



The Five Sensations and the Art of Sensing

Using Sensation to Teach Yourself



Sensing precisely how you feel when moving is an excellent way to become your own masterful teacher. As you practice a Nia move, focus your mind to recognize one of the five sensations.

Use your skin, muscles, bones and joints to consciously monitor the presence of:

Flexibility

Agility

Mobility

Strength

Stability

Practice the Art of Sensing with the 52 Moves

- 1** First, pick one of the five sensations (FAMSS) to practice with (ie: Flexibility).
- 2** Next, begin moving and focus on recognizing this sensation's presence and unique physical qualities.
- 3** Now, keep moving and focus on sustaining the sensation with Dynamic Ease, the sensation of relaxed power.
- 4** Repeat each of the above steps with all of the Five Sensations.
- 5** Finally, move and focus on energetically balancing the flow of all five sensations, consciously activating their "on" and "off" buttons.



Flexibility

Flexibility is sensed as **energy moving outward**. It is the physical feeling of **releasing power**. Dynamic flexibility (the perfect action between contraction and release) relaxes your body and is sensed as opening and lengthening. When you sense flexibility, you can sustain whole-body movement while the Voice of Your Body says, “I feel more space; I am getting more flexible.”

Flexibility feels like:

- Energy moving outward.
- An elastic quality in your muscles and joints.
- A physical vibration of positive tension.
- A warm lengthening along the bone that stretches the belly of a muscle without pulling the ends or causing your body to say, “Stop.”

Flexibility is nurtured by:

- Opening and closing your joints.
- Balancing the action between stability (non-moving bones and joints) and mobility (moving bones and joints).

Flexibility is maintained by:

- The action of your muscles spiraling over bones.
- Opening and closing your joints to sustain the flow and movement of energy.

Losing flexibility is sensed as:

- Heaviness, rigidity, pain, stiffness, cramping or fatigue.
- A diminishment of balance, grace or coordination.
- The inability to remain strong yet relaxed.

Sensing flexibility teaches you to:

- Consciously engage your body and mind to use specific muscles to achieve a desired flexibility result, such as more flexibility in your hamstrings.

The Voice of Flexibility

I am the voice of Flexibility. I give you the freedom to expand in your life. You sense me as energy radiating outward like the sun radiates heat, like a rubber band expanding and extending in all directions. You know me through the first stretch of waking. I am the yawn of your body. Feline, I love to extend, to know my own fullness down to my toes and out my tail - into my claws and the spaces between. My pliability creates space within you and connects your edges to the world beyond. To your emotional body, I am the product of yearning and desire; contentment and satiation; security and curiosity. Connect to me through desire and in your longing, open up to expose your deepest self. Through me, find trust, expansion; discover your full potential. I am your potential. Let me in by letting yourself out.

Flexibility Pearls ~ Free. Opening. Rubber-band like. Willow tree. Elastic. Reaching. Searching. Yearning. Yawning. Extrinsic. Stretch the canvas. Feel for the horizon. Sense the unseen.



Agility

Agility is sensed as a **shifting of dynamic tension**. It is the physical feeling of **pulling and pushing**. Dynamic agility (the perfect action between contraction and release) relaxes the body and is sensed as a balance between yin and yang. When you sense agility, you can sustain whole-body movement while the Voice of Your Body says, “I can respond to anything; I am gaining agility.”

Agility feels like:

- A shifting of dynamic tension.
- Simultaneous strength and flexibility.
- The ability to easily start and stop movement.
- Playful tension, or a “tug-o-war” quality of energy.
- Controlled reflexive actions in your muscles, bones and joints that allow you to quickly start, stop and change direction without causing your body to say, “Stop – I can’t keep this up or sustain my movement.”

Agility is nurtured by:

- Opening and closing your joints in varying ranges of motion.
- Balancing actions of stability (non-moving bones and joints) with mobility (moving bones and joints).

Agility is maintained by:

- The action of your muscles working with your bones and joints to quickly start and stop – or sustain – movement.
- Shifting between continuous action and balanced stillness.

Losing agility is sensed as:

- Stiffness, pain or fatigue.
- A diminishment in balance, grace, speed, coordination or control.
- The inability to remain strong yet relaxed.

Sensing agility teaches you to:

- Consciously engage your body and mind to use specific muscles to achieve a desired agility result, such as quickly starting, stopping and changing directions with a sense of ease.

The Voice of Agility

I am the voice of Agility. I am energy in motion; I am stops and starts. I am quick. Slow. Right. Left. Angular. Linear. Curvaceous. A trickster and a clown, I am the dance between Mobility and Stability. I bridge the worlds of the still and the frenetic, bringing calm to commotion and quick action to complacency. I allow you to negotiate shifts in weight and direction on the spur of the moment. I train your nervous system to respond to a variety of stimuli. Like a cat, I give your body the ability to sprint at full speed, turn on a dime, alight on one foot, roll into a somersault and roll out onto a high wire, creating stability even in the slack of the wire with my deft reactions. Like a spring lamb, I frolic with gusto – and then suddenly I am stillness itself. I come from your reptilian brain. Instinctual, I activate the automatic fight-or-flight responses that preserve your life. I am best friends with speed and grace. Use me to get out of a pickle and back on track. Use me to right your body and avoid a fall. Use me to dance through the highs and lows of every moment.

Agility Pearls ~ Tiger-like. Playful. Frolic. Creative. Angular. Curvilinear. Quick. Slow. Stimulating. Linear. Curvaceous.



Mobility

Mobility is sensed as **energy in constant motion**. It is the physical feeling of **juggling power**. Dynamic mobility (the perfect action of flexibility and strength) relaxes the body and is sensed as youthful freedom. When you sense mobility, you can sustain whole-body movement while the Voice of Your Body says, “I feel free; I am gaining mobility.”

Mobility feels like:

- Energy in constant motion.
- Free, balanced movement in your whole body.
- The physical sensation of juggling power to sustain a continuous flow of energy.
- Controlled excitation in your joints and muscles that does not interfere with your movement or cause your body to say, “Slow down; I can’t continue with balance.”

Mobility is nurtured by:

- Continually opening and closing your joints, neither opening them nor closing them all the way.
- Balancing the action of flexibility (energy moving outward) with strength (energy moving inward).

Mobility is maintained by:

- Sustaining continuous movement by engaging your muscles, bones and joints in harmony.
- Sensing for balanced freedom as you move.

Losing mobility is sensed as:

- Tightness, stiffness, pain, fatigue or loss of power.
- A diminishment in balance, grace, speed, coordination or control.
- The inability to remain strong yet relaxed.

Sensing mobility teaches you to:

- Consciously engage your body and mind to use specific muscles to achieve a desired mobility result, such as more mobility in your hip joints.

The Voice of Mobility

I am the voice of Mobility. A free spirit, I am energy in constant motion. My sensation is similar to the rolling of the ocean, constantly alive, moving, undulating, flowing, seeking to fill empty spaces. You know me in the sway of your hips and the in shifting gaze of your eye. Like an otter in the surf, I love momentum and Dynamic Ease. Try to grasp me and I will slip through your fingers, for confinement extinguishes me. I reside in your synovial fluid, eddying and flowing with your energy. Like petals on the breeze, I move effortlessly in twists and arcs, lofting and spiraling in corkscrews. Through me, you explore space. Release your joints to activate me in the spaces between your bones. Soften and I will slide along the smooth contours of your bones and muscles, releasing energy through the gateways of your body. Through me, discover the play of life. Use me to get where you want to go. Master me and know the dance of the slow and the gift of the swift.

Mobility Pearls ~ Constant. Alive. Front, back. Side to side. Up, down. In and out. Undulating. Fluid. Sway. Corkscrew. Momentum. Slow. Swift. Slip. Eddy. Rolling.



Strength

Strength is sensed as **energy moving inward**. It is the physical feeling of **containing and sustaining power**. Dynamic strength (the perfect action between contraction and release) relaxes the body and is sensed as a resisting, or a quality of weighted energy being moved in ways that allow you to sustain a movement or posture. When you sense strength, you can sustain whole-body movement while the Voice of Your Body says, “I feel powerful; I am gaining strength.”

Strength feels like:

- Energy moving inward.
- A “squeezing in” or packing of energy against your bones.
- Warm power moving along your bones.
- Positive tension in your muscles.
- Containing and sustaining power.
- Contraction in the belly of a muscle without pulling in one direction more than another, or causing your body to say, “Stop, I’m out of balance.”

Strength is nurtured by:

- Opening and closing your joints.
- Balancing the action of stability (non-moving bones and joints) and mobility (moving bones and joints).

Strength is maintained by:

- The action of your muscles working in harmony with your bones and joints to push and pull with Dynamic Ease.
- Aligning your bones and joints to provide the stability needed to create strength.

Losing strength is sensed as:

- Quivering, pain or fatigue.
- Diminishment in balance, grace, speed or coordination.
- The inability to remain strong yet relaxed.

Sensing strength teaches you to:

- Consciously engage your body and mind to use specific muscles to achieve a desired strength result, such as more strength and definition in your quadriceps.

The Voice of Strength

I am the voice of Strength. I am the core power you exert in life. I am the force that protects; I am the Warrior, the Lioness, the Protector-Healer. I am a sensation of energy drawing in and hugging your bones tightly to provide condensed, concentrated energy and power deep within. In your physical body, you know me with the squeeze of your muscles. Emotionally, you may know me in the bear hug of a loved one or in the pull of a personal tug-of-war. Mentally, I empower you to maintain your thoughts independently of others. Through me, your muscles become armor; your bones become martial weapons. I enact your will. Know your power through me.

Strength Pearls ~ Deep. Concentrated. Condensed. Oak tree. Elephant-like. Intense. Internal. Powerful. Gripping. Independent. Armor. Core.



Stability

Stability is sensed as **energy moving out in all directions from the center**. It is the physical feeling of **harmony and peace combined with readiness for action**. Dynamic stability (the perfect balance of all five sensations) relaxes your body and is sensed as a powerful peace. When you sense stability, you can sustain whole-body movement while the Voice of Your Body says, “I feel relaxed; I can balance and I recognize stability because I feel it.”

Stability feels like:

- Energy moving out in all directions from the center.
- A dynamic tension of harmonious energy.
- A natural “letting go” that naturally engages your muscles, bones and joints, creating a perfect action between contraction and release.
Stability is not control.
- A powerful peace.

Stability is nurtured by:

- Seeking balance.
- A sense of “resting” in momentary or sustained periods of movement and non-movement.
- Relaxation, postural integration and correct alignment of your body.
- Balancing all five sensations with equal harmony (flexibility, agility, mobility, strength and stability).

Stability is maintained by:

- The actions of your muscles working with your bones and joints to quickly start and stop, arriving to stillness with balance.
- Equalizing muscle contractions and relaxation.
- Consciously relaxing while moving and in stillness.
- Postural integration and correct alignment of your body.

Losing stability is sensed as:

- Agitation, stress, loss of balance, joint stiffness, poor coordination or fatigue.
- A diminishment in your ability to balance, move gracefully, vary speeds, coordinate your whole body or move through levels with ease.
- The inability to remain strong yet relaxed.

Sensing stability teaches you to:

- Consciously engage your body and mind to use specific muscles to achieve a desired stability result, such as sustaining balance moves that also require strength.

The Voice of Stability

I am the voice of Stability. In me you will find constancy, integrity, peace. I am strength combined with quiet resting. My constancy allows for freedom. I am able to hold myself in place, never losing balance or leaving my center. In me, you know where you stand. Access me to know Calm. I am grounded, contained, intrinsic. I am solid, even when instability is all around. I am the result of positive tension. I am found when there is a balance between opposing forces: pushing together, pulling apart, contracting inward. In your physical body, I reside in the structures of your base – in the tripod of your foot; in the bowl of your pelvic basin. I am more easily found when your base is wide. In Sumo Stance, I am in the arc of your legs, where your pelvis is the keystone and your center of gravity is closer to the earth. Find me by squeezing in and lengthening out. I am the foundation on which you build. I support so there may be motion, like a tree trunk. Because of me, your leaves may sway and reach out to the heavens.

Stability Pearls ~ Solid. Grounded. In line with gravity. Like a mountain. Calm. Connected to the core of the earth. Positive tension. Supported. Root. Base. Foundation. Grounded. Contained. Extrinsic.



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