



Mike's Body Shop – Functional Anatomy Workshop Series

Michael offers the following classes, which have been designed to educate yoga, Pilates, fitness, and bodywork professionals and students alike. With a strong focus on integrating structure and function, these classes approach the body in three dimensions and as a continuous network of muscle, connective tissue, and bone. Originally intended to be taught in sequence, these classes are available and approachable in any order. Any class may be presented in a three-hour or daylong format. We invite you to review the class descriptions and select which classes are most appropriate for you and your studio.

Seeing Bodies: No two bodies are alike, just as one size never “fits all.” This class increases students’ ability to identify structural patterns in the body and gives them a language to modify movement with verbal and hands-on cueing. It will enable students to choose which movements are supportive and which are contraindicated for specific body types.

Understanding Fascia: Known as the organ of form, fascia is the three-dimensional support structure of the body. It wraps every body part—muscles, tendons, organs—and both separates and connects them. Fascia is an endless web and an integral component to the health of posture and movement in the body.

Lower Leg: All structures need a supportive foundation. In our bodies, this foundation originates below the knees. In this class, students acquire knowledge of the anatomy and function of the lower legs, as well as the effect its organization can have on the rest of the body.

Pelvis and Sacrum: Like a bowl split in half, the pelvis supports everything above it while balancing on the legs below it, creating essential order in the body. Discover how the body adapts to imbalances between these two halves of the pelvis, while supporting the sacrum between them. Learn to identify key boney landmarks and become well versed in the muscular anatomy of this area of the body.

The Spine: Although it’s often mistakenly seen as a rigid column, the spine is actually a suspended, buoyant structure. In this class, learn the design, function, and interrelationship of the three main components of the spine: the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar curves. Special emphasis will be given to restoring normal health to each part of the spine.

T-12: All roads lead to the twelfth thoracic vertebra, which is why this entire class is devoted to one part of the spine. Here, the psoas connects the legs to the spine, and the diaphragm, quadratus lumborum, obliques, lower trapezoids, and lumbar fascia all share real estate here as well. The architectural significance of this lumbar/dorsal hinge influences so many of our movements.

Core Anatomy: Discover how the abdominals are actually a girdle wrapping the torso and integrating the thoracic cavity with the pelvic floor. Learn the origin and insertion of each core muscle, its individual function, and cues to help differentiate and combine core muscle actions.

Thinking In Threes: The goal of all functional fitness should be to create stability, length, and space. This class will focus on seeing the body in three dimensions and creating movement strategies that promote health and comfort. Michael will demonstrate how to connect the foot, pelvis, thoracic cavity, neck, and head using three different bony landmarks.

Cueing Bones: Visualize the skeleton as a puzzle, and learn how to organize the various pieces by moving bone instead of using muscle action. When the bones are aligned, the appropriate muscles are contracting and releasing in healthy relation to each other. This workshop is about three-dimensional thinking and connecting the dots.

Hands-On: Hands on the body means hands on the nervous system. Often, only hands-on cueing will do for achieving the best alignment. However, improper or disconnected touch can confuse or alarm your subject, which defeats the purpose. Explore the potential and techniques of using physical contact to attain the greatest results. This is an excellent training for yoga teachers who practice hands-on assists with their students.