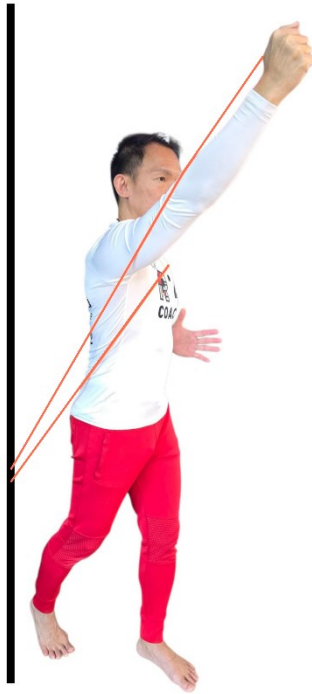
Drill A – High-to-Low Pull (band)

- Anchor a light band **overhead**. Stand tall, ribs stacked, chin gently retracted.
- With the affected arm, grab the band thumb-up.
- Think: “**Blade to back pocket**” as you pull to ribs, elbow brushing the side.
- Pause, feel lower traps engage (beneath shoulder blade, not neck).
- **8–12 smooth reps**. If you feel it mostly in your neck, lower the anchor and lighten the band.



Drill B — Low-to-High Push (band)

- Anchor the band **low** (knee height). Stand sideways to the anchor, working arm farthest from the band.
- Start hand near opposite hip; **push up and out** to a high diagonal as if placing something on a top shelf.
- Keep shoulder **down-and-wide**, ribs quiet.
- **8-12 smooth reps.** Feel the shoulder blade glide **up and around**, not jam into your neck.



Alternate/assist:

- **Wall Slides with Hover:** Yoga block between chest and wall, forearms on wall, elbows at 90°. Slide up diagonally like a big “V”, **elbows and last finger must not leave the wall**, hold for 5 breaths each rep then slide down. **Do 5 reps.**
- **Press Down:** Rest your elbow on yoga block, press down gently to feel your shoulder blade moving down slightly. Hold for 5 breaths each rep then relax. **Do 5 reps.**

Coaching cue: If your **upper traps** burn, you’re shrugging. Reset: soften ribs, widen the collarbones, imagine the shoulder blade **rotating** rather than the shoulder **hiking**.



Step 4 – Results: Lock It In with Smarter Set-ups

Bra & strap decision tree (2 minutes):

- Do you have medium–large breasts or wide shoulders?
- Prefer racer-back/sports bras: Y-shaped straps, thicker, closer to center.
- Daily home wear?
- Go strap-free when comfortable to let ribs and scapulae move.
- Sleep? No bra unless medically indicated; support the shoulder instead (see below).



Bag rules:

- **No cross-body** for daily hours. If you must, **alternate sides** and keep weight minimal.
- Best: **waist pouch** or **two-strap backpack** worn on **both** shoulders.

Workstation non-negotiables:

- Eyes level with top of the screen.
- **Elbows & neck supported** (armrests and neck rest) shoulders resting — not hovering.
- **Keyboard and mouse close**; no reaching.
- **Laptop?** Use a riser + external keyboard/mouse.
- **Feet flat on ground** (use foot rest if you can't)



Sleep fixes for side sleepers:

- **Ergonomic pillow** that fills the space from mattress to jaw (neck neutral).
- **Firm bolster** hugged to support the top arm so the shoulder doesn't droop forward all night.
- If you wake with tingling: check that the top shoulder and wrist aren't compressed; adjust bolster height.



Your 10-Minute Daily (Neck & Shoulder) — The R`4 Micro-Circuit

1. Review (30 sec):

- Straps centered? Elbows supported? Screen at eye level?
Bolster ready for tonight?

2. Release (7 min):

- Pec clavicular — 90 s/side
- Lat/serratus — 90 s/side
- Triceps — 60 s/side
- Rhomboids/Traps — 60 s/side

3. Retrain (3 min):

- High-to-Low Pull — 8-12 reps
- Low-to-High Push — 8-12 reps

Do this once daily for 14 days. Most readers feel **lighter shoulders** and **freer neck rotation** within a week—because the shoulder blades finally move, and the neck can finally **stop** doing everyone else’s job.

Troubleshooting & FAQs

“My neck still grabs during the band drills.”

Lighten the band. Exhale as you start the movement. Think “blade glides” before “arm pushes.” Do one extra minute of **pec release** first.

“I get tingling at night.”

Check the **bolster**: it should fully support the top arm so the shoulder is not hanging forward. Add forearm release. If tingling persists or worsens, consult a clinician.

“Racer-back feels weird at first.”

That’s your traps learning to **rest**. Give it a week. Many notice less end-of-day neck fatigue.

“Desk days beat me up.”

Set a **50-minute timer** to do 3 breaths with **palms up**, collarbones wide, then one set of **Wall Slides with Hover**.

A Quick Win You Can Feel Today

1. Put on a racer-back (or temporarily **clip** your straps together at the back to mimic one).
2. Spend **90 seconds** releasing the pec area just under your collarbone.
3. Do **8 High-to-Low Pulls** and **8 Low-to-High Pushes** with the lightest band you have.
4. Re-test: place your hand on your head and shrug the shoulder blade up and down.
5. Notice the smoothness. Notice the space.

That's not luck. That's **source first, symptom last** – the R4 way.

Watch & Practice (when you're ready)

- **3 Simple Truths To Fix Your Neck & Shoulder Pain** – the exact principles you just used, demonstrated step-by-step.
- **Who is Nelson Chong** – the backstory behind the method and why small daily tweaks change everything.
- **3 Simple Truths To Fix Your Chronic Back Pain** – for the banana-spine crowd (pair with Chapter 3).

(Use the QR codes in the print/e-book or the video index at the back of this book.)

Up next: Chapter 3 – Back Pain Isn't in Your Back.

You'll learn why sofas, soft beds, and certain "fitness" moves keep discs angry – and how 10 minutes of the right releases plus one hinge pattern can change tomorrow morning.

Chapter 3

Back Pain Isn't in Your Back

If pain were honest, it would point to the *habit* that feeds it—not the spot that hurts.



Most stubborn low-back pain is powered by a 24-hour routine of **C-shaped sitting and bending** that squeezes spinal discs and bullies nerves. I call it the **banana-spine loop**: bed-Zooms, sofa slouching, beanbag scrolling, side-sleeping without a bolster, non-reclining car seats, hours on a bike with the back rounded, “fitness” classes full of fast burpees.

Different scenes, same shape.

This chapter shows you how to break that loop with the

R`4 Method—one small decision at a time.



**Daily Habits That Add Extra Stress To Our Lower Back : C-Shape Spine
Causing Bulging Disc, Herniated Disc, Sciatica Nerve Impingement**

The Cyclist Who Strengthened the Wrong Thing

A doctor who loved weekend rides came in with “sciatica pain” down the leg. He’d stretched his hamstrings for months and bought a stiffer saddle. No change.

R`4 Review: His days were a flexion marathon: laptop low, long drives, hours on the bike — **all banana, all day**.

R`4 Release: We didn’t touch his hamstrings first. We freed the **hip flexors** (front of the hips that keep the spine tugged forward), the **outer glutes** (glute med/min) and the front core (abs, obliques, psoas) that had turned into hard, tender knots from sitting.

R`4 Retrain: A simple **hip hinge** taught his hips to bend while his spine stayed neutral; a banded “**cowboy soldier**” drill woke up the side-bum muscles that keep knees and pelvis aligned. **Bird dog** and **staggered side plank** to realign his spine that was confused.

R`4 Results: His shoots of leg pain faded within days. He kept riding — only now with a spine that knew where neutral lived.

The lesson: **Back pain isn’t just “back.”** It’s hips, glutes, front core and habits conspiring at the spine.



R`4 for Backs: Source First, Symptom Last

Step 1 – Review: Find What’s Feeding Your Banana-Spine Loop

The 60-Second Banana Check

Tick what’s true today:

- ☐ Worked on **sofa/bed** for more than 30 minutes.
- ☐ Screen **below eye level**; head forward to read.
- ☐ Car seat **non-reclined**; tail tucked under.
- ☐ **Cycled** 45+ minutes (and little else).
- ☐ Side-slept like a fetus with **no bolster**.
- ☐ Did **burpees/sit-ups** fast in a class.
- ☐ Bent to lift with **back first** (not hips).
- ☐ **Sitting on bed** using devices > 30 mins before sleep.
- ☐ Woke with **morning stiffness** that eases as you move.

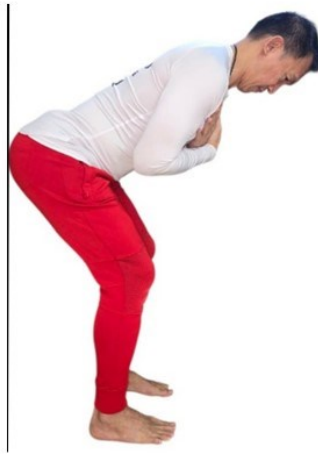
The more boxes you tick, the more your discs have been nudged backward hour after hour. Today’s “sudden” pain is yesterday’s posture, repeated.

Two 20-Second Self-Tests

1. Wall Hinge Test

Stand 20–25 cm from a wall, feet hip-width. Reach your hips back to *touch* the wall without rounding your spine; shins stay nearly vertical.

- If you can't reach without rounding, your hips aren't doing their job—your back is.



2. Supine Knee-Hug vs. Standing Squat

On your back, hug one knee to chest. If it's pain-free here but a **body-weight squat** hurts, the block isn't your knee—it's **ankle/hip mobility and glute control** in standing.



Step 2 – Release: 10 Minutes to Free What’s Tugging Your Spine

Tempo: slow, easy breathing. Pressure: a “good ache,” never sharp. If symptoms travel or worsen, ease off or switch spots.

(1) Front Hip/Thigh (TFL/upper quad) – 90 s/side

- Lie face-down on a ball/roller placed just inside the front pocket line.
- Bend/straighten the knee to floss the tissue.



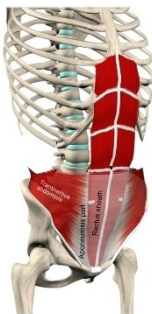
(2) Outer Glute (glute med/min) – 2 min/side

- Lie on a firm ball/roller placed on the side-butt (not the low back).
- Cross the ankle of the treated side over the opposite knee; move up and down for 1 min, then left and right for 1 min.



(3) Front Core – 90 s

- Lie over a pair of massage balls/roller below your naval.
- Take five slow breaths; move one segment up/down and repeat.



(5) Calf/Achilles (optional for morning stiffness) – 60 s/side

- Ball/roller under calf; slow ankle pumps. Restless calves pull the chain downwards.

Order matters: **front hip** → **outer hip** → **front core**. Free the hips so the spine doesn't have to fake the motion.



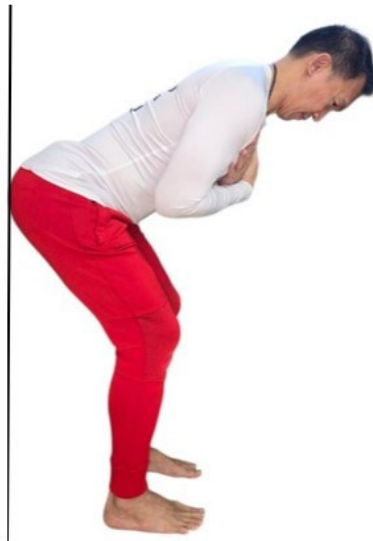
Step 3 – Retrain: Teach Hips to Bend, Spine to Stay

Four drills give you most of the return if you do them **well**.

A) Wall Hip Hinge (Spine-Sparing Pattern)

- Stand 20–25 cm from the wall, feet hip-width.
- Soften knees; **reach your hips back** until your glutes touch the wall.
- Keep ribs stacked over pelvis; imagine a broomstick from head to tail.
- **8–12 smooth reps**, pause at the wall, feel hamstrings load.

Feel it in hamstrings/glutes? Good. Feel it in the low back? Reset, go smaller.



B) “Cowboy Soldier” (Band at Knees to Wake Side-Bum)

- Loop a black band just below knees.
- Stand tall, feet parallel.
- Push knees gently **out** (like a cowboy) without rolling feet, then **march** in place/forward for 20 slow steps, pelvis steady.
- 2 sets of 20 slow steps.

This teaches your glute med/min to stop knees caving in—key for backs and knees.



C) Bird Dog (30-Second Hold Each Side)

- On fours, lift off your opposite arm and leg. Exhale, gently brace as if zipping jeans; maintain normal breath.
- Hold for 30 secs and switch side.



D) Staggered Side Plank (30-Second Hold Each Side)

- Lie sideways, top leg in front, bottom leg behind, both knees straight, elbow supported, raise hip away from floor.
- Hold for 30 secs and switch side.



Step 4 – Results: Lock Gains with Smarter Set-ups

- **Work:** Screen at **eye level**; **elbows and neck supported**; feet flat. Laptop? Use a riser + keyboard.
- **Sit:** Hips slightly **higher** than knees; sit bones pointing down (not tucked).

- **Sleep:** Side-sleepers use an **ergonomic pillow** and a **firm bolster** to support the top arm/leg so the spine rests neutral.
- **Move:** Trade high-rep **burpees/sit-ups** for **hinge, split-squat, carry** patterns.
- **Ride/Drive:** Break every **45–60 min** with a 30-second stand and two wall hinges.



Your 10-Minute Daily (Back) – The R`4 Micro-Circuit

1. Review (30 s):

- Screen height? Seat angle? Plan one 60-second stand-up break per hour.

2. Release (7 min):

- Hip flexor – 2 min/side
- Outer glute – 2 min/side
- Front core – 90 s

3. Retrain (3 min):

- Wall Hip Hinge – 8-12 reps
- Cowboy Soldier – 2 × 20 slow steps
- Bird Dog – 30 secs each side
- Staggered Side Plank – 30 seconds each side

Do this daily for 14 days. Most people feel **easier mornings, fewer zings**, and a stronger “I can pick that up” within a week.

Troubleshooting

“Hinging still pinches my back.”

Go **closer to the wall** and hinge smaller. Reset ribs over pelvis before each rep; do one extra minute of **hip flexor** release first.

“My leg tingles when I sit.”

Put a **firm cushion** under your sit bones, raise the screen, and do 10 **standing hip hinges** every hour. Add **outer-glute** release daily for a week. If tingling worsens or weakness appears, get medical assessment.

“Mornings are the worst.”

Do the bird dog and side plank to align your spine.

A Quick Win You Can Feel Today

1. Put your laptop on **yoga block** so the top of the screen is at eye level.
2. Do **2 minutes** per hip of hip-flexor release.
3. Perform **10 wall hinges**.
4. Pick something light from the floor using the same hinge — hips back, spine long, stand tall.

That “oh—no pinch” feeling? That’s your hips finally doing their job and your spine finally allowed to rest.

Up next: Chapter 4 — Knees, Feet, and the Chain Reaction.

You’ll see why knees are often the **innocent victim** between stiff ankles and sleepy hips—and how a wider toe box, a stronger foot arch, and one simple drill change everything.

Chapter 4

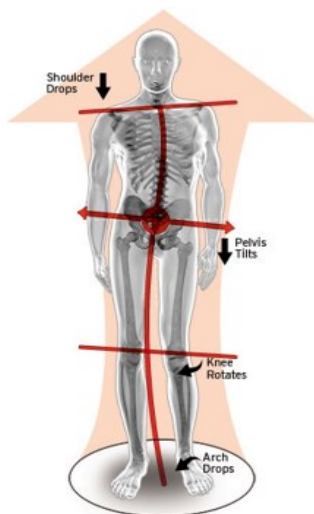
Knees, Feet, and the Chain Reaction

Your knees are often the **innocent victim** — caught between **stiff ankles** and **sleepy hips**. If the foot collapses inward or the side-bum muscles are off-duty, the knee is forced to twist and grind through thousands of steps a day.

It's not a "bad knee"; it's a **bad line of force**.

This chapter shows you how to fix that line with

R`4: Review → Release → Retrain → Results.



The 13-Year-Old Runner

Mum bought her a quality “anti-pronation” shoe. Still, every jog ended with knee aches. R`4 Review showed both knees **knocking inward** on every step, the left worse than the right—classic **glute med/min underwork** and a **collapsing foot arch**. We didn’t chase the knee. We trained the foot tripod and the side-bum. Pain gone, joy back.



One or both knees rotate internally



Both knees remain on an imaginary line drawn from hip-joint to the foot

The Elliptical “Low-Impact” Trap

My fit female client in her early 40s returned from a year abroad with **two MRI reports** from two orthopaedic surgeons telling her to go for knee surgery. Her both knees were crying in pain when walking, squatting or using the stairs.

Both doctors were not aware that she has been using the **elliptical machine, 1-hour daily for one year**. Watching her move during R`4 Review, both knees **dove inward** every stride. Low impact doesn't mean low **misalignment due to thousands of reps**. We released her tight-hip and calf, retrain her glutes and foot arch, taught her proper biomechanic for cardio. She returned to US happily with no surgery required. Fully restored.



“I Can’t Squat—Must Be My Knees”

Ailian had been told not to squat because of **rheumatoid arthritis knees**. Both her physio and doctor told her not to squat after steroid injections at her knees. Sadly, she was still in pain with limited mobility and quality life.

During R`4 Review - she could bend each knee fully **without pain when** lying down. Standing, she jammed halfway. The block wasn’t the knees; it was the **stiff ankles**. Ten days of calf/foot release + ankle drills + arch and hip retrain, and she sat to the floor, **pain-free**.



Before



After

R`4 for Knees: Source First, Symptom Last

Step 1 – Review: What’s Feeding the Twist?

Footwear & daily habits

- ☐ Shoes with **narrow toe boxes**, tight socks; toes can’t spread.
- ☐ Thick, very **cushy soles**; can’t feel the ground.
- ☐ **High heels** or forefoot-elevated fashion most days.
- ☐ Working/resting on **bed/sofa/recliner** with legs straightened for prolong hours, ankles stuck with toes pointing down.
- ☐ Kids’ shoes chosen for **style**, not **shape** (toes squeezed).
- ☐ Wearing **indoor slippers** that can’t be bent all day.

Movement tells

- ☐ When you squat or go downstairs, your **knees cave inward**.
- ☐ Your **arches collapse**; big toe lifts off when you push off.
- ☐ From behind, your heel bone tilts in; from front, kneecaps point in.

Environment clues

- ☐ Only **sitting toilets** for years; deep squat feels foreign.
- ☐ Long hours **sitting**; little hip work.
- ☐ “Cardio” is mostly cycling/swimming; no foot-to-ground practice.

Two quick self-tests (20–30 seconds each)

1. **Knee-to-Wall (Ankle Dorsiflexion) Test**
2. Stand facing a wall, one foot forward. Position your big toe 10 cm away from the wall. Keep heel **down** and knee **tracks over 2nd–3rd toe** as you try to touch the wall.
 - If the heel pops or the knee swings inward, your ankle is likely limiting you.



2. Step-Down Alignment Test

Stand on a step. Slowly tap the opposite heel to the floor and rise.

- Does the standing knee **drift inside** the big toe? That's the pattern stressing your knee.



Step 2 – Release: Free the Tissues That Drag the Knee

Pressure: comfortable “good ache,” never sharp. Breathe slowly.

(1) Plantar Foot & Arch – 90 s/side

- Roll a ball under the foot from heel to toes. Pause on tender spots; spread toes between passes.



(2) Calf (Soleus/Gastrocnemius) – 2 min/side

- Ball or roller under calf. Slow ankle pumps; then bend/straighten the knee.



(3) Peroneals (Outer Shin) – 90 s/side

- Lie on your side; place a ball along the outer shin just below the knee to mid-calf. Small rolls. Move your ankles up and down.



(4) TFL/Upper Quad (Front Pocket Area) – 90 s/side

- Ball just inside the front pocket line; bend/straighten knee to floss.



(5) Glute Med/Min (Side-Bum) – 2 min/side

- Sit on a ball on the **side** of the butt (not low back). Cross ankle over knee; up and down 1 min, left and right 1 min.

Order: **foot** → **calf** → **outer shin** → **front hip** → **side-bum**. Free the bottom and top of the chain so the knee can track cleanly.



Step 3 – Retrain: Build the Line (Foot → Knee → Hip)

A) Short-Foot + Tripod (Arch On) – 60-90 s

- Barefoot, stand tall. Press **big toe, little toe, heel** evenly – your tripod.
- Gently “shorten” the foot by drawing the ball of the foot toward the heel **without curling toes**.
- Maintain while breathing; feel the arch lift and the kneecap point straight ahead.

B) Wall Ankle Drive – 8-12 reps/side

- Same setup as Knee-to-Wall test. Glide the knee forward over mid-toe, heel down, ribs quiet.
- No cave-in; track straight. Small, controlled range.

C) “Cowboy Soldier” (Band Below Knees) – 2 × 20 slow steps

- Light band just below knees. Stand tall, feet parallel.
- Gently press knees **out** to neutral (not duck feet) and **march** in place.
- Pelvis level, arches active. This wakes the side-bum to hold the knee line.

D) Step-Down With Band Cue – 2 × 6-8/side

- Mini-band below knees. On a step, tap the opposite heel to floor and return.
- Keep knee tracking **over 2nd-3rd toe**; don’t let band pull it in.
- Move slow; control the **lowering** phase.

E) Split-Squat (Rear-Foot Supported) – 2 × 6-8/side

- Long stance. Front foot tripod on; back toes tucked.
- Drop straight down; front knee tracks over mid-toe, heel heavy.
- Rise by pressing **big toe + heel** evenly; feel glute and quad share the work.

Cue for every drill: “Tripod on. Knee over mid-toe. Pelvis steady.”
If the arch collapses or the knee caves, pause, reset, and use a **smaller range**.

Step 4 – Results: Lock It In with Smarter Choices

Footwear rules (for adults and kids)

- **Wide toe box** with **toe socks** so that toes can **splay**.
- **Thin/flexible sole** enough to feel the ground, with minimal heel-toe drop.
- Fit by **foot shape**, not brand hype. If the insole leaves toe imprints **squashed together**, it's too narrow.
- For dress/high heels: limit time, remove them when sitting in office; after wearing them, do **calf/foot release** and a few **ankle drives**.

Daily patterns

- Practice a supported **deep squat hold** 30–60 seconds/day (heels down; hold a doorframe if needed).
- Break long sitting with **20 banded steps** or **8 wall ankle drives**.
- Running? Keep cadence smooth and land with the knee **stacked**; do 1–2 sets of **step-downs** as part of warm-up.

For kids & teens

- Choose **wide, thin, flat** school shoes. Toes should fan out inside.
- Teach “knee over toe” on stairs and landings.
- Add **barefoot time** at home on safe surfaces.

Your 10-Minute Daily (Knees) – The R`4 Micro-Circuit

1. Review (30 s):

- Check shoes (wide/flat?). Pick one moment today (stairs, desk break) to practice **knee-over-toe** with **tripod on**.

2. Release (7 min):

- Foot roll – 90 s/side
- Calf – 2 min/side
- Glute med/min – 2 min/side (alternate days add peroneals or TFL)

3. Retrain (3 min):

- Short-Foot Tripod – 60 s
- Wall Ankle Drive – 8-12/side
- Step-Down with Band – 6-8/side

Do this daily for 14 days. Most feel stair confidence return and “tracking” improve within a week – because the **line** is fixed.

Troubleshooting

“My arch cramps during Short-Foot.”

Ease the tension; think **spread, then lift**. Only 20–30% effort. Add more **calf/peroneal release** first.

“Knee still dives in on step-downs.”

Lower the step height; keep reps slow. Do **Cowboy Soldier** first to wake the side-bum.

“Outside knee aches after band work.”

Likely over-pressing the knees out. Aim for **neutral**, not bow-legged. Keep feet **straight ahead**.

“Deep squat pinches the front of the ankle.”

Add **ankle drives** and a **calf stretch** after releases. Elevate heels slightly (book/plate) while you groove depth, then gradually lower.

A Quick Win You Can Feel Today

1. Take off your shoes. Stand and find your **tripod** (big toe, little toe, heel).
2. Do **10 wall ankle drives** per side—**heel down, knee over mid-toe**.
3. Put the shoes back on. If your toes feel squeezed, swap to a pair with a **wider toe box** and **toe socks** repeat the step-down test.
4. Finish with **2 × 20 Cowboy Soldier** steps.

Feel how the knee tracks straighter? That's the chain finally stacked: **foot awake, knee aligned, hip engaged**—the R`4 way.

Up next: Chapter 5 — R`4 on One Page.

You'll get the whole method condensed into a daily 14-day plan—three moves, ten minutes, real change.

Chapter 5

R`4 on One Page

(& Your 14-Day Reset)

If you only read one chapter, make it this one.

This is the whole method – condensed, practical, ready to run in ten minutes a day.

The R`4 Method at a Glance

R1 – REVIEW (find what feeds the pain)

Audit the **24-hour loop**: workstation, sleep set-up, footwear, exercise choices, bags/bras. Use the quick tests to spot which region to start with.

R2 – RELEASE (free the right tissues)

10 minutes/day on the **prime culprits**:

- Neck/Shoulder: **pec (clavicular fibers), lats, triceps, rhomboids/traps, neck.**
- Back: **hip flexors, glute med/min, TFL, front core.**
- Knee/Foot: **plantar foot, calf/soleus, peroneals, glute med/min.**

R3 – RETRAIN (teach alignment)

2 simple drills per region to groove **neutral** under light load:

- Neck/Shoulder: **High-to-Low Pull, Low-to-High Push** (band).
- Back: **Wall Hip Hinge, Cowboy Soldier** (band at knees) + quiet bracing.
- Knee/Foot: **Short-Foot Tripod, Wall Ankle Drives, Step-Downs.**

R`4 – RESULTS (lock gains with choices)

Small environment tweaks that stop the pain cycle:

- **Racer-back** instead of thin, wide straps; **no bra in bed.**
- **No cross-body** bags; use a waist pouch or two-strap backpack.
- **Screen at eye level, elbows & neck supported, feet flat.**

- **Wide toe-box** shoes with **toe socks**; daily **deep squat hold** (supported).

Where to Start (3 Questions)

1. **Which hurts first or most?**
2. Neck/shoulder → start with Neck block.
3. Back/butt/thigh → start with Back block.
4. Knee/foot/achilles → start with Knee/Foot block.
5. **Which quick test fails?**
 - **Scapula shrug** jerky/stuck → Neck block.
 - **Wall hinge** impossible without rounding → Back block.
 - **Knee-to-wall** limited / **step-down** caves in → Knee/Foot block.
3. **Which habit screams “that’s me”?**
4. Bed/sofa work → Back.
5. Straps/bags + night tingling → Neck.
6. Narrow shoes + stairs pain → Knee/Foot.

Pick one block. Do it daily for 14 days. Then add a second block if needed.

The 10-Minute Formula (Daily)

0:30 – REVIEW

Adjust one environment lever (strap/screen/bolster/footwear).

7:00 – RELEASE

Four spots, 90 sec each (see regional menus below).

2:30 – RETRAIN

Two drills, 8–12 quality reps (or timed holds), slow breath.

Rule: If you're short on time, *never* skip Review. Remove the cause; your body keeps the change.

The 14-Day R`4 Reset

Day 1-2 – Neck/Shoulder (refer to chapter 2 at page 15)

- Release: pec (clavicular), lats, triceps, rhomboids/traps, neck.
- Retrain: High-to-Low Pull; Low-to-High Push.
- Result lock: swap to **racer-back**, elbows & neck supported at desk, **no bra in bed**.

Day 3-4 – Back (refer to chapter 3 at page 35)

- Release: hip flexor, glute med/min, front core.
- Retrain: Wall Hip Hinge; Cowboy Soldier; quiet bracing.
- Result lock: laptop to eye level; sit bones down, hips slightly higher than knees, use bed for sleeping only.

Day 5-6 – Knee/Foot (refer to chapter 4 at page 50)

- Release: plantar foot, calf/soleus, peroneals, glute med/min.
- Retrain: Short-Foot Tripod; Wall Ankle Drives; Step-Downs.
- Result lock: **wide toe-box** shoes and **toe socks**; 60-sec supported deep squat.

Day 7 – Integrate & Walk

- Pick **one** release from each region (total 7 min).
- Walk 15–20 minutes noticing **knee over mid-toe**, arms free, collarbones wide.

Day 8–9 – Neck/Shoulder (progress the band a little or slow the tempo)

Day 10–11 – Back (inch further from wall on hinges)

Day 12–13 – Knee/Foot (lower step height if form wobbles; add slow eccentrics)

Day 14 – Re-test Day

- Scapula shrug, Wall hinge, Knee-to-wall & Step-down.
- Compare to Day 1. Note wins and next focus.

After Day 14, keep your **primary** block 3–4 days/week and rotate the others 1–2 days/week.

Regional Menus (Plug-and-Play)

Neck & Shoulder (10 min) – refer to chapter 2 at page 15

Release (7 min)

1. Pec clavicular – 90 s/side
2. Lat/serratus region – 90 s/side
3. Triceps – 60 s/side
4. Rhomboids & traps – 60 s/side
5. *(Optional 45 s gentle upper trap after front/side work)*

Retrain (3 min)

- High-to-Low Pull – 8-12 reps
- Low-to-High Push – 8-12 reps
- *(Alt: Wall Slides with brief hover at $\frac{3}{4}$ height)*

Result locks

Racer-back straps; elbows & neck supported; screen at eye; **no cross-body bag**.

Back (10 min) – refer to chapter 3 at page 35

Release (7 min)

1. Hip flexor – 2 min/side
2. Glute med/min – 2 min/side
3. Front core – 90 s

Retrain (3 min)

- Wall Hip Hinge – 8-12 reps
- Cowboy Soldier (band below knees) – 2 × 20 slow steps
- Quiet bracing switches – 6-10 total

Result locks

Laptop riser + keyboard; sit bones down; break each hour with **10 hinges**.

Knee & Foot (10 min) – refer to chapter 4 at page 50

Release (7 min)

1. Foot roll – 90 s/side
2. Calf/soleus – 2 min/side
3. Peroneals **or** TFL – 90 s/side (alternate days)
4. Glute med/min – 90 s/side

Retrain (3 min)

- Short-Foot Tripod – 60 s
- Wall Ankle Drives – 8-12/side
- Step-Downs with band cue – 6-8/side

Result locks

Wide toe-box & toe socks; daily supported deep squat; stair rule: **knee over mid-toe.**

Track What Matters (2 minutes, Day 1 → Day 14)

- **Pain scale (0-10):** waking, mid-day, bedtime.
- **Range checks:**
 - Turn head to look over shoulder (neck).
 - Touch wall with hinge (back).
 - Knee-to-wall distance & step-down control (knee/ankle).
- **Sleep quality:** number of wake-ups.
- **Work tolerance:** minutes till first “niggle.”

Improvement looks like: lower peaks, longer “calm” windows, and smoother movement – not perfection.

The Tiny Rules That Change Everything

- **Environment beats willpower.** Fix the strap, the screen, the shoe.
- **Slow wins.** Move like honey, breathe like you’re untying knots.
- **Two is plenty.** Two good drills > ten scattered exercises.
- **No pain auditions.** Sensible effort, never sharp symptoms.
- **Stack it.** Tie releases to something you already do (coffee brew, show intro).

Common Pitfalls (and the Fix)

- **“I did releases... then slouched all day.”**
- → Set a **50-minute timer**; do one hinge set and one posture breath.
- **“Band work burns my neck.”**
- → Lighten the band. Exhale first. Think **blade glides**, not shoulder hikes.
- **“My knee still drifts in.”**
- → Lower the step, lock **tripod** first, do **Cowboy Soldier** before step-downs.
- **“Morning stiffness won’t quit.”**
- → Before getting up: 10 gentle knee rocks + 1 min nasal breathing; then your 10-minute block.

What “Better” Feels Like (Realistic Timelines)

- **Days 3-5:** shoulders lighter; first pain-free hinges; stairs feel steadier.
- **Days 7-10:** fewer night wake-ups; longer sitting/working windows.
- **Days 14+:** automatic strap/screen/shoe choices; drills feel “built-in.”

Keep the circuits simple, the decisions smarter, and the breath slow. The method works because **you remove the cause and retrain the pattern**—and then you let the body keep the win.

Safety Box

If you notice **progressive weakness, loss of bowel/bladder control, unexplained weight loss, fever**, or pain from **significant trauma**, seek medical care. For persistent numbness that doesn’t ease with position change or releases, get assessed.

Up next: Chapter 6 – Release: The 10-Minute Reset, Deeper Dives.

We’ll zoom in on the exact hand placements, pressures, and breathing patterns that make each tissue release work faster—and last longer.

Chapter 6

RELEASE: The 10-Minute Reset (Deeper Dives)

Release is how you make space.

Tight tissues tug bones into bad positions; nerves complain; joints grind. Ten mindful minutes can change that—if you work the **right spots, in the right order, with the right dose.**

This chapter gives you the nuts and bolts: **where, how hard, how long, what to feel, and when to stop.** You'll also learn a few pro techniques (pin-and-move, breath timing) that make your results stick.

The 3 Rules of Effective Release

1. **Source before symptom.**
2. Free the tissues that **pull you into the problem** (e.g., chest/lats before upper traps; hip flexor/side-bum before low back; foot/calf before knee).
3. **Sensation, not suffering.**
4. Aim for a **5-7/10 “good ache.”** If you get sharp pain, pins/needles that **intensify**, or a “burning wire” sensation, **move off** and go gentler or change angle.
5. **Breathe the tissue soft.**
6. 4-second inhale through the nose → **6- to 8-second exhale.**
On each long exhale, let the area melt around the tool.

Stop rules (non-negotiable):

Escalating numbness/weakness, dizziness, chest pain, or pain that persists **after** you move off the spot. Seek assessment if these occur.

Tools & Set-Up

- **R`4 Massage Ball:** soft to start, firmer later
 - White (soft), red (medium), black (hard)
- **R`4 Mini Vibe:** convenient to use on bed for elderly
 - best for foot, calf, core, chest, lat, arms, etc
- **Wall vs floor:** use a **wall** for control near sensitive areas (neck/upper back, ribs); use the **floor** when you need more pressure (glutes/calf).

Positioning hacks

- **Support your head/neck** with R`4 Functional Block when working in side lying position
- **Timebox:** 60–120 seconds per spot; move on. You're teaching, not torturing.

Techniques That Multiply Results

- **Pin-and-Move (a.k.a. tack-and-floss):** Hold pressure on a tender point while you **move the joint** that tissue influences. Example: ball under pec → slowly **slide arm overhead**.
- **Contract-Relax:** Press **gently** into the tool for 5 seconds → **exhale and soften** for 10 seconds; repeat 3–4 rounds.
- **Angle Ladder:** If a point is stubborn, **change the angle** in 15–30° increments rather than pushing harder.
- **Breath Bias:** Spend **twice as long exhaling** as inhaling. Parasympathetic tone helps tissues let go.
- **DZMR (a.k.a. Dual Zone Myofascial Release):** position 2 balls at 2 different locations concurrently to achieve simultaneous release within 2 mins. Example: zone 1 (chest & obliques), zone 2 (lat & glute med), zone 3 (rhomboids & glute max), etc.

Regional Playbooks (What, Where, How)

A) Neck & Shoulder (pec/lats first) – refer to chapter 2, page 15

1) Pec (clavicular fibers) – 90 s/side

- **Where:** Just under the collarbone, slightly toward the front shoulder.
- **How:** Ball/roller at wall; micro-circles.
- **Pin-and-Move:** With ball pinned, slide the working arm from hip to overhead.
- **Feel for:** Dull ache that eases; arm reaches higher afterward.

2) Lat/ Serratus region – 90 s/side

- **Where:** Side of ribcage below the armpit.
- **How:** Roller/ball on floor; side-lying; sweep the arm from pocket to overhead.
- **Cue:** Keep breath long; avoid rib poking pain.

3) Triceps – 60 s/side

- **Where:** Ball/roller below the armpit.
- **How:** Lying face up, knees bent; bend and straighten elbow slowly, find 2 to 3 different spots.
- **Note:** More slowly.

Optional (after 1-3)

4) Forearm flexors – 60 s/side (ball on desk; open/close hand).

5) Gentle upper trap – 30-45 s/side (ball on floor).

Order matters: front → side → (then) top. Free the leash before soothing the neck.

B) Back & Hips (hip flexor/side-bum before spine) – refer to chapter 3, page 35

1) TFL/Upper Quad – 90 s/side

- **Where:** Just **inside** the front pocket line.
- **How:** Prone, ball under TFL; bend/straighten knee to floss.

2) Side-Bum (glute med/min) – 2 min/side

- **Where:** Lateral buttock (avoid the low back).
- **How:** Sit on ball; ankle of working side crosses other knee; tiny circles.
- **Pin-and-Move:** Keep pressure and slowly **open/close** the crossed knee.

3) Front Core – 90 s total

- **Where:** Below navel.
- **How:** Roller/balls across tummy; ; **exhale** and inhale gently; shift up or down after 5 breaths. Avoid ribs.

If you only have 3 minutes: **1 minute** hip flexor each side + **1 minute** side-bum (total 3). It changes how your spine loads **immediately**.

C) Knee & Foot (foot/calf before thigh) – refer to chapter 4, page 50.

1) Plantar Foot – 90 s/side

- **Where:** Whole sole.

- **How:** Ball from heel pad to toes; pause on hotspots; **spread toes** between passes.

2) Calf (soleus/gastroc) – 2 min/side

- **How:** Ball/roller under calf; slow ankle pumps; then bend/straighten knee.
- **Note:** Soleus likes a bent-knee angle.

3) Peroneals (outer shin) – 90 s/side

- **How:** Side-lying, ball along outer calf just below the fibular head down to mid-calf; small rolls.

4) Glute Med/Min – 90 s/side (see B2)

- Connects foot control to hip control.

Dosing & Schedules

- **Standard:** 60–120 s per point; **4–6 points** total → ~7 minutes.
- **Stubborn zones:** revisit later the **same day** rather than over-doing now.
- **Frequency:** Daily during the 14-Day Reset; then **3–5×/week** for maintenance or as a warm-up before Retrain.

Relief Ladders

- **3-Minute SOS**
 - Neck day: Pec 60s/side → High-to-Low Pull 8 reps.
 - Back day: Hip flexor 60s/side → 10 wall hinges.
 - Knee day: Foot roll 60s/side → 10 wall ankle drives.
- **7-Minute Standard** (as in Chapter 5)
- **12-Minute Deep Clean**
 - Add one extra point per chain (e.g., forearm on neck day; TFL on back day; peroneals on knee day) + slower exhales.

How You Know It's Working (in minutes)

- **Neck/Shoulder:** Arm raises higher with **less neck effort**; scapula shrug test smoother.
- **Back:** Wall hinge feels **closer/easier**; standing up requires less bracing.
- **Knee/Foot:** Step-down tracks **over mid-toe**; arch holds without cramping.

If a release doesn't change a test **right away**, change **spot, angle, or order** — then re-test.

Common Mistakes (and the Fix)

- **Hunting the sorest spot only.**
- → Start **upstream**: pec before trap; hip flexor before QL; foot before knee.
- **Too hard, too long.**
- → Cap at **2 minutes** per point. Tissue fights high threat.
- **No re-test.**
- → Always perform the region's quick test **before/after** to confirm you picked the right target.
- **Skipping Retrain.**
- → After release, do **one** drill (8–12 reps). That's how you **keep** the range you just earned.

Safety & Modifications

- **Recent surgery, acute inflammation, DVT history, bleeding disorders, advanced osteoporosis, lymphedema, active skin infection: consult your clinician** before doing deep release.
- **Pregnancy:** Avoid deep belly/psoas pressure; prioritize gentle **hip flexor stretch**, **glute** and **calf** work; side-lying positions are your friend.
- **Varicose veins:** Gentle strokes **around**, not directly on, the vein.
- **Nerve-dominant symptoms:** Prefer **wall-based** light pressure and shorter bouts; stop if symptoms **increase**.

Mini Case Files (Why Order Wins)

- “I can’t look up.”
- You release upper trap... no change. Switch to **pec clavicular** 90 s/side, then redo the look-up — range unlocks. Finish with **Low-to-High Push**.
- “My back pinches on hinges.”
- You rolled low back... worse. Swap to **hip flexor** 2 min/side + **side-bum** 2 min/side, then hinge — pinch gone.
- “Knee hurts on stairs.”
- You iced the knee... temporary. Roll **foot** and **calf**, then cue **tripod** and do **step-downs** — tracking cleans up, pain fades.

Your 10-Minute Release Circuit (Templates)

Neck Day

1. Pec (clavicular) — 90 s/side
2. Lat/serratus — 90 s/side
3. Triceps — 60 s/side
4. Rhomboids/Traps — 60 s/side
5. → **Retrain:** High-to-Low Pull + Low-to-High Push 8-12

Back Day

1. Hip flexor — 2 min/side
2. Side-bum — 2 min/side
3. Front core — 90 s
4. → **Retrain:** Wall hinge 8-12 + Cowboy Soldier 20 steps

Knee Day

1. Foot roll — 90 s/side
2. Calf — 2 min/side
3. Peroneals — 90 s/side
4. Side-bum — 90 s/side
5. → **Retrain:** Short-Foot 60 s + Ankle Drives 8-12/side + Step-Downs 6-8/side

Hydrate and walk 5 minutes after each session. Movement is the save button.

Quick Troubleshooter

- **Area gets angrier after release** → Too hard/too long or wrong spot. Halve the pressure/time; start upstream; switch to wall.
- **Arch cramps** → Back off effort; “spread then lift” the foot; add calf & peroneal release first.
- **Neck fires during band work** → Lighter band; exhale to start; think **blade glides**; add one extra pec set first.
- **No time** → Do the **3-Minute SOS** ladder. Something small, daily, beats heroic, rare sessions.

Release is not a massage; it’s **communication**. You’re telling your tissues, “We don’t need to hold like this anymore.” Review removes the reason, Release opens the door, Retrain walks you through it, and Results (your choices) keep it open.

Up next: Chapter 7 — Retrain: Teach Your Body Neutral.

Two to three drills per region, the cues that matter, and how to progress without waking the old pain.

Chapter 7

RETRAIN: Teach Your Body Neutral

Retrain is the save button.

Release makes space; retrain teaches your body
what to do with it—so alignment holds when you type,
lift a bag, climb stairs, or sleep.

Motor learning is simple:

- **Little and often beats long and rare.**
- **Quality beats quantity.**
- **Specific beats general.** (Train the pattern you need in the position you use.)

Global Setup Cues (use in every drill)

- **Stack:** ribs over pelvis, crown tall, chin gently back.
- **Breathe:** in through the nose, long easy exhale; never hold.
- **Tripod foot:** big toe, little toe, heel share the load.
- **Wide collarbones:** shoulders relaxed, blades glide – don't shrug.
- **Slow tempo:** 2–3 seconds up, 2–3 seconds down; pause where control is hardest.

Traffic-light guide

- **Green (go):** effort, warmth, mild 2–3/10 discomfort that fades as you move.
- **Amber (modify):** sharpness, wobble – shrink the range, lighten resistance.
- **Red (stop):** zinging, spreading numbness, or pain that builds – change exercise.

Dose: **8–12 smooth reps** (or 30–45s holds), **1–2 sets, daily** during your 14-day reset.

A) Neck & Shoulder – Restore Scapular Rhythm – refer to chapter 2, page 15.

Goal: The shoulder blade should **rotate up and tilt back** as the arm lifts, without the neck doing the work.

1) High-to-Low Pull (band)

- **Setup:** Band anchored **overhead**. Thumb up, elbow brushes ribs.
- **Move:** Exhale; pull to lower ribs like sliding the blade to the **back pocket**. Pause 1s.
- **Don't:** flare ribs, bend wrist, or shrug.
- **Feel:** low trapezius under the blade, not neck.

Progressions

- Kneel tall → stand → split-stance.
- Add a 1-2s pause mid-range without losing neck quiet.

Regressions

- Lower band anchor; lighter band; sit with back supported.

2) Low-to-High Push (band)

- **Setup:** Band anchored **low**; working arm farthest from anchor.
- **Move:** From opposite hip, push up/out on a diagonal to top-shelf height; blade glides **up and around**, neck soft.
- **Cue:** "Reach long, don't hike."
- **Common fault:** elbow behind body (jams shoulder). Keep elbow slightly **in front** of torso line.

Accessory (choose one)

- **Wall Slides + Hover:** Forearms on wall; slide up; at $\frac{3}{4}$ height hover elbows 2 cm for 3 breaths; slide down.
- **Press Down:** Rest your elbow on yoga block, press down gently to feel your shoulder blade moving down slightly. Hold for 5 breaths each rep then relax. **Do 5 reps.**

Self-test to confirm learning (15s): Hand-on-head **scapula shrug** (up & down). Should feel **smoother**, less neck grab, more blade glide.

B) Back & Hips – Make the Hips Work, Spare the Spine – refer to chapter, page 30.

Goal: Hips bend and share load; spine stays quiet and long.

1) Wall Hip Hinge

- **Setup:** Heels 20–25 cm from wall, feet hip-width.
- **Move:** Soften knees; send hips **back to touch** wall; shins near vertical; stand tall.
- **Feel:** hamstrings/glutes, not low back.
- **Fault fix:** If you round, move **closer** to the wall and shorten the range.

Progressions

- Step 2–5 cm **forward** over days.
- Add **load** (light dumbbell close to body).
- **Reach & Hinge:** arms reach forward as hips go back (anti-flexion control).

2) “Cowboy Soldier” (band below knees)

- **Setup:** Light band just below knees.
- **Move:** Gently press knees **out to neutral** (not duck feet) and **march** 20 slow steps.
- **Cue:** Pelvis steady, ribcage quiet, arches **on**.

3) Quiet Bracing (dead-bug switches)

- **Setup:** On back, knees bent, fingers just inside hip bones.
- **Move:** Exhale, zip gently; float one foot 2–3 cm, 5 breaths; switch.
- **Feel:** a low, firm **corset**, not a breath hold.

Progress when green for 7–10 days

- **Hip-hinge to object** (pick up a bag) 8–10 reps.
- **Suitcase carry** (one-side hold) 30–40 m with ribs stacked.
- **Split-hinge** (rear foot light) 6–8/side.

Self-test: Hinge feels **closer/easier**; less pinch on picking things up.

C) Knee & Foot – Stack the Line (Foot → Knee → Hip) – refer to chapter 4, page 50.

Goal: Knee tracks over **2nd–3rd toe** with the foot tripod and pelvis steady.

1) Short-Foot Tripod (arch on)

- **Setup:** Barefoot. Spread toes, then **draw ball of foot toward heel** (no toe curl).
- **Hold:** 30–45 s breathing; kneecaps point straight.
- **Tip:** If arch cramps, do **less**; “spread, then lift.”

2) Wall Ankle Drives

- **Setup:** Knee-to-wall stance, heel **down**.
- **Move:** Glide knee forward over **mid-toe**, back out; 8–12/side.
- **Don’t:** let knee cave or heel lift.

3) Step-Down with Band Cue

- **Setup:** Mini-band below knees, stand on step.
- **Move:** Tap opposite heel to floor and rise, knee **over mid-toe**.
- **Tempo:** 3 seconds down, 2 up. 6–8 reps/side.
- **Cue:** “Tripod on, knee tracks, pelvis level.”

Progressions

- Lower the step → remove band → **rear-foot elevated split-squat** 6–8/side.
- Add light load held **close** to body.

Self-test: Recheck step-down. Video if possible – knees should no longer **kiss** midline.

Micro-Sets: How to Fit This Into Real Life

- **After Release (Chapter 6):** do **one** drill (8–12 reps).
- **Hourly sparkle:** 30 seconds of **wall hinges** or **wall slides**.
- **Phone rings:** stand, **tripod**, 8 slow **ankle drives**.
- **Before bed:** 30 seconds **quiet bracing** + set your **bolster/pillow**.

Two-day rule: If you overdo it and symptoms flare, **halve the dose** for the next two sessions, then rebuild.

Progress Without Flare-Ups

- Increase **one variable at a time** (range or load or reps).
- Use the **10% rule** weekly (tiny nudges > big jumps).
- Keep at **RPE 4–6/10** (moderate). If you must mouth-breathe or shrug, it's too hard.

Return to Strength (when daily life feels easy)

- **Neck/Shoulder:** add light **band rows** and **landmine presses** (or incline DB presses), staying neck-quiet.
- **Back:** kettlebell **deadlifts** from a block, then from floor; farmer/suitcase **carries**.
- **Knee/Foot:** **split-squats**, **step-ups**, and **lateral band walks** with tripod on.

Format: **2–3 sets, 6–10 reps, 2–3×/week**, never chasing fatigue at the expense of form.

Quick Region Circuits (6-8 minutes each)

Neck & Shoulder

1. High-to-Low Pull — 10
2. Low-to-High Push — 10
3. Wall Slides + Hover — 2 × 3 breaths

Back & Hips

1. Wall Hip Hinge — 10
2. Cowboy Soldier — 20 steps
3. Quiet Bracing — 8 switches

Knee & Foot

1. Short-Foot Tripod — 45 s
2. Wall Ankle Drives — 10/side
3. Step-Downs — 6-8/side

What “Better” Looks Like in Motion

- **Arms up:** blade glides, neck stays quiet.
- **Pick up a bag:** hips back first, spine long, stand tall.
- **Stairs:** knee over mid-toe, pelvis level, arch awake.
- **Walking:** collarbones wide, hands swing, feet land quietly.

Keep the drills small, the breath long, and the wins frequent. Retrain isn't punishment; it's **practice**—a short daily reminder to your body of how freedom feels.

Up next: Chapter 8 — The Proof (Stories).

Real people, real changes—the chapter your skeptical friend needs to read before they try their 14-day reset.

Chapter 8

The Proof (Stories)

Real people. Real patterns. Real fixes.

Each vignette shows how

Review → Release → Retrain → Results

turns a stuck story into a success story.

Use them as mirrors, not miracles – copy the *process*

then write your own ending.



1) Shuwei: “Slipped Disc” & Post-Covid Breathlessness

Before

Caring for sick kids, two months post-Covid with breathlessness. Back seized; “slipped disc” label; fear of bending.

R`4 Review

Days filled with bed-phone scrolling and sofa work; C-shaped sitting and side-sleeping without a bolster – **banana-spine loop**.

R`4 Release

Hip flexors, side-bum, and front core (not hamstrings). Gentle diaphragmatic breathing to downshift the system.

R`4 Retrain

Bird dog, staggered side plank; wall hip hinges; to wake entire core, glute med/min.

Results

Breath easier, back quieted, movement confidence returned within sessions—then held because the **bed/sofa rule** and sleep set-up stayed changed.

Borrow it: If mornings hurt, fix sleep: firm pillow to fill the neck gap; firm bolster to support the top arm and thigh.



Compressed C-Spine



Relaxed Neutral Spine

2) Megan: The Desk That Stole a Shoulder

Before

One year of right shoulder pain (7/10 at 90°). Nights broken by sharp stabs. Physio and injections = no change.

R`4 Review

Home workstation low; elbows floating; laptop forward; **sleep** with wrong pillow height and no bolster.

R`4 Release

Chest fibers under collarbone (**pec clavicular**), lats, triceps, rhomboids, trapezius.

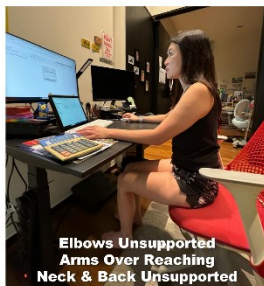
R`4 Retrain

High-to-Low Pull (band) and **Low-to-High Push** (block), rehearsing blade *upward rotation* without neck hike.

Results

Right arm overhead, pain-free after the first session; sleep restored once strap/screen/bolster changed.

Borrow it: If your palms face **backward** when you walk, your chest/lats are winning. Do pec + lat release, then retrain shoulder alignment.



3) The Doctor with Ten Numb Fingers

Before

Three years of neck/shoulder pain and ten finger numbness. Mornings: stiff, painful, weak grip, can't open a bottle. A steroid shot left one finger permanently numb. Hope thin.

R`4 Review

Right shoulder sat lower than left (constant drag on trapezius). Clinic and home desks too low and far; chest/lats shortened. Stretching the **already lengthened** right neck made it worse.

R`4 Release

Pecs, lats, triceps, rhomboids, forearms, front core, neck.

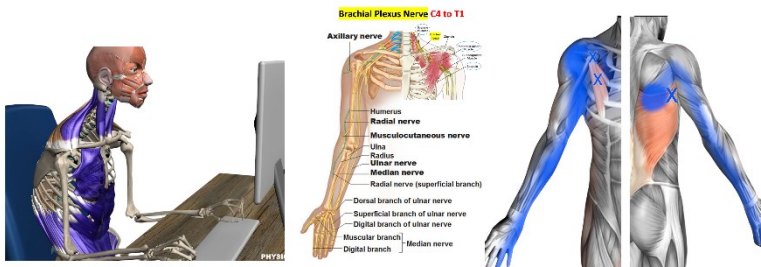
R`4 Retrain

Two scapula drills to restore rhythm on the **right**; quiet bracing for carriage.

Results

Nine fingers cleared; morning stiffness gone; handwriting and bottle-opening back. The permanent numb finger stayed (post-injection damage).

Borrow it: If your “tight” side is actually **lower**, it likely needs **strength**, not more stretch. Retrain after releases is paramount.



Tight Chest & Lat Compress Nerve Causing Numb & Tingling Fingers

4) Eileen: “Don’t Squat” (But Life Is Squats)

Before

Diagnosed rheumatoid knees; injections done; told not to squat. Yet sitting, trains, cars, and toilets... are squats.

R`4 Review

On her back she could bend knees fully **without pain**. Standing, range jammed. Block = **ankle** (and foot), not knee (victim).

R`4 Release

Plantar foot, calf/soleus, peroneals; side-bum.

R`4 Retrain

Short-foot tripod, wall ankle drives, step-downs with band cue.

Results

In < 10 days, she sat to the floor, pain-free. Because the *line* (foot → knee → hip) was restored.

Borrow it: If a squat hurts but a lying knee-hug doesn’t, treat **ankle** and **arch** before blaming the knee.



Before



After

5) Yin Shan: Seven Years, Two Screens, One Fix

Before

After a neck adjustment, migraines and neck/arm pain spiralled. Daily painkillers, no laptop tolerance, can't drive or cook—saw 7 top physios, seven years of pain, missing her active lifestyle.

R`4 Review

Main monitor sat to the right of the laptop; she ping-ponged her head from center→right all day. Screens too far, neck reaching forward; right shoulder **lower** at rest, further dragging the neck.

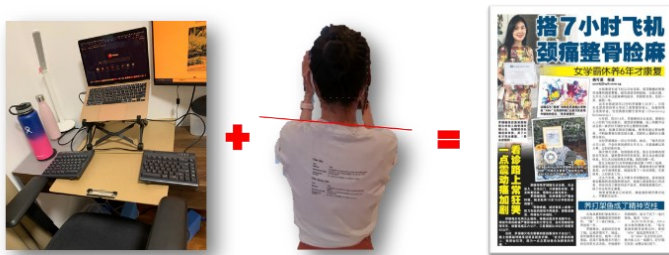
R`4 Release

Chest/lats, triceps, rhomboids, traps, forearms, gentle neck.

R`4 Retrain

High-to-Low Pull / Low-to-High Push with a yoga block cue; workstation set to **eye level** with arm and neck support.

Results



Headaches and night pain melted; work tolerance returned across weeks—not because of a new treatment, but because the **old habit** ended. Active life restored.

Borrow it: Two screens? Keep the **primary** dead center and the **secondary** at equal height and close enough that you *don't* crane.

6) Ricard, “The Half-Bra Man”

Before

Right neck/upper-back ache that tape could soothe—but only while it was on.

R`4 Review

Heavy **cross-body bag** compressing the left shoulder **daily**.
Scapula shrug test: left blade barely moved.

R`4 Release

Pec, lat, triceps, rhomboid, traps.

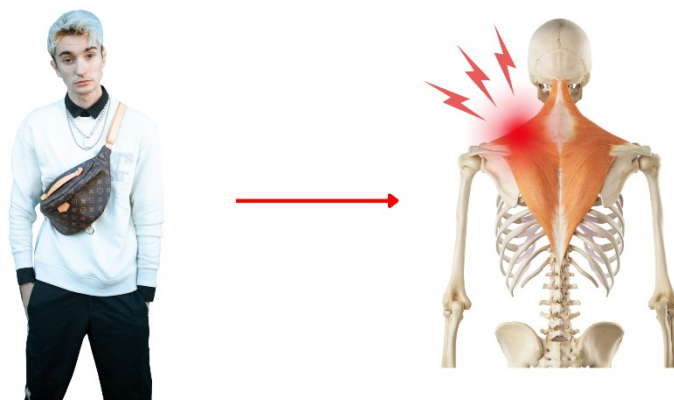
R`4 Retrain

Same two scapula drills; swap bag for a waist pouch.

Results

Pain-free in a session—and it stayed that way because he removed the **strap** that kept depressing the shoulder.

Borrow it: If tape helps then pain rebounds, ask: *what habit is the tape pretending to fix?* Change that.



7) “The Tissue Paper That Broke a Back” (Revisited)

Before

Businesswoman, two weeks of lower back agony after stooping for a tissue; walking stick, trips cancelled.

R`4 Review

Four hours/day of **bed Zooms** for a year. Banana-spine everywhere; spinal disc compression reached limit.

R`4 Release

Hip flexor, side-bum, front core, erector spine.

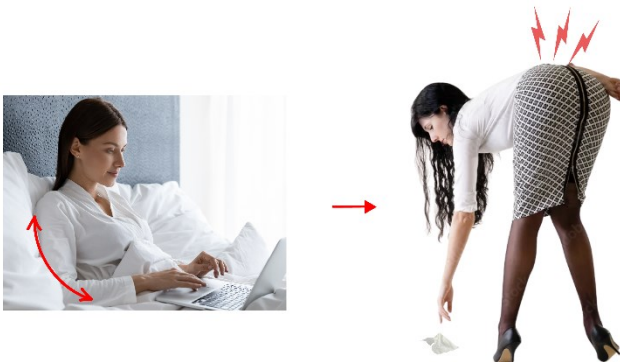
R`4 Retrain

Bird dog, staggered side plank, hinge, glute activation, sleep set-up; bed rule: sleep & babies only.

Results

Sat, slept, and walked without pain. Kept the gain by keeping the **rule**.

Borrow it: If you work on a bed/sofa, you’re training for back pain. Table, chair, eye-level screen, elbows and neck supported – today. Bed for **sleeping and making babies** only.



8) Lawrence Khong (73): Full Knee Replacement → MVP Competitive Polo & Double-Black Diamond Skiing

Before

Founder & pastor of FCBC and president of Singapore Polo Club. Post-knee replacement and worried the “new knee” meant the end of competitive polo and steep-slope skiing. Stiff hips, cautious stairs/descents, uneven riding posture.

R`4 Review

Saddle height/fore-aft and stirrup length set him into a subtle pelvic tilt; posting and turns loaded one side. Daily gait showed a slight knee-in pattern with limited ankle bend on descents. Shoe toe-box narrow; carries and car seat favored one hip.

R`4 Release

Hip flexors/adductors (groin line), calf-soleus and peroneals, glute med/min plus gentle thoracic extension—free the chain above/below the knee so the joint sits neutral. Light quad/hamstring melt only as needed (avoid poking the joint).

R`4 Retrain

Wall hip-hinges → short split-stance “step-down” with band cue (knee over mid-toe) → loaded carries for pelvis control → ankle drives + tripod foot. On-horse alignment: neutral pelvis, quiet ribs, scapula rhythm before power shots. Progress by time, not ego.

Results

Returned to competitive polo; won **MVP** in multiple tournaments. Keeps skiing **double black diamond** runs every year. Walks, rides, and trains with full mobility at 73—while many peers struggle with stairs.



Borrow it:

If stairs or hills bite after a knee op, train the **step-down** from a low box with a light band pulling the knee **out**—track over the middle toes. Pair it with **ankle mobility** (wall ankle drives) and **tripod foot** practice in **wide toe-box** shoes. On the bike/horse, re-check **saddle height and fore-aft** so your pelvis sits level before you add speed or power.

Rapid-Fire Postcards

- **Nancy, 69:** knee, back, shoulder, neck pain → foot/hip/pec work + hinge. Won her 30-day challenge.
- **Gwen:** special-needs child who couldn't stand unaided → gradual R`4 retrain; finished a 5 km.
- **Charmaine:** national bowler with knee pain → ankle + glute line restored; back to winning repeatedly.
- **Nico:** elite fencer; shoulder/knee/back pain → scapula + foot-knee-hip chain; podiums returned.
- **Mrs Singapore:** pre-/post-pregnancy R`4; pain managed, performance and physique back.
- **Joanne:** pregnancy pain → R`4 releases + align; Bintan triathlon three months postpartum.
- **Dr Margaret:** scoliosis & back pain in twenties → R`4 + functional strength; now jumps, runs, competes.

Same pattern in every win: identify the source, free the line, teach the pattern, then live like it.

Make Your Story Next (5 Steps)

1. **Pick your region** (neck/shoulder, back, or knee/foot).
2. **Run the quick test** from the matching chapter.
3. **Do the 10-minute circuit** (Release 7, Retrain 3) for **14 days**.
4. **Change one lever** (strap/screen/bolster/footwear/bag).
5. **Re-test and journal** pain peaks, sleep, and tolerance.

Red-flag reminder: If you develop progressive weakness, bowel/bladder changes, unexplained weight loss, fever, or pain after significant trauma, seek medical care.

Up next: Chapter 9 – Obstacles & Plateaus.

What to do when progress stalls, how to adjust load and range, and when to bring in a clinician.

Chapter 9

Obstacles & Plateaus

Progress is rarely a straight line. Expect **wobbles, stalls, and the occasional flare-up**. This chapter gives you a clear **decision tree** for what to change — without losing momentum or triggering setbacks.

The R`4 Troubleshooting Matrix

When progress stalls, check the pillars **in order**:

1. **REVIEW** (environment & habits)
2. **RELEASE** (targets & order)
3. **RETRAIN** (technique & dose)
4. **RESULTS** (consistency & recovery)

Fix one variable at a time. Small, specific changes beat big overhauls.

Decision Tree (use this weekly)

A. "No change after 7-10 days."

- **Review:** Are you still feeding the loop?
 - Bed/sofa work? → Move to table + eye-level screen + elbow support.
 - Cross-body bag / thin, wide bra straps? → Swap.
 - Narrow toe boxes? → Wider shoes.
- **Release:** Change **order** (source before symptom).
 - Neck day: pec → lat → (then) gentle trap.
 - Back day: hip flexor → side-bum → front core.
 - Knee day: foot → calf → peroneals → side-bum.
- **Retrain:** Shrink range, slow tempo, **lighter band** / lower step.
- **Results:** Do the 10-minute block **daily** for the next 7 days.

B. "It helped at first, then plateaued."

- Progress **one** knob: +10% reps **or** slightly farther range **or** a tiny band/load increase.
- Add a **2-3 min walk** after each session (movement = save button).
- Introduce **one** new drill variation (e.g., wall slides hover on neck day).

C. "I feel better right after, but it fades by afternoon."

- Add **micro-sets**:
 - Hourly: 8-10 **wall hinges** or **ankle drives** or one **band set**.
- Re-check **chair height** and **arm support**; most fade-outs are workstation problems.

D. "Something flared."

- Use the **48-Hour Reset** (below) and halve all ranges/resistance for the next two sessions.

The 48-Hour Reset (flare-up protocol)

1. **Stop provoking moves** (no burpees/sit-ups/forced end ranges).
2. **Short walks** 3-5×/day, 10-15 minutes, easy breath.
3. **Release light & upstream only** (wall pressure; 45-60 seconds/spot).
4. **Retrain tiny** (pain-free part of range; 6-8 slow reps).
5. **Sleep set-up perfect** (firm pillow/bolster; no phone-in-bed).

6. Resume normal circuits **at 50% dose** for two sessions, then climb.

“Region-Specific” Plateau Fixes

Neck & Shoulder

- **Still achy during wall slides:**
 - Extra **pec** release 60–90 s/side **before** drills; exhale to start each rep.
- **Night tingling persists:**
 - Check bolster height; top arm fully supported. Add **forearm** release 60 s/side.
- **One blade won’t move:**
 - Use **wall slides + hover** for 5 breaths, then retry the main drills.

Back & Hips

- **Hinge still pinches:**
 - Add **hip flexor** 2 min/side + **side-bum** 2 min/side; move **closer** to wall; smaller range.
- **Morning stiffness:**
 - Before rising: 30 secs **bird dog**, 30 secs **staggered slide plank**.
- **Sits fine, stands hurts:**
 - **Lean back entirely** on the chair when working.
 - Raise seat so hips are **slightly higher** than knees; hourly 10 **hinges**.

Knee & Foot

- **Knee keeps caving on step-downs:**
 - Do **Cowboy Soldier** first (20 slow steps); lower the step; confirm **tripod**.
- **Arch cramps:**
 - “Spread then lift” with only 20–30% effort; add **calf/peroneal** release first.
- **Front-ankle pinch in deep squat:**
 - Elevated heels (book/plate) as a bridge + **ankle drives** 8–12/side.

Load & Progression (so you don’t overcook it)

- **RPE 4–6/10** for retrain (moderate effort).
- Change **one** variable per week (reps *or* range *or* resistance).
- **10% rule:** progress by small nudges.
- **Deload:** every 3–4 weeks, do one **lighter week** (–20–30% volume).

Consistency Tactics (that actually work)

- **Habit stack:** tie your 10-minute block to something fixed (e.g., coffee brew).
- **Environment first:** set the band, ball, and bolster **visible** where you use them.
- **Two-minute rule:** on busy days, do **any** 2 minutes (it preserves identity & momentum).

- **Track two metrics:** pain peak and one range test (e.g., step-down). If they trend down/up, you're winning.

When to Get Help

- **Now:** progressive weakness; bowel/bladder changes; unexplained weight loss; fever; post-trauma pain.
- **Soon (if stalled 2–4 weeks despite adjustments):** sharp night pain, spreading numbness, or fear limiting daily life – see a clinician. Bring your **R`4 log**; it speeds diagnosis.

The Plateau-Breaker Week (template)

- **Mon:** Neck block (add wall slides hover)
- **Tue:** Back block (add suitcase carry 2 × 30–40 m, light)
- **Wed:** Knee block (add split-squat 2 × 6/side, shallow)
- **Thu:** Walk 25 min + 3-minute SOS for tightest region
- **Fri:** Neck block (lighter band, slower tempo)
- **Sat:** Back block (hip hinge to a **box**; perfect form)
- **Sun:** Knee block (lower step, pristine tracking) + 10-minute mobility walk

Quick FAQ

“Should I stretch more?”

Stretching the **already-long** side (e.g., the low shoulder/neck) can worsen things. Free front/side lines first, then **retrain**.

“Isn't pain just wear-and-tear?”

Often it's **wear-and-habit**. Change the habit and load path; tissues behave better.

“How long until ‘normal’?”

Many feel change in **days**, clearer gains by **week 2**, and durable habits by **weeks 4–6**. Keep the easy wins going.

Plateaus are messages, not verdicts. Use the matrix, change one knob, and keep the reps honest. The body learns fast when you remove the cause and practice the pattern—again and again.

Up next: Chapter 10 — Tools, Setups & Gear That Help (and What to Skip).

Pillows, bolsters, bands, balls, shoe shapes, laptop risers—the few items that make R`4 easier every day.

Chapter 10

Tools, Setups & Gear That Help (and What to Skip)

You don't need a clinic in your living room. A few well-chosen tools make **Review** → **Release** → **Retrain** → **Results** easier—and keep you consistent. This chapter tells you **what to use, how to set it up, how to test it**, and what to avoid.

The Short List (99% of what you'll ever need)

For RELEASE

- **R`4 Massage balls, come with 3 densities**
 - - white for soft, red for medium, black for hard
 - - to be used on the floor with mat or against the wall
 - - made of premium medical grade silicon
 - - signature dual zone myofascial release technique
- **R`4 Functional Yoga block**
 - - storage box for R`4 massage balls and bands
 - - use for supporting head and neck during release
 - - use for correcting body alignment during retrain
- **R`4 Mini Vibe, comes with 4 vibration modes**
 - - 300g only, portable, powerful, effective
 - - can be used on floor, wall, or **bed**
 - - **elderly friendly** without having to get on the floor



For RETRAIN

- **R`4 Mini Bands**
- - white 5kg tension (light), black 15kg tension (heavy)
- **R`4 Functional Yoga Block**
- - use for retraining entire body alignment
- **Kitchen Timer/Phone**
- - keep track of timing during release and retrain

For RESULTS (ergonomic health)

- **R`4 Functional Yoga Block** as a laptop riser
- **External keyboard & mouse**
- **Fully adjustable ergonomic chair with neck rest**
- **Ergonomic pillow + firm bolster** (side-sleeper)
- **Wide toe-box shoes + toes socks** (daily wear)
- **Small footrest** (a box works) if your feet dangle

If you only buy two things today: **get the R`4 Recovery Kit & R`4 Mini Vibe**. They unlock most of the method.



Scan the QR
code
below for the list
of R`4 Products.



Scan the QR
code
below to buy
an ergonomic
chair.



Sleep Setup: Lock in the Overnight Win

Goal: Spine, shoulders and hips stay neutral for 6–8 hours so you **stop feeding** night pain.

Side Sleepers (most of us)

- **Pillow height test:** Lie on your side. A partner looks from behind. Your nose and breastbone should point straight ahead, not down/up.
 - If your head tilts toward the mattress → **pillow too low**.
 - If it tilts away → **too high**.
- **Firm bolster:** Hug it so the **top arm is fully supported** (no shoulder hanging forward). Place the lower end between knees to **keep pelvis level**.
- **No bra** during sleep (unless medically indicated): free the ribs and shoulder blades to glide.

Back Sleepers

- Pillow should fill the **neck curve**, not push the head forward.
- A small pillow or towel under **knees** can ease low-back tension.

Red flags to fix tonight

- Waking with **tingling hands** → top arm not supported; add/adjust bolster.
- Waking with **stiff low back** → try a **slightly higher** pillow + knee support; audit daytime banana-spine habits.

Workstation Setup: Make Neutral the Default

Screen

- Top third at **eye level** (use R`4 Functional Yoga Block).
- **Arm's length** away so you don't crane forward.

Elbows, shoulders and neck

- **Elbows resting on armrests**, parallel to desk; shoulders **down and wide**.
- If armrests won't reach, raise the **chair** and add a **footrest**.
- **Neck resting completely on neck rest**, not your head.

Keyboard & mouse

- Close enough that elbows stay **near 90°**; wrists neutral.
- Laptop users: **riser + external keyboard/mouse** is non-negotiable.

Chair & pelvis

- Hips **slightly higher** than knees; sit on **sit bones** (not tucked tail).
- Seat depth: 2-3 fingers between seat edge and calf.

Hourly "sparkle" (60 seconds)

- Stand, 8-10 **wall hinges** or **wall slides**, and one minute of nasal breathing.

Footwear & Feet: Where the Chain Begins

Three rules

1. **Wide toe box:** Toes should **splay** freely. Do the **insole test**—stand on the removed insole; if toes spill over, the shoe is too narrow.
2. **Thin-to-moderate sole:** Enough feel for the ground; minimal heel-toe drop for daily wear.
3. **Secure at the heel/midfoot:** Foot shouldn't swim—a sloppy fit makes arches work overtime.

Dress code constraints?

- Choose the **widest toe box** the brand offers.
- Use a **removable insole** to gain room; remove it if needed for toe space.
- Limit **high heels** to short windows; remove them when sitting at office; after wearing, do **calf/foot release** and **ankle drives**.

Optional helpers

- **Toe spacers** at home (short sessions) to remind the toes to spread.
- **Rocker-bottom shoes** for acute forefoot pain—temporary bridge while you retrain gait and load.

The Car & Travel

Car

- Adjust car seat **10 to 15 degrees backward** to prevent C-spine (banana spine); lean back entirely to relax spine.
- **Sit beside the driver** for safety and adjust the car seat for best comfort.
- **Small lumbar support** (rolled towel) when car seat can't be adjusted especially when sitting at the rear.
- Every 45–60 minutes: stop, **10 hinges**, 20-second walk.

Travel kit

- **R`4 Recovery Kit, R`4 Mini Vibe.**
- Hotel workstation: ice bucket/tissue box under the laptop, **portable keyboard and mouse.**

“How To Use” Cheatsheets (by tool)

R`4 Massage ball (general)

- **Dose:** 60–120 s/spot, **5–7/10** pressure, slow breaths.
- **Neck/shoulder day:** pec under collarbone → lat → triceps → rhomboids & trapezius.
- **Knee day:** foot → calf/soleus → peroneals → side-bum.
- **Back day:** hip flexor stretch first, then side-bum, then front core.

R`4 Mini Bands (15kg black and 5kg white)

- Knees: black mini-band **below knees** for **Cowboy Soldier**.
- Foot: white mini-band on foot for **Walking on Spot**.

Yoga block

- Shoulder: between chest and wall for **wall slides hover** (keeps ribs quiet).
- Knees: between foot for gentle **hip abduction and tibia internal rotation**.
- Hips: between knees for gentle **hip internal rotation**
- Hip: between hip and wall for foot arch and side bum activation

“Does This Gear Help Me?” Field Tests

- **Neck/shoulder:** After swapping to **racer-back** or adjusting arm support and neck support, re-check **hand-on-head scapula shrug**. Smoother glide = keeper.

- **Back:** After riser + hinge practice, pick up a light object. Less pinch? Keep it.
- **Knee/foot:** After wide toe-box shoes + short-foot, film a **step-down**. Knee tracks over mid-toe? You're on track.

If a gadget doesn't improve a test **right now** or within a week, you probably don't need it.

What to Skip (or Use Sparingly)

- **Cross-body bags** for daily hours (depress scapula; neck pays). Prefer **waist pouch** or **two-strap backpack**.
- **Thin, wide-set bra straps** for everyday wear (long lever on the neck). Prefer **racer-back/sports-style**; no bra in bed.
- **Aggressive neck manipulation** for chronic desk pain (often treats symptom, not source).
- **Sit-ups/burpees** when backs are flared (swap for **hinge/carry** patterns).
- **Permanent bracing/taping** as a solution (fine for short stints; change the **habit** causing the issue).
- **Giant massage guns** on bony or nerve-rich areas (scalene triangle, front of neck, behind collarbone) — avoid.

Budget Paths (Good, Better, Best)

Good (\$20-\$40): tennis ball + light loop band + books-as-riser + rolled towel bolster

Better (\$60-\$120): spiky ball + mini & long bands + foam roller + firm bolster + external keyboard/mouse

Best (\$150-\$300): R`4 Recovery Kit for full solution, R`4 Mini Vibe for bedtime recovery

Spend first on environment (riser/keyboard/mouse, pillow/bolster, wide toe box shoes/toe socks). It prevents you from undoing the work you just did.

Kids & Teens

- Shoes: **wide, thin, flat**; toes visible **spreading** on the insole.
- Teach **knee-over-toe** on stairs and landings.
- Keep **barefoot time** at home on safe surfaces; sprinkle **ankle drives** and **short-foot** as games.

Safety Notes (quick)

- Nerve symptoms that **worsen** with a position or tool: **stop** and modify (wall instead of floor; lighter pressure).
- Recent surgery, clotting issues, advanced osteoporosis, pregnancy: choose **lighter**, wall-based releases; avoid deep abdominal/psoas pressure.
- Red flags (progressive weakness, bowel/bladder changes, fever, trauma): seek care.

Your 10-Minute “Gear & Setup” Checklist (Do once, then maintain)

1. **Sleep:** Adjust pillow height; add firm bolster for side sleep.
2. **Work:** Raise screen to eye level; elbows supported; keyboard/mouse close.
3. **Feet:** Put on **wide toe-box** shoes; do 60 s foot roll.
4. **Tools ready:** Ball by the sofa; bands on a hook or door.
5. **Timer set:** Daily 10-minute slot (tie to coffee or lunch).

If you never bought another gadget, this setup alone would solve half the battle.

Up next: Chapter 11 – The 14-Day R`4 Reset, Day-by-Day.

Follow a simple calendar with links to the exact releases and drills, plus daily “one lever” environment tweaks so your wins stick.

Chapter 11

The 14-Day R`4 Reset (Day-by-Day)

Ten minutes a day. One smart environment tweak.

A couple of checks. Follow this plan exactly for two weeks;
write your notes; enjoy the compounding wins.

How to use this chapter

Do the **10-minute block** each day

(Review 30 secs → Release 7 min → Retrain 2½ min).

Make the **one lever** change listed for the day
(strap/screen/bolster/footwear/bag).

Log two things: **pain peak (0-10)**

and **one quick test** for that region.

Day 1 – Neck & Shoulder (Start Here)

- **Review (30 secs):** Switch to a **racer-back**/sports bra (or temporarily clip straps together). Elbows and neck supported at desk with optimal ergonomics.
- **Release (7 mins):** Pec (clavicular) 90s/side → Lat 90s/side → Triceps 60s/side → Rhomboids 60s/side.
- **Retrain (2½ min):** High-to-Low Push 8-12 reps; Low-to-High Push 8-12 reps.
- **Quick test:** Hand-on-head **scapula shrug**—should move smoother, with less neck effort.

Day 2 – Neck & Shoulder (Reinforce)

- **Review:** Keep elbows and neck rested; raise screen to **eye level**.
- **Release:** Same as Day 1 (slower breaths, smoother).
- **Retrain:** Same drills; add a 1-second pause mid-range if neck stays quiet.
- **Quick test: Shoulder flexion** (arms raise to ceiling)—less pinch?

Day 3 – Back & Hips (Banana-Spine Breaker)

- **Review:** Laptop on yoga block or riser; **external keyboard/mouse** if possible.
- **Release:** Hip flexor 2 min/side → Side-bum (glute med/min) 2 min/side → Front core 90s.
- **Retrain:** Bird Dog 30 secs each; Staggered Side Plank 30 secs each.
- **Quick test: Flexion** (forward bend) feels lower/easier? Less back pinch putting on your pants/shoes?

Day 4 – Back & Hips (Groove)

- **Review:** Sit with hips **slightly higher** than knees; hourly 10-rep hinge break.
- **Release:** Same sequence; add 30s extra to whichever felt most stubborn.
- **Retrain:** Same sequence; add another set if possible.
- **Quick test:** Morning rise smoother?
- (Note minutes to “feel normal”.)

Day 5 – Knee & Foot (Stack the Line)

- **Review:** Wear **wide toe-box** shoes and **toe socks** today (insole test: toes must fit).
- **Release:** Foot roll 90 secs/side → Calf/soleus 2 min/side → Peroneals 90 secs/side → Side-bum 90 secs/side.
- **Retrain:** Short-Foot Tripod 45–60s; Wall Ankle Drives 8–12/side; Step-Downs 6–8/side (mini-band below knees).
- **Quick test:** Film a step-down – knee tracking over 2nd–3rd toe?

Day 6 – Knee & Foot (Control)

- **Review:** Add a **60-sec supported deep squat** hold (heels down; hold a doorframe).
- **Release:** Same as Day 5.
- **Retrain:** Same; slow the **lowering** phase to 3 seconds.
- **Quick test:** Stairs feel steadier?

Day 7 – Integrate & Walk

- **Review:** Choose one lever to cement (strap, screen, bolster, shoes, bag).
- **Release (7 mins):** Pick **one** key point from each region (Neck: pec; Back: front core; Knee: foot).
- **Retrain (3 mins):** Hip Hinge 8; Wall Slides 4 slow reps; Ankle Drives 8/side.
- **Result lock: 15–20-minute walk**, notice knee-over-toe and wide collarbones.

Day 8 – Neck & Shoulder (Progress Lightly)

- **Review:** No **cross-body** bag today; backpack on both shoulders or waist pouch.
- **Release:** Pec → Lat → Triceps → Rhomboids/Trapezius (same doses).
- **Retrain:** High-to-Low Push & Low-to-High Push; add a **5 secs pause** if neck stays quiet.
- **Quick test:** Greater overhead reach without shrug?

Day 9 – Neck & Shoulder (Refine)

- **Review:** Check **sleep:** proper ergonomic pillow; **firm bolster** supporting top arm and leg.
- **Release:** As above; spend an extra 30 secs on the tighter side.
- **Retrain:** Same as day 8. Add another set of 5 reps.
- **Quick test:** Night wakings fewer?

Day 10 – Back & Hips (Load the Pattern, Not the Pain)

- **Review:** Chair to **arm-support** elbows; hourly **hinge** breaks continue.

- **Release:** Hip flexor 2 min/side; Side-bum 2 min/side; Front core 90s.
- **Retrain:** Wall Hip Hinge 8-12; add a light **object** (held close) for last 4 reps if pain-free.
- **Quick test:** Easier car/get-up transitions?

Day 11 – Back & Hips (Carry Over)

- **Review:** Stand to take two phone calls today (collarbones wide).
- **Release:** Same.
- **Retrain:** Quiet bracing 8-10 switches; **Suitcase carry** 2 × 30-40 m (light), ribs stacked.
- **Quick test:** Less fatigue standing/walking?

Day 12 – Knee & Foot (Confidence on Stairs)

- **Review:** Keep **wide toe-box**; add 5 minutes **barefoot** at home on safe floor.
- **Release:** Foot → Calf → Peroneals → Side-bum.
- **Retrain:** Short-Foot 45-60 secs; Ankle Drives 8-12/side; Step-Downs 6-8/side (lower step if form wobbles).
- **Quick test:** Step-down path cleaner than Day 5 video?

Day 13 – Knee & Foot (Strengthen the Line)

- **Review:** Limit heels/fashion shoes today; if worn, do calf/foot release after.
- **Release:** Same; add TFL 60-90 secs/side if knees still dive in.
- **Retrain:** **Rear-foot supported split-squat** 6-8/side (shallow, knee over mid-toe), tripod on.

- **Quick test:** Comfortable, even depth left vs right?

Day 14 – Re-Test Day (Celebrate & Decide)

- **Review:** Keep your easiest lever(s) permanent (riser, racer-back, bolster, shoes).
- **Re-tests (compare to Day 1):**
 - **Scapula shrug** (smoother, less neck?)
 - **Wall hinge** (closer/easier?)
 - **Knee-to-wall & step-down** (more range, cleaner tracking?)
- **Release (optional, 5 min):** Hit the one spot that still talks.
- **Retrain (5 min):** One drill per region (perfect form).
- **Decide:** Which block becomes your **3-4×/week** maintenance? Which becomes **1-2×/week** support?

Your Daily Log (copy this)

- **Date / Day #:**
- **Pain peaks (0-10):** Waking ____ / Mid-day ____ / Bedtime ____
- **Quick test:** (what changed?)
- **Lever applied:**
- **Notes:** (what felt easier/harder; anything that flared)

If peaks trend down and tests trend up, you're winning—even if some days wobble.

Two Emergency Options (Busy/Flare Days)

3-Minute SOS

- Neck day: Pec 60 secs/side → Low to High Push 8.
- Back day: Front core 60 secs/side → 10 Wall Hinges.
- Knee day: Foot roll 60 secs/side → 10 Ankle Drives/side.

48-Hour Reset (if you overdid it)

- Short walks; wall-only gentle releases; half-range drills; perfect sleep set-up; then resume at **50%** dose for two sessions.

What Happens After Day 14

- **Keep** your primary region 3–4×/week (10 minutes).
- **Rotate** the others 1–2×/week.
- **Progress** one knob at a time
- (range **or** reps **or** resistance).
- **Deload** every 3–4 weeks (-20–30% volume).

Small, repeatable wins are the engine. You’ve shown your body a better path—now keep walking it. Tomorrow begins **Chapter 12: Resources & Next Steps** (reference checklists, FAQs, and how to expand into strength without waking old pain).

Chapter 12

Resources, Next Steps & Your Keep-Going Plan

You've finished the 14-Day Reset.

Now make the wins **automatic**—and expand them.

1) Your Maintenance Rhythm (4-2-1)

- **4×/week:** Run your **primary block**
- (Neck/Shoulder *or* Back *or* Knee/Foot).
 - 10 min each: Review 30 secs → Release 7 mins → Retrain 2½ mins.
- **2×/week:** Rotate a **support block**
- (the next-most-relevant region).
- **1×/week: Integrate Day**
- (one key release per region + a 15-20 min walk).

If life gets busy: do the **3-Minute SOS** (Chapter 11) rather than skipping.

2) Strength Ladder (return to full life, safely)

Move up only when the current rung is **green** (no sharpness; steady breath).

Rung 1 – Pattern strength (2-3 weeks)

- Wall Hip Hinge 2×10
- Step-Downs 2×8/side
- High-to-Low Push & Low-to-High Push 2×10
- Bird Dog 2×30 secs/side
- Staggered Stance Side Plank 2×30 secs/side
- Dead Bug 2×8/side

Rung 2 – Load (2-4 weeks)

- KB Deadlift from blocks 3×6-8
- Rear-Foot Split-Squat 3×6/side
- Band Row / Incline Press 3×8-10
- Farmer Carry 3×40-60 m

Rung 3 – Power & play (ongoing)

- Hinge to **hip-snap** (swings) if back stays quiet
- Step-ups / lateral work for change of direction
- Sport-specific drills (serve, run, hike) at **talkable pace** → build time before intensity

Deload: every 3-4 weeks, drop volume ~25% for 5-7 days.

3) Video Index (scan the QR in your print/ebook)

- **Who is Nelson Chong?** (method & mission)
- **3 Simple Truths** series:
 - Neck & Shoulder
 - Knee Pain
 - Chronic Back Pain
- **What Your Mama Didn't Tell You About Bras** (and shoulder freedom)
- **6 Steps to Successful Weight & Fat Loss** (pair with R`4 for energy, sleep, metrics)

4) One-Minute Checklists (tear-out style)

Workstation (daily)

- Screen at **eye level**
- **Elbows and neck supported**; shoulders down & wide
- Keyboard/mouse **close**
- Hourly: 8-10 **wall hinges** or **wall slides**

Sleep (nightly)

- Side sleeper: **firm ergonomic pillow** (nose/breastbone straight), **firm bolster** supports top arm & between knees
- Back sleeper: pillow fills neck curve; small pillow under knees if needed
- **No bra** in bed (unless medically indicated)

Footwear (leaving home)

- **Wide toe box** and **toe socks** (insole test)
- Minimal heel-toe drop for daily wear
- Remove slippers/shoes when sitting at home/office
- After heels/fashion shoes: 60 secs **calf/foot release** + 8 **ankle drives**

Bags & straps

- **No cross-body** for long hours; backpack on **both** shoulders or **waist pouch**
- Prefer **racer-back** straps by day

5) The 30-Day “Lock-In” Challenge

- Pick **one** lever to own for 30 days
- (e.g., racer-back + elbow and neck support).
- Track two metrics 3×/week: **pain peak** and **one quick test** (hinge, step-down, scapula shrug).
- Add **5 minutes** of easy walking after your 10-minute block (movement = save button).

6) Playbooks for Common Lifestyles

Desk-heavy professional

- Two **hourly sparkles** + neck block 4×/week.
- Laptop riser + external keyboard/mouse are **non-negotiable**.

New/expecting mothers

- Racer-back or supportive nursing sports bra; **no bra** at night.
- Bolster every side-sleep.
- Neck block 3×/week; Back block 2×/week.

Cyclists/rowers

- Double the **hip flexor + front core** releases.
- Back block before rides; bird dog and staggered side plank after.

Runners

- Knee/Foot block 3×/week; cadence steady; step-downs in warm-up.

- Rotate **wide toe-box** trainers.

Active agers (60+)

- Prioritize **balance** (tandem stance, suitcase carries).
- Light strength 2-3×/week; walking most days.

7) FAQs (fast answers)

“How much discomfort is OK?”

RPE 4-6/10 effort; 2-3/10 discomfort that eases as you move.

“Do I stretch the tight neck?”

Usually **no** – free **pecs/lats** first, then retrain scapula.

“Can I skip Release?”

If time-crunched, do **one** upstream release (pec/hip flexor/foot) then retrain.

“Weight & fat loss?”

Pain-free sleep + walking + hinge/split-squat + protein with meals
→ follow the **6 Steps** video to layer nutrition and habits without flare-ups.

8) Red Flags (don’t self-manage these)

- Progressive weakness, bowel/bladder changes, fever, unexplained weight loss, significant trauma.
- Numbness/tingling that **worsens** or doesn’t ease with position change.
- **Action:** seek medical care; bring your **R`4 log**.

9) Printable: R`4 at a Glance (put this on your fridge)

- **Review:** change one lever
(strap/screen/bolster/shoe/bag).
- **Release (7 min):**
 - Neck: pec → lat → triceps → rhomboids
 - Back: hip flexor → side-bum → front core
 - Knee: foot → calf → peroneals → side-bum
- **Retrain (3 min):**
 - Neck: High-to-Low Push; Low-to-High Push
 - Back: Wall Hinge; Bird Dog; Staggered Stance Side Plank; Dead Bug
 - Knee: Short-Foot; Ankle Drives; Step-Downs
- **Results:** walk 5–20 min; keep the lever changed.

10) Make It Yours

- Choose a **mantra**: “Source first, symptom last.”
- Keep tools **visible** (band on a door hook, ball by the sofa).
- Share a **win** with a friend or family member; teach them one drill – teaching cements learning.

You don’t need permission to move well. You needed a map.

You’ve got one now – **Review, Release, Retrain, Results** – and a body ready to practice freedom, a few minutes at a time. Keep going. Your story is still being written.

Epilogue – Keep the Door Open

You've seen the pattern now. Pain isn't mysterious when you watch the whole day.

- The sensitive neck that hated to move calmed when the **pecs and lats** were released.
- The lower back that pinched in a hinge cleared when **hips** did their job.
- The knee that shouted on stairs quieted when **foot** → **knee** → **hip** lined up.
- The quick fixes faded when the **old habits** stayed; wins lasted when the **lever** changed.

If you're finishing this book with less pain, good. If you're finishing with a plan, better. Here's how to keep the door open:

1) Keep the simple rhythm.

Use the **4-2-1** cadence from Chapter 12:

- 4×/week your primary block
- (neck/shoulder *or* back *or* knee/foot)
- 2×/week a support block
- 1×/week an integrate day + a walk

2) Progress by nudges.

One knob at a time: **range** or **reps** or **resistance**—never all three. Stay at RPE 4–6/10. Deload every 3–4 weeks.

3) Let environment do the heavy lifting.

Racer-back by day, **no bra** in bed. Two-strap backpack or waist pouch. Screen at eye level, elbows and neck supported. **Wide toe-box** shoes and **toe socks**. An **ergonomic pillow** and **firm bolster** so that your neck, shoulders, spine and hips rest all night when sleeping on the side.

4) When you wobble, don't vanish.

Busy day? Do the **3-Minute SOS**. Flare-up? Use the **48-Hour Reset**. Small sessions protect the identity you just built: "I'm someone who fixes the source."

5) Write the next story.

Teach one person one drill—band push, wall hinge, step-down. Teaching locks in your own learning and multiplies relief.

If you need permission to live pain-free, here it is: **you don't**.

You need a map, a few minutes, and the honesty to change one habit at a time. You already did the hard part—starting. Now keep going. The **R`4 method** scales with you: from first pain-free morning, to picking up your child without thinking, to 10,000 quiet steps, to whatever "active life" means in your world.

Close the book. Set a timer. Do today's 10 minutes.

Then take a walk and feel the difference you made.

Fix the source. Live the life. R`4.

About the Author

Nelson Chong is the CEO and founder of Functional Training Institute (FTI) and the creator of the award-winning **R`4 Method** for pain resolution and performance. Voted **Fitness Best Asia – Regional Personal Trainer of the Year (2021)**, Nelson has spent more than two decades helping people from **6 to 96** overcome musculoskeletal pain—from heels and knees to backs, necks, and shoulders—and return to the activities they love.

A globally sought-after educator, he has taught thousands of personal trainers, Pilates and yoga teachers, and rehabilitation professionals across **Singapore, Malaysia, India, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Taiwan, Australia, China, Italy**, and beyond. His work and public education efforts have been featured in major media, and he has spoken at international fitness conventions, including Nike’s Super Workshop in Shanghai. His contributions to the industry have been recognized with the **Spirit of Enterprise (2013)** and **China AASFP Outstanding Achievement Award (2018)**.

Nelson’s path was anything but linear: trained as an engineer in the United Kingdom and tested through elite military training at home, he ultimately chose a purpose-driven life in human movement and health. Together with his wife and co-founder, **Karen Goh**, and their children—**Justin, Charmayne, and Oliver**—he continues to refine the R`4 Method so that everyday people can live **pain-free, active lives**.

Nelson believes that *pain may be part of life, but suffering is optional*—and that with the right knowledge, environment, and practice, anyone can reclaim strength, mobility, and joy.

QR Code for Online Resources

Scan the QR code below to access **R`4 online videos**.



Scan the QR code below for **R`4 workshop** to empower yourself,
your loved ones or your clients live pain-free.



QR Code for Online Products

Scan the QR code below for the list of **R`4 products** to break free from your chronic pain.



Scan the QR code below for **an ergonomic chair** to optimize your workstation at the office and at home.



"Nelson is the Michael Jordan of what he does. He is definitely God-sent!"

Lawrence Khong

Founding Pastor of FCBC & President of Singapore Polo Club

"Results speak louder than words. Nelson's R`4 Method simply works. My clients and I have benefitted immensely from his coaching and treatment. So good to live pain-free!"

Apelles Poh, BA, CFP, MFP

Senior Financial Services Director – PIAS

Author of Live Well, Love Much, Laugh Often

"Encountering Nelson and his R`4 Method is the pivoting moment of my life. My clients skyrocketed, business grew exponentially, and most importantly, every day I am living a purpose driven life helping others to live pain-free."

Arjun Kumar

Celebrity Fitness Trainer 2022

"In my very first session, Nelson had me touching my toes after years of being unable to. He also eased a two-day migraine in minutes with precise trigger-point release. Following major surgery, Nelson was instrumental in helping me regain my balance and get back to living my life. I can't recommend Nelson and his R`4 Method highly enough."

Dr Shyamala Thilagaratnam

Retired Group Director (Outreach), Health Promotion Board