

Use Additional Aids

Various aids such as the **Necksaviour** and the **Sacro Wedgy** (ask your practitioner) can assist in your recovery. Using these in the evening leaves your body in a good state to heal overnight. Rock from side to side on the Sacro Wedgy to loosen muscles, then lay with your head on a book and knees bent for five minutes to allow muscles to 'sink' downwards before spending the remaining 20 minutes lying flat on your back. Try *not* to fight pulling sensations or make positional corrections. Your body will heal faster if you allow it to lie in whatever contorted position it likes before bed and you will find that it makes small shuffles to straighten you out all by itself anyway! If you are tired, combine the Necksaviour, Sacro Wedgy and Meditation.

Stabilising Your Pelvis

If your pelvis is out of alignment, knee raises whilst lying on the Sacro Wedgy are *extremely* helpful in building strength in the surrounding muscles to ensure it stays in the correct position:

- Whilst lying on your back on the Sacro Wedgy with knees bent, breathe deeply into your pelvis area to engage your pelvic floor muscles (ladies imagine zipping up tight jeans!)
- Whilst exhaling, and ensuring that your unstable side of your pelvis stays in exactly the same place (keep a hand on it), raise your knee *very slowly* (this can be done even with a floppy lower leg to begin with).
- Once raised, inhale deeply into your pelvis again, keeping your pelvic floor muscles lightly engaged, and again, making sure that your pelvis does not move.
- Return to starting position whilst exhaling. You can do more on the side that is weak/unstable until the sides start to even up. Try three to every one.

* Avoid swimming breast-stroke if you are having problems with stabilising your pelvis.

Driving

Getting in and out of cars and depressing the clutch are movements which twist your body into strange positions and hinder the stabilisation of your pelvis. Whilst driving, aim to keep your legs at the same height and your bottom firmly back in the seat. Breathe into your pelvis area and engage your pelvic floor muscles (as described above) before changing gear. Then relax, but try to keep your pelvis as static as possible. To get out of the car, swivel in your seat and place both feet outside *first*, standing up straight onto both feet and avoiding twisting your body.

Healing Your Feet

If you have problems walking or your feet are in any way contorted, prickle stimulating balls are really useful! Roll each foot for one minute and then attempt ten pickups. Try to hold the ball with your toes as your strength improves! This strengthens the muscles which help your toes push off with each step and so makes your walking stronger, faster and less painful.

And Most of All...Do Not Lose Faith!

The S.A.T journey can be a long one if your trauma/whiplash injury has gone untreated for a long time. Learn to *enjoy* the journey and *trust* the unwinding process which occurs within your CNS. Some days symptoms will get worse, your CNS will feel highly strung or an improvement will suddenly disappear again. Do not worry! This is a sign that things are in fact moving forward but they need to go backwards first in order to unwind in the *correct* way. Think about the process being like untangling several knots in a necklace; sometimes you need to feed a bit of the necklace backwards through a loop before you can tackle the next knot! One by one, every symptom *will* change or disappear and you will eventually go through an entire day with absolutely no tension or pain. The information in this leaflet has been compiled from my own personal experience; symptoms and relevant methods of treatment may vary from one individual to another.

Specific Adjusting Technique (S.A.T)

Specific Adjustment Technique encompasses treatment for many issues involving all kinds of trauma; both physical and emotional. This may arise from the moment of birth or from direct trauma later in life that results in a 'whiplash' type injury. This leaflet is intended for people who have either long-standing or more recent issues following emotional/physical trauma and who may need help with the recovery process.

Going through S.A.T treatment involves a commitment on many levels. The information in this leaflet has been compiled from my own personal experience with a view to making your journey to recovery easier and faster. I offer advice on overcoming obstacles you may encounter and how to get the most out of your treatment.

Please visit <http://www.stillpoint-thelakes.co.uk/s.a.t.php> to read My Story before reading this leaflet. I should emphasise that not everyone will need to go to the lengths described here to recover from their injury – always follow your practitioner's advice and make use of the information here which is relevant to you.

The following key points are central to maximizing the effects of S.A.T. If you take on board and practise these principles, you will see great results and will be gifted with a new lease of life:

S.A.T is a course of treatment over a period of months with specific intervals to allow for healing and recovery. **You will receive the most benefit from treatment if you have a period of at least a few weeks of minimal stress before you begin treatment.**

Develop trust in your S.A.T practitioner that he/she can feel into your body and knows what needs to be done and in what order. Also begin to **trust in your body** that it will now gain the ability to start healing all by itself. This is very difficult, because you will have probably been battling with your body to function for many years, but as S.A.T delivers improvements, it will get easier to trust your body (and even love it too!) and your belief in the process will soar.

Realise and harness the power of the 'still point' which you will experience during treatment but which you can also replicate at home through the breath during meditation.

Go with the flow and listen to your body. This may sound 'airy fairy' but it is key to gaining as much out of S.A.T as is possible. Do not focus on the ultimate destination of getting better, but rather, the *journey* to that destination. Depending on your starting point, it may be one of the most empowering journeys of your life.

Dedicate time to fight/correct problems in your body, and likewise, dedicate times when you allow it to do what it wants; active periods and rest periods. If you constantly fight your body to do the correct thing, it will get tired of being 'tackled' and will rebel (as it probably has been doing for years already), whereas if you allow it to do what it wants sometimes, it will be more readily pliable and will discover what it needs to do all by itself! You need to learn when to push forward and when to allow your body just to *be*. A *balance* is the key.

Dedicate yourself to the Pilates rehabilitation stage. Your S.A.T practitioner can do most of the work but there comes a time when it is your turn to back it up. **Pilates is what will make the effects of your treatment permanent.** It may also be useful to supplement Pilates with Hanna Somatics or Alexander Technique.

Here is some more practical in depth advice on how to effectively decrease tension, strengthen and rebalance your body. It is not imperative to do everything listed here to make the treatment work; S.A.T will improve your overall health regardless. However, the advice here will ensure you get the *most* (and also the most rapid) success out of the treatment.

Foam Rolling Prior to S.A.T Treatment

If you suffer from severe muscular tension throughout your body, try foam rolling your whole body *before you embark on S.A.T treatment* for half an hour each day until you feel a long-term release. The first few days can be brutal, so just start with a few seconds of an exercise - taking most of your weight off the roller and on to your arms if it is painful - and build up from there. You will soon manage two minutes in each position.

Set Aside a Quiet Time for your Treatment

Ensure that S.A.T treatment coincides with a time when you will not be stressed, driving for a long period of time, or have a hectic schedule. If you have to drive a long distance to see an S.A.T practitioner, then arrange an overnight stay to minimise driving after treatment. Allow yourself time to doze/sleep for as long as your body needs. Drink plenty of water and relax in a neutral non twisted position, sleeping on your back for at least the first night.

Strictly Follow Instructions on Exercise

Do not exercise after treatment for as many days as your practitioner recommends, and be careful not to make any twisting or sudden movements. Take everything slowly during this time and make sure you are going about your day with your body as straight and balanced as possible. Getting in and out of cars and driving can present major problems (see Driving section below).

Do Not Dabble; Have Trust in S.A.T

Do not be tempted to have any other treatments/therapies at all whilst receiving S.A.T. The treatment is designed to retrain your central nervous system (CNS) to heal itself along with the support of the Pilates/Somatics and Meditation. All it needs is time and belief. Dabbling in other treatments - even if well meaning - may hinder and reduce the effectiveness of S.A.T. This includes massages from loved ones in a bid to relieve pain!

Helping Your Body to Break Muscular Holding Habits

- Try to break the habit of sitting with legs crossed or one leg under the other. Make sure you sit with equal pressure on your buttocks and as straight in a chair as possible.
- Also try to reduce the over dominance of one hand/one side of your body.
- Ladies swap your handbag for a rucksack (it does not have to be a sports rucksack; you can get small feminine ones too) for everyday use, making sure to use both straps. Your arms will now swing whilst walking which allows the upper and lower body to fully integrate.
- After your initial course of S.A.T comes to an end, you may find you go through stagnant periods. If this happens, try a reiki session – this can often kick-start progress!

Pilates...Pilates...Pilates

...is absolutely paramount to ensuring the effects you get from S.A.T are long term. Find a Body Control Pilates teacher who will tailor a specific programme for you. Changing the time of day when you do your Pilates workout can help to maximize effectiveness. Do not think that it is 'too late at night' to do Pilates; even a little is better than none at all. In fact, often late-night Pilates yields the best results as your body puts up less resistance to change when it is tired, and as a result, you will wake up in the morning with some great improvements!

Integration and Re-Balancing of your Body

It may be obvious that you have one side of your body weaker than the other. Always check with your Pilates teacher, but you can probably do 2-3 more reps of relevant exercises on the weak side. Only continue until it is *almost* as strong as the other side and then return to an equal number on each so that the stronger side will 'teach' the weaker side. This will re-integrate parts of your body and allow them to work more harmoniously together again. As the tension in your body releases, you will sense that you can use each part of your body independently rather than tensing up your whole body just to use one part.

Mindful Meditation

Learning to practise meditation is an important 'aside' to S.A.T. Guided body scans are the most effective in complementing S.A.T as they strengthen the mind-body connection and teach you to melt away tension by bringing awareness to the breath and feeling deeply into specific parts of the body. Learning to observe (and bask for a few seconds) in the 'still point - like' sensation which occurs at the end of the out breath (before you breathe in again) helps to break well ingrained tension patterns in the body, providing a much needed respite from a highly strung CNS. Meditation for half an hour in a morning and before bed to set you off and set you down is effective. You can increase this time in the days following a S.A.T session to maximise the effectiveness of the treatment. Acknowledging the 'still point' sensation allows your CNS to fully experience the novelty and beauty of being in a state of deep relaxation.

Learn to Melt Away Pain Through Meditation

You can develop your meditation practice to the degree where you can dissolve pain and tension by placing a hand on a painful part of the body and intensely visualising *inside* your body. Move your awareness around the muscles and ligaments, imagining that that you are stroking/softening them. This will help to promote improvement in painful/tense areas. There are many helpful visualisations; online guided recorded body scans can talk you through these. You will start to feel a tingly sensation in your hand and in the painful part before the muscles will relax and then the pain disappears! This skill takes time to develop and may take 15-20 minutes to achieve at first, but with practice you will be able to melt pain away in just a couple of minutes! The longer you can intensely stay with the experience of visualising inside your body, the longer the pain will stay away after you cease this practice.

Embrace and Enjoy Any Strange Sensations!

Following treatment, you may simply experience a welcome relief from pain or tension. Equally, you may feel intense sensations such as a shuddering sensation down your back which takes your breath away or a sudden 'dead arm'. This can be disconcerting but just go with it and *enjoy!* Sit or lie down, take awareness to your breath and feel deeply into your body. It feels as though your CNS is 'resetting' and preventing your body from falling into old holding patterns. Afterwards, you will find that you are sitting straighter with less tension and the old holding patterns have disappeared. If you learn to prolong the sensations by feeling deeply into them, you will receive a greater long-term benefit. Trust that your practitioner has made the necessary structural adjustments in your spine so that your body is regaining the knowledge to heal the connecting muscles and ligaments all by itself. "Structure governs Function" is the rule; once the structure is correct, the muscles, ligaments and functions will improve too. You may notice an 'unwinding' sensation and perceive your body moving from one problem area to another, resolving as it goes. Your body innately knows what to address and in what order and it *will* get round to every pain or tension, but it takes time!