AGENDA - DAY ONE

Workshops should follow this order and format (of course, adjust the hours to reflect the actual start time). You may adjust the lunch break according to how the participants are feeling and the actual time of day.

INTRODUCTION	20 minutes	12:00 - 12:20
WRIST MOBS	15 minutes	12:20 – 12:35
BEAST		
Static Beast	30 minutes	12:35 – 1:05
For/Rev Beast	25 minutes	1:05 – 1:30
Lateral Beast	10 minutes	1:30 – 1:40
Notes/ Break	20 minutes	1:40 – 2:00
APE		
Lateral Apes	30 minutes	2:00 – 2:30
Forward Apes	20 minutes	2:30 – 2:50
LUNCH	30 minutes	2:50- 3:20
Apes Notes	15 minutes	3:20 – 3:35
CRAB		
Static Crab	10 minutes	3:35 – 3:45
For/Rev Crab	20 minutes	3:45 – 4:05
Notes/ Break	15 minutes	4:05 – 4:20
UNDERSWITCH		
Underswith	20 minutes	4:20 – 4:40
Underswitch Tap	10 minutes	4:40 – 4:50
Jumping Underswitch	10 minutes	4:50 – 5:00
Underswitch Flow	10 minutes	5:00 – 5:10
Notes	15 minutes	5:10 – 5:25
WRAP UP		5:25 – 5:30

END DAY ONE!

AGENDA - DAY TWO

REVIEW DAY ONE / WRIST MOBS	15 minutes	12:00 – 12:15
FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES	60 minutes	12:15 – 1:15
Loaded Beast Unload		
Loaded Beast Wave Unload		
Loaded Beast Reach		
Crab Reach		
Ape Reach		
Scorpion Reach		
FSS Flow		
Notes/ Break	15 minutes	1:15 – 1:30
SIDE KICKTHROUGH	30 minutes	1:30 - 2:00
Side Kickthrough		
Jumping Side Kickthrough		
Levitating Side Kickthrough		
US/SKT Flow		
SCORPION	30 minutes	2:30 – 3:00
Scorpion		
Scorpion Switch		
US/SKT/SCORP Flow		
LUNCH BREAK	30 minutes	3:00 – 3:30
Notes Sidekickthrough/Scorpion	15 minutes	3:30 – 3:45
FRONT KICKTHROUGH	30 minutes	3:45 – 4:15
Front Step		
Front Step Through		
Front Kickthrough		
FLOWS		
Kingdom Flow		4:15 – 4:30
Root Game		4:30 – 4:50
Group Flow Work		4:50 – 5:15
WRAP UP	15 minutes	5:15 – 5:30
Notes on FKT		
Test Instructions		
Overview		

END DAY TWO!

INTRODUCTION

The introduction is your opportunity to set the stage for the next two days.

- Make every effort to start ON TIME. This sets the tone for the rest of the workshop, and people will learn to come back from breaks on time, and to show up on time for Day 2. It also projects that we are professionals respectful of their time.
- Depending on the size of the group, you can ask everyone to quickly introduce themselves, which will give you a better understanding of your audience. You can use the information from their intros to help you tailor your workshop (athletic coaches versus personal trainers, etc.). However, if you have a large group or long talkers you can easily lose 20-30 minutes here, so you may want to limit people to saying their name and profession.
- Give a brief preview of the Agenda.
- Introduce yourself. This is where you'll give your personal monologue about your own fitness journey and how you came to Animal Flow. Keep it brief and to the point!
- Explain what will be expected of them to test out to become Certified. You'll review this again multiple times throughout the workshop.

TALKING POINTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Be sure to introduce the following ideas during your introduction:

What is Animal Flow?

Animal Flow is a movement program designed to reconnect your body to itself, through the ground.

We are always the first to admit that we did NOT create animal movements, they've been used for health and vitality for literally thousands of years. We just *act* like animals to improve the function of the *human animal,* whether that be postural distortions, performance, cardiovascular health or maybe even a little fun.

Reconnecting the body with itself, through the ground:

Explain the advantages of becoming conscious/responsible for their movements as well as their place in space.

Neuromuscular communication:

We introduce concept of using the receptors in the hands and feet to engage the "neuromuscular super highway" of information. We want the shoulders to communicate with the hips, through the spine and into the extremities. The more efficiently the body communicates, the better it will function in work, sport, hobby and day to day life.

THE SIX COMPONENTS

Provide a very brief overview of the Six Components. We want to begin to encourage the attendees to start thinking about each component and the roles that they play in the overall program. When you're introducing the components, you don't have to go into an incredible amount of detail - just hit the basic elements.

DEMONSTRATE ONE EXAMPLE OF EACH OF THESE AS YOU EXPLAIN THEM

1. **WRIST MOBILZATIONS**

   The basics of wrist health with the Animal Flow practice is really about ADAPTATION. Just like with anything, our bodies are designed to adapt to any consistent challenge. We can help the adaptation process by being diligent with wrist mobilizations before, during and after your AF practice. I can speak from experience that even now, if I don't dedicate specific time for wrist mobs as prep, active rest and cool down, that I'll start to feel some issues creep up. Once you start that inflammation cycle, it's very tough to continue your training. What it boils down to is a couple of minutes of prevention sure beats having to take a week or two off to heal.

2. ACTIVATIONS

   The activations are all about "setting the system". They are a fantastic assessment and at the same time an incredible corrective wrapped into one. The Static Beast and Static Crab activations absolutely complement each other. While the static Beast focuses more on flexion chain and anterior oblique sling, the Static Crab focuses more on the posterior chain and posterior oblique slings. They can be used as an assessment, corrective, shoulder, spine and hip stabilization, pre/post rehab, active rest, antagonistic movement to a resisted push or pull (Static Beast with a Resisted Pull or Static Crab with a Resisted Push, etc)

3. FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

   The Forms Specific Stretches (FSS) or "reaches" are more or less about end ranges of motion, like full flexion, followed by full extension, flexion and rotation followed by extension and opposing rotation. Protraction, flexion and internal rotation followed by retraction, extension and external rotation. These are a great way to increase dynamic flexibility as well as conditioning. You may hold the end point for timed static holds, or active dynamics, trying to increase ROM with each movement or performing repetitions for strength or endurance.

4. TRAVELING FORMS

   The "ABC's of Traveling Forms" - The traveling forms are essentially how we play like animals to improve the function of the human animal. These are great for neuromuscular sequencing so they may be used for creating neural engrams or overall cardiovascular and muscular conditioning. Just like with the statics, the traveling forms are a dynamic practice in creating efficiency of communication of flexion chain/ anterior oblique sling or extensor chain/ posterior oblique sling. The Lateral Ape completes the package by challenging the muscles that work in both the frontal and transvers plane while adding in the hand balance transfer. These may also be a little FUN at the same time!

5. SWITCHES AND TRANSITIONS

We use the terms switches & transitions interchangeably. The switches and transitions ultimately make up our flows, but are incredibly challenging as drills on their own. In Level 1, we introduce these 4 categories of switches & transitions:

You don't have to demonstrate each of the individual variations; you should just pick one from each category.

- Underswitches: Underswitch, Underswitch Tap, Jumping Underswitch
- Side Kickthroughs: Side Kichthrough, Jumping Side Kickthrough, Levitating Side Kickthrough
- Scorpions: Full Scorpion, Scorpion Switch
- Front Kickthroughs: Front Step, Front Stepthrough, Front Kickthrough

6. FLOWS

The Flows are a combination of the entire program *not sure about saying the entire program since we then talk about not using the travels and activations. Flows are about the seamless transfer of energy. A "flow" can be as simple as linking two movements together in an endless loop, or many movements that are choreographed.

At this level, when we select the pieces for our flows, we'll choose movements from our Form Specific Stretches and our Switches & Transitions. The Traveling Forms or Activations will essentially kill the flow. (In Level 2 we will use traveling forms as connectors during our flows, but more experience is needed for this.)

Flows may be choreographed sequences, or may be "call outs:"

- **Choreographed Flows:**

  Choreographed flows are sequences that may be practiced over multiple sessions or even weeks Once the flow is established the client can progressively "practice" it throughout each workout or over a series of weeks or even months, with the goal being to make it as fluid as possible.

- **Call Out Flows:**

  Call Outs are like playing Simon Says, where the coach calls out the flow as the client(s) perform it, which is all about the reaction time of the client to the call out. The call outs should be completely random but still have a structure and make sense to the movement sequence. The call out game can be played even if the client only knows a few movements. This is a great way to drill newer moves as well as to lock in some practice while you're going through the workshop.

  As an example of a Flow, demonstrate the Kingdom Flow. Explain that they will all learn this Flow by the end of Day Two.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Review the requirements to become certified, focusing on what will be in the test out. Let them know you'll repeat this throughout the workshop. *Over the entire workshop, you'll tell them the test out instructions 4 times, including the beginning and end of each day.

WRIST MOBILIZATIONS

Once you've completed your introduction to the program, have the group stand up and take them through the entire Wrist Mobilization protocol.

DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate each move and have them follow along performing each one for at least 60 seconds in each direction. (Explain that they would do at least 30 seconds each direction during their usual workouts)

COVER THE FOLLOWING WRIST MOBS

- **WRIST ROLLS**
- **WRIST WAVES**
- **LATERAL WRIST STRETCH**
- **SAGITALL SHAKA**
- **TRANSVERSE SHAKA**
- **WRIST RELIEF POSITION**

- Incorporate full body movements (while still standing in place) , encouraging them to explore rotations in different directions, lunge and squat movements, anything to get the whole body moving.
- There should NOT be any talking during this time, except for your occasional instruction and cueing. You want them to be focusing on themselves and their movement and reconnecting to their bodies.

  *You may want to play some appropriate music during this period to avoid total silence, but nothing that would be too distracting.

TALKING POINTS FOR WRIST MOBS

- Encourage them not to disconnect when you begin the wrist mobs, but actually challenge them to become very in tune with their body.
- I like to mention that this is an opportunity to invite them back into their bodies and perform a "body scan". How do their shoulders feel, their hips, spine, knees, neck, feet feel?
- Connect their breath!
- Do not underestimate the power of wrist mobs for adaptation.
- Explain that the Wrist Relief position is something they should always come back to throughout their practice.

TIP ON BEING SUCCESSFUL IN AF

I personally use this as an opportunity to fist start talking about making the client "successful". This is a theme that pops up multiple times in the workshop. If their wrist or hand discomfort is causing them to have a negative experience, then we're beginning to distort their ability to see Animal Flow as a valuable tool. That's why we put so much attention to the wrist mobs as an adaptation strategy before, after and in between AF movements.

Staying within this same idea, you may want to mention that their clients may not be ready for an hour of Animal Flow the first day that they try it and if forced to, may not want to do it again.

Be prepared to only add in enough to keep them challenged but leaving with a positive experience

BEAST FORMS

A) STATIC BEAST

The first Animal Flow form we start out with is the Static Beast. This is because the Static Beast is really the central position for Animal Flow, and is a link between our own human developmental stages and the animals that we mimic in the AF practice.

Having a perfect Static Beast form is important for everything else we do in AF. Therefore, we spend a lot of time introducing this position. You want to focus on:

- Understanding the perfect form for this position
- Introducing the scientific principles supporting quadrupedal movement
- Explaining where you would use this in a fitness program

Use this time to set the tone for the rest of workshop. You will continually refer back to these themes: the importance of perfect form, the science behind the program, and the potential applications.

DEMONSTRATE:

Ask for a volunteer to demonstrate the first Activation. Set them up in the 6 point crawl position.

- Hands shoulder width
- Feet and knees hip width
- Knees just in front of hip line (underneath bell button)
- Feet plantar flexed (top of foot on ground)

Give them some info on the power of the crawl as part of our neurodevelopmental stages, including how it was such a powerful stage in creating the stability, sequencing, balance, righting and tilting responses that eventually allowed us to walk upright.

This “baby to beast” set up allows us to introduce an important concept for the entire workshop, which is that quadrupedal movement and crawling patterns have many benefits. While such benefits have been under-appreciated in the fitness world for some time, we are starting to see more studies providing scientific documentation of the benefits for physical and cognitive functioning.

ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS ON CRAWLING

Train the body, Train the brain:

We want to emphasize the importance of WHY we use the crawling pattern.

Crawling benefits include:

- Stimulate and organize neurons to help cognitive processes like comprehension, concentration and memory
- Establish hand/eye coordination important for reading, writing and sports activities
- Conditioning binocular vision, looking off into the distance, then back at the hands
- Cross lateral movement that strengthens both the left and right side of the brain, allowing increased communication between the two sides of the brain and enhancing learning.

RECENT STUDY YOU CAN REFERENCE:

"Quadrupedal movement training improves markers of cognition and joint repositioning"

After a four week quadrupedal training program, the training group showed improvements in executive function and joint reposition sense. Complex movement previously associated with improved executive function. Participants undertook novel and challenging quadrupedal gait training programme. Significant improvements were observed in cognitive control.

Matthews, Martyn; Yusuf, Mohamed; Doyle, Caron; and Thompson, Catherine. Human Movement Science, Volume 47, June 2016

Human Balance System & motion variability

The Human Balance System is made up of three subsystems:

1. Ocular (visual)
2. Proprioception (touch)
3. Vestibular (coordination, inner ear)

It's the efficient and effective communication of these systems that allow us to maintain balance while moving through space. Much like other abilities within the human body, if you don't use it, you lose it. This is the exact reason why it's important to challenge these systems with as much motion variability as possible throughout an entire lifetime. That means all joint angles through every plane of motion as often as possible. Animal Flow is one program that encourages the synchronicity of the Human Balance System.

Communication

Communication is an essential concept in Animal Flow. We are focusing not only how your body communicates with itself (shoulders talking to hips, through spine and out to the extremities), but also on your conscious communication and perception of your own body. Placing both our hands and feet in contact with the ground simultaneously puts us in a rich proprioceptive environment. You're stimulating both sensory and motor responses out to the hands and feet, then back to the motor control center of the Central Nervous System. With that much stimulus, it becomes very difficult to "tune out" or start to lose focus on the task.

It's the difference of the attention being on an external object or task, like moving a kettlebell from point A to point B, to now having to move their own body through space.

This is a second important concept within Animal Flow, which is forcing the person to be conscious and accountable of their own movement. Reinforce the idea that most people come into the gym or their workout session "disconnected" and it's our goal to teach them how to reconnect and navigate their vessel more efficiently. That's the entire base of function.

CONTINUE DEMONSTRATION OF ACTIVATION:

Once they are in the crawl position, set them up to "Activate Their Beast".

- Hands are still shoulder width with knees and feet hip width
- Slide the knees in front of the hip line, tuck the toes under and go through the activation process:
    - Start at the shoulder girdle.
    - Protract, retract, then split the difference.
    - Corkscrew the arms, set the abdominal wall, squeeze the glutes and raise the knees one inch off of the ground.

BEAST ACTIVATION TALKING POINTS

What's the base reason for the positioning in the Beast set up?

The specific positioning in the Beast set up revolves around human gait. Since developmental crawling laid the foundations for gait (walking), then in our Beast, we want to put the body in a position that would have a direct carryover or resemblance to how we walk.

For example, look at the position of having the hands underneath the shoulders and knees in front of hip line. In efficient gate, the arms swing forward and backwards at shoulder width distance, while the legs stride with feet and knees at hip width.

If we were observing someone walking from the side, we would see that their arms and legs swing forward and backward like a pendulum from the shoulder and hip. This places one leg and the opposite arm into flexion, while the opposite leg and arm are in extension. This is the exact positioning goal of our strides in a Beast Crawl. By placing the knee in front of the hip line, we're encouraging equal amount of flexion (past 90 degrees) as we are extension. If the knee were directly under the hip, the tendency would be to extend, but then come back to 90 degrees, never exploring the lesser degrees of flexion.

This also furthers our point of load variability. As upright human beings, our hips and shoulders usually only experience the vertical pull of gravity through gait or seated positions (never going less than 90 degrees at the hip). By striding in quadruped, using equal amount of flexion and extension, the forces are now expressed horizontally at the hip and shoulder, creating variability.

Why do we set the shoulder girdle and shoulder joint that way?

We're encouraging stability by finding middle or neutral relationship of the scapula to the T-spine. By fully retracting and protracting, we're stimulating both the muscles that pull the scap forward (pec minor, serratus anterior) as well as the muscles that pull it back (rhomboids, mid traps). Going to both end ranges helps the body establish neutral.

Why do we corkscrew the arm?

Creating spiral tension in the arm line (externally) encourages the head of the humerus to "lock" into the scapula-humeral joint, with the emphasis on the external rotators (teres minor, infraspinatus). The slight tension externally, plays nicely with the neutral scap position. Why? Internal rotation of the arm encourages protraction and elevation, while external rotation encourages retraction and depression of the scaps.

Why do we drawl in with the belly button?

We're trying to stimulate the "inner unit" of the abdominal region. By drawing in, we're encouraging the Transversus Abdominus to interact with it's synergysts of the pelvic floor, diaghpragm, and multifidus. It's this inner unit stabilization that is the base for all movement and breath. Of course once we bring the knees off of the ground, the power generating muscles of the Rectus Abdominus, obliques and extensors will activate, but we're trying to prime the inner unit for stability first.

B) STATIC BEAST WITH LIMB LIFTS

Now move on to the Limb Lifts:

- Limb lifts should be just high enough to slip a piece of paper under the hand or foot.
- Work your way through the Limb Lifts in this progression:
  - First: Right foot, left foot, right hand, left hand
  - Second: Contralateral limb lifts - one hand and opposite foot

DEMONSTRATE:

Have the volunteer try each one. After each attempt, ask everyone else what they see going on in the volunteer's body. Talk the class through the questions listed below.

TALKING POINTS ON LIMB LIFTS

After the volunteer performs the foot lift, lead the class through several questions:

1. **By lifting the foot off of the ground, what kind of challenge have we now introduced into their system?**

   Answer: The answer that we're looking for is rotary stability, or also acceptable would be anti or counter rotation.

   You can expand by explaining that in four points of contact, the load is being distributed evenly, with full emphasis on flexion chain. Once a limb is lifted, we've now cut our four symmetrical points of contact down to an asymmetric three points of contact. In doing so, the body now has to fight against rotation in order to maintain stability.

   SLING SYSTEMS:

   This is your Segway to start to talk about the **Sling Systems** of the body. The goal is to keep this as informative yet simple to understand as possible.

Have the person who's demoing go from their Beast Position to a tall kneeling or standing position, so that we can use them as a visual tool. This is how I explain "slings and chains:"

In Animal Flow we talk a lot about slings and chains. These would be very similar to Thomas Myers' work in Anatomy Trains, but the terminology and exact muscle synergy lines differ slightly.

**If you know Anatomy Trains, you can interject the terminology to show the comparison, although for those students who are unfamiliar, it may complicate things even more.*

For the following questions, continue to use your volunteer as a model while you describe these concepts. Trace the lines on their body as you discuss them. You will introduce the concept, and then ask the class a question about it.

2. **Flexion Chain/ Anterior Chain:**

Explanation: If I were to take a paint brush and paint a line down the front of this person's body all the way from the bottom of their chin, down the midline of their body, then down the fronts of their legs, all the way to the tips of their toes, we would call that their Flexion Chain, also known as Anterior Chain.

Question: If the muscles of his or her flexion chain were to fire simultaneously, what would their body do?

Answer: We're looking for flex or bend forward.

3. **Extensor or Posterior Chain**

Explanation: In the same way, if I took my paint brush and painted a line from just above their brow, all the way over their head, down their back, then continuing down the back of the legs, all the way to the bottom of their feet, that would be their Extensor or Posterior Chain."

Question: If his or her Extension Chain were to fire synergistically, what would happen to the person's body?

Answer: Extend, stand up right or hyperextend, bringing the heels off of the ground, would all be acceptable answers

4. Anterior Oblique Sling/ Posterior Oblique Sling

If I took that same paint brush and painted two large X's on the front and back of our volunteer, going from one shoulder to the opposite hip and vice versa, this would be their Anterior and Posterior Oblique Slings. These Slings are crucial for both rotation and anti-rotation. They also work together synergistically to propel us through space.

An excellent example of this is during gate pattern. The Anterior Oblique Sling pulls the striding arm and leg into the stride while the Posterior Oblique Sling drives the ground away by extending the hip and opposite arm.

Question: In a contralateral limb lift from Static Beast, which sling system is being challenged?

Answer: Anterior Oblique Sling

5. Additional Talking Points about Slings:

- Throughout the workshop, we'll talk a lot about concentric and eccentric rotation of Animal Flow and how the Oblique Slings are challenged, especially during our Switches & Transitions. In this scenario, we're looking at the stabilizing or isometric ability of the sling systems
- *A muscle synergy line that we talk a little bit less about in L1 is the Lateral Subsystem. This one is in charge of our lateral or frontal plane stabilization, and is made up of the muscles on the sides of the torso and neck, as well as the inside and outside of the legs. There will be a mention of the Lateral Line in the Ape section.

TALKING POINTS ON CONTRALATERAL LIMB LIFTS

Work your way all of the way through the progressions and questions above, until you get to the contralateral limb lifts.

- Be sure to mention that the contralateral may be easier than the single hand lift for some. If this is the case than you would switch the last two when you are programing it for the client. Ask them to make a note of which feels easier or more stable for them (contralateral versus single arm lift).
- It's extremely important to mention to the class that their goal should not be to try and guess which exact muscles are inhibiting the person from performing the movement correctly or are causing the compensation. Instead we're looking to see if the attempt is SUCCESSFUL or not.
- We will still take them through the entire activation sequence to gather additional information, but then regress them back to the variation that they were successful at to begin their training.

GROUP PRACTICE

Now have the entire group try the Static Beast Activation while giving them the cues again.

- Start in 6 point crawl, moving to static beast activation, into single limb lifts with the feet first, into the hands and ending with the contralateral lift.
- Ask them to feel what their body is doing in order for them to produce a movement (or anti movement) that is similar to what we are asking of them.

- We are looking for the point at which their form breaks down. This would be the progression at which their body begin to breakdown or compensate. This is valuable information since this determines the point that we would begin to train them in their programing. They should be training at the progression BEFORE the one where they break down - ie they should be practicing the one where they are successful, until they gain enough strength to progress to the next one. They should not train at a progress where they have improper form.
- After the entire group has attempted each progression, ask them to explain what they felt. Ask them if they had a dominant sling, or if lifting contralaterally was easier or harder than just lifting the hand.

As a point of reference, you'll want to tell the attendees to work their activations in timed sets of up to 30-60 seconds per set.

REGRESSIONS

The limb lifts may also be performed from 6 Point Baby Crawl. It is important to demonstrate this and have the class actually practice it together.

- When lifting the leg, be sure to lift the entire shank of the lower leg as one, attempting to minimize any hip hike or rotation.
- A further regression would be to elevate the hands, decreasing the percentage of "body load" that they are working against.

APPLICATION

Where would you use the Static Beast?

- Assessment
- Corrective, pre/post rehab
- Warm up, movement prep, conscious connection
- Active rest
- Opposition to a pulling exercise

As you ask the class where the Static Beast could be used in a program, you'll probably hear someone say "Anywhere!" You'll want to explain that, Yes, this is true, but I'd like to hear some specific places in someone's program or workout that you could implement this exercise.

The main take away from this is that we use the Activations as a way to encourage body communication.

However they are also an assessment and corrective that are wrapped into the same exercise. If the body is having to compensate or loses structural integrity, then that's their body telling us that they lack stability somewhere in their kinetic chain. It's not our goal to find that exact spot, but instead to put them in a position that encourages "global stability" and exposes it when it's not available. By working them isometrically in the progression that makes them successful, we'll see more and more stability over time.

C) FORWARD TRAVELING BEAST

Now we're going to get the beasts moving!

Begin by talking about the importance of ***Slow Flow***. If we move fast, our bodies can intuitively find the path of least resistance and glaze over any imbalances or leaks in the chain. If we move slowly, we can properly assess and look for dysfunctions or breakdowns. Therefore, make sure to make this point to attendees:

> Keep in mind that in Level 1, we're building a foundation for the rest of your Animal Flow practice. Our number one objective is quality of movement. That's why we'll be practicing the movements with precision, at slower tempos. We can only go as fast as we can control.

DEMONSTRATE

You should demonstrate this move yourself. Explain all of those little cues that we need to look out for. Many questions will begin to come up organically as the students try it out, giving you the opportunity to address them during the active process, rather than trying to speak too much during the demo.

Tell them that eventually their Beast Travel will be very fluid, but right now we are building a foundation so it will be more mechanical.

Cues to reference:

- knees an inch above the ground
- limbs lift and land lightly, limbs lift and land at the same time
- once they begin their stride, they will always be in a stride pattern with one hand in front of the shoulders, one behind
- one knee in front of the hips, one behind
- shoulders in line with the hips and head
- neutral spine
- minimal shift, sway or hip drop
- THE SAME SIDE KNEE NEVER TOUCHES THE SAME SIDE WRIST

TALKING POINT: LIFT, STRIDE, LAND, SET

Either before or after the first attempt, use the phrase, "Lift, stride, land, SET".

This means:

- Lift the opposite hand and foot at the same time;
- Stride equal distance,
- Then drop (land) at the same time.
- Once you've dropped, SET by corkscrewing the arm (pit of the elbow forward) as you drive the opposite heel backwards. It's this opposing tension that offers much more stability.

GROUP PRACTICE

This is a great time for the students to perform the Beast Travels, as well as practice coaching.

- Have the students practice the traveling movements in waves, instructing the students from one wave to watch the other waves, looking for where the breakdowns occur.
- Have them start by activating their BEASTS and remind them to stay in tempo with the rest of their group. Emphasize that this is NOT A RACE!
- Be sure to repeat the main cues as many times as possible while they are doing it.
- After each wave, ask the students to describe what they felt (if they were traveling) or saw (if they were watching).

COMMON ISSUES IN TRAVELING BEAST

Discuss each issue as the students bring it up. Common issues that arise:

- Excessive rotation, sway or hip shift
- Dropping a hand or foot too quickly (sequencing)
- Keeping the elbows flexed the entire time
- Too wide or too narrow with the feet or hands
- Excessive lordosis or kyphosis in the spine
- Ipsilateral Stride
- Knee going past the same side wrist
- Looking too far forward
- Holding breath
- Turning the hands outward

- After each wave has gone once, have everyone go again, this time teamed up with a coach from another wave. The coach will travel with the BEAST and cue them as they begin to break down.

  As they are observing their Beast, the coach can give a simple cue as they see compensation or breakdown. However, if the situation requires more attention, the coach will ask the Beast to **"Stop, RESET"**. Reset means bringing them back to Static Beast. That way the coach can tell them about their observation, give them a corrective strategy and allow them to continue. If the Beast continues to break down, then it's up to the coach to ***"Regress to Progress."*** If the Beast continues to breakdown after the regressive strategy, they may just be fatigued and need to take a break.

  Special Note – Pain is also a breakdown

REGRESSIVE STRATEGIES

- **Shorten the stride:** Even within the very specific parameters that are given for Traveling Beast (knee never touches wrist, etc), there are still lots of room for different stride lengths. If we are seeing a lot of shift/rotation or other compensatory patterns, one of our first go-to, regressive strategies is to shorten the stride length until they gain stability again. After all, the common compensations are telling us that they lack the control or stability through the stride length that they have chosen. Therefore, by decreasing the stride, we may find the distance that they can successfully stabilize through.
- **Single Steps:** If the person is having a hard time sequencing the lift and land at the same time, that's telling us that the neural coordination of the task is miscommunicating. One regressive strategy to practice just the sequencing, is to introduce a Single Step. They would begin in Static Beast, then take one stride forward with contralateral limbs. Then stride back to start. Perform this for multiple reps with both sides. Once we feel like they have locked in the engram, we'll continue to travel.
- **Back to Baby:** Return to 6 Point Baby Crawl. Drop the knees, plantar flex the ankles and rest the tops of the feet on the ground. Regressing to baby crawl is one of the most powerful strategies, in my opinion. It may only take them a few yards or sets in baby, before we can return to Beast successfully. Or it may take weeks. It completely depends on the client and their body. ***Everybody has a different BODY!***

D) REVERSE TRAVELING BEAST

Perform the same structure for the Reverse Traveling Beast.

If our goal is to create balance and vary load, then we should be traveling backwards just as much as forwards. It's also a great way to maximize a small amount of space.

DEMONSTRATION

When setting up the Reverse Traveling Beast, be sure to bring attention to the most common mistake, which is OVER STRIDING THE LEG.

As mentioned earlier in this manual, the body depends on its proprioceptive, vestibular and ocular feedback for balance and movement. When traveling backwards, the vision (ocular) is inhibited. Therefor the body will rely on its touch (proprioceptive) to find ground. In an attempt to gather more information of potential threat, it will push the leg further than what we consider optimal in the Reverse Traveling Beast.

One way that we can combat the over stride, is to keep an eye on the distance between the same side knee and wrist. We know that those two points are not supposed to touch, but if we see them get further and further apart from each other, we're probably beginning to over stride.

If both knees are behind their hips, then they have already begun to over stride.

ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS ON REVERSE BEAST

If we want to break it down even further, we can mention that when traveling forward, the extensors of the hips (glutes) and Shoulders (Lats, posterior delts, triceps) are what is driving them forward. When traveling backwards, it's now the job of the antagonists at the hip extensors (psoas, rectus femoris, adductors) to pull the ground underneath of them while the muscles at the shoulder (Anterior delt, Bicep), push the ground away.

GROUP PRACTICE

For time conservation, we won't have the attendees coach each other through the Reverse Traveling Beasts.

- Have them go back to their wave formation and perform the first attempt. Be sure to ask who thought going backwards was harder than going forwards.
- This is a great opportunity to remind them again that each one of their clients will have different strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, going both backwards and forwards in Beast will encourage balance.

The Forward and Reverse Traveling beast section takes a while to go through, but it is important to establish this form properly, so don't rush it.

E) LATERAL TRAVELING BEAST

The Lateral Traveling Beast can be taught much quicker than the forward and reverse sections.

DEMONSTRATE

First, demonstrate the move. Explain these cues:

- Begin with the hands together (thumbs touching)
- The knees and feet should be wider than hip width
- Make sure that the fingers and thumb are all pulled together on each hand
- Move contralateral hand and foot
- Limbs lift and land at the same time
- After the first stride, the hands should be wider than shoulder width, while the knees and feet are touching

GROUP PRACTICE

Talk the group through the practice:

- Have everyone find a space on the floor, facing the same direction.
- You'll want them to start their attempts from 6 Point Baby Crawl, so they can get used to coordinating the movements, with a decreased body-load. However, before they begin to travel, make sure that they know that they'll be traveling from Beast, not baby. You can mention that if they begin to break down or are having a rough time getting started, they can immediately regress to 6 point baby.
- Begin by bringing the hands together and opening the legs.
- Instruct everyone to take one stride to the Left (either direction would be fine). Have them perform a "self check" to make sure that they are in the correct position.
- Next instruct them to perform one or two strides at a time as you call out the direction.
- Once they've shown that they have a basic understanding of the movement, get them back to one end of the room and allow them to perform the Lateral Traveling Beast across the room, in waves.

TALKING POINTS

Why are Lateral Traveling Beasts so awesome?

Everything up until this point has been Sagittal Plane dominant. In a Lateral Traveling Beast, of course, we are moving laterally, which adds variation, but now the shoulder and hip are experiencing HORIZONTAL ABDUCTION/ADDUCTION. It's rare that you'd ever experience closed chain AB/AD, especially at the shoulder joint. This again adds load variability to the shoulder and hip, with emphasis on Glute Med, Adductor Complex, Pec, Anterior/Posterior Delt, Subscap, Pec Minor, Rhomboids, Mid Traps, Teres Minor, Infraspinatus.

The movement also encourages stabilization from the Lateral Sub System, by forcing the ipsilateral obliques (internal/external) to stabilize the thorax and pelvis in the frontal plane.

APPLICATIONS

Where would you use Traveling Beasts? (Forward, Reverse and Lateral)

- Warm up, movement prep
- Active rest
- Corrective exercise
- Cardiovascular conditioning
- Antagonist to pulling exercises
- Burn out
- Fun

!!! NOTES BREAK !!!!

Once you've finished teaching the Static and Traveling Beast forms, have everyone get their manuals to take notes. Repeat all of the relevant points for each move, including key forms, cues, and common mistakes. You can then give a 5 minute break.

APE FORMS

A) LATERAL TRAVELING APES – GENERAL

The Lateral Traveling Ape is the first AF movement that begins to introduce a HAND BALANCING component.

- You'll want to remind the class that Hand Balancing is an art and a discipline that people spend their entire lives practicing. We could spend multiple days on hand balancing alone, but that doesn't mean they'd be able to leave the workshop being able to do a handstand. It would mean they'd have all of the tools necessary to then go spend a very long time with.
- As Animal Flow practitioners, and even as Master Instructors, we are always working on our Hand Balancing abilities. **This is a great opportunity for you to add in a story of your own HB practice.**
- One of the goals of the Ape section is to introduce hand balancing components that are 100% designed around you being SAFE and SUCCESSFUL

GENERAL TALKING POINTS ON APES

Explain the basic ***why*** we use Lateral Apes:

Note that we'll learning three different Lateral Ape variations, each one having a very different and specific desired outcome. Variation one, two and three, all have a hand balancing component:

- Variation One is a low hip variation, where we're staying close to the ground
- Variation Two is a high hip variation, where we're beginning to learn what we call a "tuck balance" in the Animal Flow
- Variation Three is a long leg reach variation, where our goal is to open up the hips, adductors and hamstrings.

So why do Apes?

1. **Hand Balancing:** Even if our clients have no desire to ever be a cirque performer, they can still benefit tremendously from learning how to transfer their entire body through space, while only having their hands in contact with the ground. Most people spend their entire lives moving objects around with their hands. This is a very different sequence of communication in their motor control center, versus moving the entire body around the hands that are firmly planted. This is a closed chain scenario, which is full of information from sensory and motor messages. Think about all the messages that have to be sent, received and acted upon to keep your entire body mass balanced over top of your extremely small base of support (your hands). This further adds to our goal of better body communication.

2. **Improving Range of Motion**: In Addition, the Ape motions allow us to move similarly to the Lateral Traveling Beast, offering shoulder AB/Adduction. This is a great opportunity to mention the body's tendency to lock down mobility as a self-defense strategy to limited stability. If a shoulder is unstable, it will most likely be limited in its ROM. By putting the hands in contact with the ground, the body may see it as safe/stable, therefor allowing more available range. I've often seen someone not be able to lift their hands over their head, but once they place their hands on the ground, they can easily drop their head down between their arms. This is a classic example of how the ROM is there; they just can't access it in open chain, due to the possible threat.
3. **Squat Mechanics:** One of the most beneficial aspects of performing Lateral Traveling Apes is that it allows the participant to add both frontal plane and transverse plane movement into their squat pattern. This is HUGE! Going back to the "use it or lose it" tendency of the body, most people will lose their ability to squat below parallel because that's all their body has to do in order to sit on a chair or toilet. It becomes accustomed to the limited range and soft tissue becomes locked long or locked short. Just by introducing a new task or stimulus that allows motion outside of the Sagittal Plane, we're starting to give the fascia/soft tissue a reason to become more playable and stable at different angles. The motion allows horizontal AB/Abduction, as well as rotation in the lumbo-pelvic-hip complex. We'll typically see someone's squat pattern begin to improve even after a few rounds of Lateral Apes

B) LATERAL TRAVELING APE – VARIATION 1

The first variation is all about making the cross body contact.

DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate this movement using slow, controlled movement so that they can see every point of the move.

Points to emphasize while demonstrating the move:

- I like to use the analogy of two lines that are painted in the middle of the road, parallel to each other. The feet will be on one line, while the hands are on the second line.
- From Deep Ape, shift the weight from the heels into the toes and place the hands in a cross body contact. Set your gaze between your hands, making sure that the trail hand is in front of the lead foot
- Staying low to the ground, drive down into the ground with straight elbows while simultaneously driving out of the legs just enough to leave the ground with the feet.
- Direct your gaze back underneath your body to make sure that the trail foot lands first, in a cross body position to the lead hand. Once the trail foot is in position, the lead foot lands
- Once both feet have made contact, we can push out of the hands, dropping the heels.
- In order for the rep to be complete, the hips and heels are down, chest up and eyes towards the horizon.

GROUP PRACTICE

Now have everyone practice this variation:

- Have the group practice the movement in waves. If the group is large, you may want to stagger each person, to make sure no one gets kicked in the face.
- After all of the waves have travelled one length, ask them how they felt. Answer any questions, and address any issues or problems with form that you saw popping up.
- Have them repeat the move going back in the opposite direction.

TALKING POINTS FOR LATERAL APE 1

While the class is practicing the move, be sure to cover these points:

- The most common limitation is the inability to squat below parallel. Before you even begin the Lateral Traveling Apes, you may want to ask the entire group to show you their Deep Ape. Once they all perform their deepest squat, have a look around and make a mental note of those that are having to compensate in order to stay low. I always like to ask the class, "By a show of hands, who feels super comfortable here? Now who can't wait to stand back up?" You'll usually get a few laughs, but you can see in the performance and body language who is limited in their squat pattern. Remind the class that this is no longer a deep squat , this is our Deep Ape.
- This is a great opportunity to talk briefly on the importance of deep squatting , as well as what some of the most common limiting factors are. You can go into as much detail as you'd like on the reason for deep squatting. I always like to talk about how anything that we could once do as part of our neuro-developmental stages, we should still be able to do as adults.
- When talking about limiting factors, the class should mention the ankle, knee, hip, spine, etc. The truth is anything could affect someone's squat pattern.

There are two major points that I like to hit here, which are applicable to AF overall:

- Just because you're learning new techniques from Animal Flow, doesn't mean you throw everything else out. For example, if you know that someone is limited in their ankle dorsiflexion, you may want to do some soft tissue work on the bottom of their foot, some distractions using a band at their ankle, and some sort of PNF based stretch for their Soleus.
- Just do the thing! I often use this question/answer as a common theme. "Class, how do we get better at Lateral Traveling Apes? Answer "We do Lateral Traveling Apes!" I use the same question multiple times during the workshop but customize it to whatever the movement is. This is just a reminder that specificity is so important. As mentioned above, just by performing the Lateral Traveling Apes, we are introducing frontal plane and transverse plane movement, which may unlock a joint that's only been experiencing Sagittal motion for a an entire lifetime.

REGRESSIONS

The most common compensations for an inhibited squat pattern are:

- Excessive external rotation of the feet (knees and toes pointed WAY out)
- Coming up on the balls of the feet
- Excessive flexion through the Lumbar and T spine, with hyperextension at the upper cervical spine

Our immediate corrective strategy will be to bring the person up higher into their squat, looking for the point that they become successful (good squat alignment).

They can still perform the Lateral Traveling Apes from a higher squat; we just have to make sure that they always come back to the same high squat position between each rep. That way we're encouraging proper mechanics and establishing a new norm.

Regressive Strategies:

*These should mostly be recommendations that you're giving the attendees to use when working with their own clients or members.

- **Modified hand:** If someone has to use a super high squat, they may not be able to get the base of their palm all the way to the ground. If this is an issue, we're okay with them planting the upper part of their palm, as well as the thumb pad.
- **Elevate the hands**: You could have a client perform alternating Lateral Traveling Apes in front of a bench or box. That way they can place the hands on the object and hop the feet over. This allows them to not have to flex down quite as far, also the higher hands put them at a mechanical advantage for getting the legs over.
- **Shift with Reach**: If a client is super deconditioned, we can have them squat while reaching with both arms to the left or right. The goal is not to come anywhere close to the ground but to just introduce a little rotation and shift into their squat.

C) LATERAL TRAVELING APE – VARIATION 2 – HIGH HIP

The Lateral Traveling Ape Variation 2 is all about getting the person to a vertical hip stack, which means the hips are directly over the shoulder, which are over the hands. In the pure hip stack position, it's considered a tuck balance, which puts the knees tucked tight towards the chest and the heels in towards the glutes, closing the gap between the traps and the ears. Of course, this can take some time to master.

DEMONSTRATE:

Demonstrate the move in sections while explaining the components:

- **Tuck Balance:** First demonstrate the "perfected version" where you hold the tuck balance position for as long as you're able to. This allows them to clearly see the goal for getting the hips stacked. If you don't "stick" it the first time, perform a few reps, getting

higher each time. That way it looks like you were demonstrating progressively longer balances.

Make it clear to the group that today's goal is not to hold a perfect tuck balance, but to learn the pieces that will help them achieve this feat over time.

- **High Hip Modified Beast:** Second, after showing the perfected version, demonstrate the regression using the High Hip Modified Beast.
  - Demonstrate what High Hip Modified Beast looks like.
  - Demonstrate how you would transition into the position and out of it.
  - When transitioning out of the HHMB, back leg comes down to meet the ground, followed by the front foot, before sinking into the new Deep Ape position.

GROUP PRACTICE

It's extremely important to teach this variation in two parts:

- The first time they travel across the floor, instruct them to pause in the High Hip Modified Beast on every single rep. That way they feel the sensation of being inverted, but still have the "safety net" of their leg connected to the ground. When they pause in HHMB, it's important that they keep their eyes down between the base of their palms, shrugging the shoulders towards the ears and drive through the ball of their base foot.
- The second time they travel, they can integrate the movements into one movement.

TALKING POINTS ON LATERAL APE VERSION 2

1. Why do we pause in HHMB?

Since the human body's number one goal is to sustain life, it comes stocked with innate self-defense mechanisms. Your head contains one of the most important parts of your body, your brain. Because of this, your body does everything it can possibly do to keep your head from crashing into the floor. For anyone who is new to being inverted, their body is going to deploy one of its self-defense strategies, which is not allowing the hips to go over head. Unless, however, it has a sense of safety.

Your safety net is the HHMB. In the Lateral Traveling Ape, we are doing a cross-body HHMB. By exposing your body to the inversion, while still having safe contact with the ground, means that your chances of toppling over have been seriously decreased. As the threat level decreases, we're starting to become successful. Being successful and safe is a green light for adaptation.

2. Why do we "Close the Gap"?

In hand balancing, the number one rule is PUSH! That essentially means driving the ground away, which also means driving the shoulders towards the ears. When the shoulders are shrugged, you've created extra stability within the head, neck and shoulder girdle complex. Think about it from the inside out. The entire length of your spine has tiny muscles between each vertebra as well as ones connecting each vertebra, like the

transversospinalis, multifidus and semispinalis. These guys are used for segmental movement of the spine, stability and proprioception. From the lumbar region, through the thoracic spine and up to the cervical spine, the boney articulations are getting smaller, which means you're getting more opportunity for mobility but less natural stability.

Superficial to the deep cervical spinal muscles you have the erectors, scalenes, SCM, ect. While these muscles are excellent for posture and moving the head, they are considerably smaller (and less stable) than the muscles that surround the thoracic and lumbar spine. This makes a difference when you have your entire bodyweight pushing down towards your head.

By driving the shoulders towards the ears, you're protecting the smaller muscles of the neck by surrounding them with the larger muscles of the traps. This is a type of "force closure" that allows the smaller muscles to play a big part in proprioception (helping you balance) without feeling as threatened by the lack of support.

3. Why do we lock the elbows?

To make sure that we're not "leaking energy". That's another way of saying, that keeping the elbows straight conserves energy. Think about it this way: a locked joint can be a very stable joint. By locking the elbow, your body is not expending much energy to keep it locked. This also gives your shoulder a direct line of information to your hand and back to the shoulder. This is great for proprioception but also a great scenario for the rotator cuff, since it now only has to worry about making minor adjustments in syncronicty with what the hand is doing.

If we bend the elbows, even slightly, now we're giving the extensors of the elbow (triceps) more work. This is much less efficient from an energy perspective, but now it's another loose joint that the motor control center has to deal with. Plus that nice line of communication from the shoulder to the hand now has another station that it has to react to and compensate for.

4. Why do we "spot" the floor with our eyes?

The ocular feedback. As mentioned earlier, with the Human Balance System, the information that your eyes are taking in is a huge part of your ability to stay upright (whether on your hands or feet). By spotting the ground, your eyes are better able to work with your vestibular system and sensory receptors of your hands. If you're looking back towards the horizon, you're now completely upside down (greater vestibular challenge) and your ocular field is much larger, and completely distorted since you're seeing the world literally upside down. That's exactly why spotting the horizon is a PROGRESSION in Hand Balancing.

*Keep in mind that when we're "conditioning," whether that means wall or partner assisted, we're spotting the horizon. The reason for that is that we don't need to rely on our own balance system, since we're already being supported. Instead we can just work on getting comfortable in the position, but most importantly while we're conditioning the closed gap.

5. Why do we point the toes up towards the ceiling?

Plantar flexion at the ankle encourages the posterior line of the leg to sync up. Since, flexion of the knee works very well with ankle plantar flexion (think about when your walking, running, etc), then dorsiflexion works typically with knee extension. Therefore, if you're trying to get a tighter tuck, pointing the toes will bring your legs closer to your torso. By bringing the legs closer to the torso, you're getting closer to your center of gravity which is over your base of support (your hands).

If you dorsiflex your ankles, you're encouraging your legs to pull away from your body, which will then pull you off of your base of support.

D) LATERAL TRAVELING APE – VARIATION 3

When introducing Lateral Ape Variation 3, you'll want to remind the attendees that the three variations aren't necessarily ascending progressions. As instructors, they have the ability to decide which variation to use, depending upon the needs of their clients. The third variation may be a preferred ape for someone who needs to be in a modified squat (high or wide) due to their squatting limitations.

DEMONSTRATE

Variation 3 may be performed with either a high hip or low hip. Just be aware that when you're teaching this version, you'll want demonstrate with low hip. After the attendees practice multiple waves, focusing on the reach, you can then challenge them to attempt the high hip, with the reach (if time allows).

- Begin in Deep Ape
- Hands to the ground, eyes between the hands
- Shift the feet, watching the trail foot land (with your eyes)
- Watch the front foot reach out for ground and land (with only the ball of the foot and toes)

  *At this point, only the balls of both feet should be in contact with the ground
- Push into the ground with the hands as you drop the heels and begin the lateral shift
- Eyes up towards the horizon, hips low, chest high
- Once you've completed the shift, bring the heels off of the ground as you reach for the next hand contact

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the students practice the move in waves.

- Be sure to encourage the attendees to coach from the eyes. One of my favorite lines is, "the head follows the eyes, the body follows the head."
- Give specific places to spot for this movement. You may even want to call them out the focal points as they attempt their first waves.

TALKING POINTS ON LATERAL APE VARIATION 3

- **Why we reach with the leg:**

  The theme of load and motion variability is constantly popping back up in Animal Flow. We reach with the leg to put the participant in a squat stance that they wouldn't normally explore, whether it's in exercise or day to day life. But it's not just the wide squat, it's the transition in and out of it that has so much magic. Just by reaching the leg, we're performing hip abduction, stimulating the muscle of the lateral hip and elongating the muscles of the medial hamstrings and adductor complex of the reaching leg.

  Once the heels drop and we begin our lateral transition, we're now generating force from the adductors of the reaching leg, as the opposing adductors begin to elongate. The lateral hip muscles of the trail leg also jump in to shift the pelvis in the direction that we're traveling. The icing is all of that great hip rotation, deep in the acetabulum as you shift from the trail leg to the lead leg

- **Do not turn it into a Cossack Squat!**

  We don't want to get to the point to where the trail leg is completely extended at the knee. We want them to shift as far towards the lead leg as possible, and then just before the trail leg extends, lift both heels and rotate into the next hand placement. That way we're always encouraging more rotation in the lumbo-pelvic-hip and even the knee and ankle.

APE DRILL!

A great way to end the Lateral Apes section is with a traveling drill. Place some cones or whatever objects you can find in a square. Have the participants travel around the cones, switching variations as they go. You can have them switch at each corner, or after a lap, or as you call it out.

E) FORWARD TRAVELING APE

The Forward Traveling Ape is a serious Flexion Chain exercise. However, the real goal of the movement is to begin to find a balance point in Forward Shoulder Load. *more on this in Talking Points below

DEMONSTRATE

Important points to cover when demonstrating:

- **Dive and then decelerate**, versus plant then pull. This means that you want to perform a little bit of a dive for the hand placement. Then the goal is to effectively decelerate the lowering back to the ground. It's common for people to just place the hands on the ground, then pull the ground underneath of them as they shift the feet forward.
- **Keep the hips low!** You'll want to make it clear that because the FSL is such an unusual position for most people, you have to create a safe scenario for the body to allow the positioning. If you have all of your body mass up high in the air, while trying to push your shoulders in front of your wrists, your body is probably not going to allow much forward motion, causing the hips to just drop. However if you attempt to keep the hips relatively at the same height as the shoulders, you'll most likely be allowed much more forward motion of the shoulders, in front of the wrists. Again, it's all about the perceived threat level.

  For even more clarity, you can look at it from a biomechanical stand point. If the hips are low, that means the thorax and shoulder girdle are at an ideal position for the serratus, lat and external oblique to create eccentric stability in a protracted scap position!

TALKING POINTS FOR FORWARD TRAVELING APE

Forward Shoulder Load

The Forward Traveling Ape is where we introduce the concept of the Forward Shoulder Load. You'll want to inform the class that a tuck balance (vertical stack) is one balance point that is used in Animal Flow, while the second is a Forward Shoulder Load. The FSL is great for eventually achieving a Scorpion Planche (L3), but the true benefit revolves around creating strength in protraction.

In order to drive home this idea, I'll usually ask the class this question:

> ***Question:*** Just because someone is in a postural protracted position, does that mean that they're strong in protraction?
>
> ***Answer:*** Of course the answer is no. I'll then continue by saying "I don't know about you guys, but I'm a firm believer that everyone should be strong in protraction, strong in retraction, elevation, depression, upward/downward rotation and every single degree in between. This is the foundation for a truly functional shoulder girdle."

SCAPULAR POSITIONS IN ANIMAL FLOW

One of the goals of the Animal Flow is to create strength and stabilization in all Scapular positions. Some examples include:

Scapular Elevation

- Scorpion Reach
- Loaded Beast
- Lateral Ape (ver 2)
- Levitating SKT

Scapular Depression

- Crab (travels, activation)
- Wave Unload (end position)
- Underswitch
- FKT

Scapular Retraction

- Ape Reach (open phase)
- Crab Reach (base arm)
- Traveling Crab

Scapular Rotation

- Full Scoprion

Scapular Protraction

- Forward Traveling Ape
- Wave Unload
- Loaded Beast Unload
- Beast Reach

****BREAK****

By now you should be a good time for the 30 minute lunch break. Remind people to be back within 30 minutes, and not to eat a heavy lunch since they've still got a lot of movement ahead of them.

***You'll take notes on the Apes section immediately after lunch, so that you can make use of the time while still allowing their food to settle a bit. ***

CRAB FORMS

A) STATIC CRAB and STATIC CRAB WITH LIMB LIFTS

DEMONSTRATION

When setting up the Static Crab activation, you'll want to remind the attendees that the Crab Activation is the complimentary position to the Static Beast. Beast focuses on Flexion Chain and Anterior Oblique Sling, while Crab stimulates Extensor Chain and Posterior Oblique Sling.

Even though the hips are in flexion, there's still a very clear and direct line of communication through the Gastroc, Hamstrings, Gluteals, and Erectors, up to the head.

Use a volunteer to demonstrate performing the Static Crab. Go through the Static Crab immediately followed by the Limb Lifts.

Be sure to go through these check points when setting up the Static Crab position:

- Hands externally rotated, fingers pointing the opposite direction as the toes
- Hands are shoulder width or slightly wider (wider if mass or ROM is a factor)
- Knees and feet are hip width
- From the side, the Static Crab should resemble a capital "M". However, the outside lines will be at a slight angle. So the lines from the knee to the ankle and the shoulder to the wrist will not be completely vertical
- To find mid-point, slide the hips all the way to the heels, then all the way to the hands, and then split the difference
- Pull the shoulder blades back and together
- Bring the head back over the shoulder girdle and tuck the chin
- Drive down into the ground with the arms, lifting the hips one inch from the ground
- Once the hips are lifted, create a slight anterior pelvic tilt, consciously connecting the glutes with the erectors

  *If the client already has an excessive lordosis, you may want to tilt all the way forward, then all the way back, then split the difference in order to find more of a neutral position.
- Once the proper Static Crab position is set, go through the Limb Lifts in this order: Hand, Foot, Contralateral Hand and Foot.

TALKING POINTS FOR STATIC CRAB

Why do we point the fingers backwards?

One of the main goals of the Crab position is to encourage posterior shoulder musculature to "fire up". By externally rotating the hands, we're encouraging the Teres Minor and Infraspinatus to activate. These muscles can then use their synergies with the posterior arm lines (Anatomy

Trains) to communicate to Scapular retractors (Rhomboids, mid traps) which pull the shoulder blades in towards the Thoracic Spine. Once the humerus is externally rotated in the Scapulo-humeral joint, then the entire shoulder girdle can be pulled down into Scap Depression from the lats, towards the glutes (extensor chain).

Keep in mind that we build upon this relationship even further as we eventually progress into Contralateral limb lifts. Once there, it's important to note that the Posterior Oblique sling is made up of the Latisimus Dorsi, Thoraco lumbar fascia and the opposing Gluteal muscle. So we're emphasizing the "drive" down into the ground from the arm as we connect it to the opposite glute.

What is the Crab Activation good for?

One of the most common postural distortions is Upper Cross Syndrome. This is a tightening or accesive "tone" of the Anterior Shoulder Girdle musculature, Pec Major, Pec Minor, Subscapularis, Anterior Delts, upper Trapezius. The Static Crab is the antidote to Upper Cross Syndrome. We are attempting to open up the anterior capsule of the shoulder joint, while pulling the posterior shoulder girdle into retraction and depression.

BONUS TIPS FOR STATIC CRAB

- Connect the feet to the ground. It's common to watch the feet invert or evert, with the toes reaching towards the ceiling. By consciously connecting the entire foot (and toes) to the ground, you're creating a wider base and demanding more information from the feet
- Corkscrew and drive the "base arm". By corkscrewing the base arm, you're locking in Scapulo-thoracic joint, providing more stability. Same with driving the arm down into the ground (connecting same side lat to opposite glute).

GROUP PRACTICE

Once you've taken the volunteer all the way through the Limb Lift sequence, have the entire class go through the sequence.

Just as with the Static Beast Activation, we want to take the participants all the way through the assessment process. The goal is to gather information from observing. We may find that the contralateral limb lift is easier than just the hand. If that's the case, we'll switch the two, training the contralateral first, with the intention of progressing to the single hand limb lift over time.

B) FORWARD AND REVERSE TRAVELING CRAB

In my opinion, the traveling Crabs are THE most difficult Traveling Form (when done properly). Just as how the Forward/Reverse Traveling Beast complement each other, the Forward and Reverse Traveling Crab is structured specifically to create balance.

You may want to warn the class, that while the movement seems simple enough, it requires a tremendous amount of neural sequencing and wrist extensibility.

DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate this movement yourself, while describing each of these points:

- Begin in Static Crab
- Lift the striding hand and opposite foot
- The elbow of the striding hand will bend upon initiating the stride
- The traveling foot and hand stride equal distance
- Land with the tips of the fingers, transitioning into full hand
- Simultaneously land with the heel, transitioning into full foot
- Once full contact has been made, grip the ground with the toes and fingers
- "Lock in" the Scapulo-thoracic joint by corkscrewing the base arm
- Begin the next stride

TALKING POINTS

- **Why do we land with the finger tips and heel of the traveling hand?**

  By focusing on the land of the finger tips, you're beginning extension through the top of the hand, which is managed by the extensor compartment of the forearm. The extensors of the forearm have a direct relationship with the extensors of the elbow and shoulder (Anatomy Trains posterior arm line), which then connects to the retractors of the scapula. We're essentially priming the posterior arm line to stabilize and move the arm into closed chain extension (pushing us forward).

  This is the exact same reason for the heel strike. By striking with the heel first, we're creating feedback and force for the back of the leg (gastroc and hamstring) which begins the communication of the Extensor Chain (or Superficial Back Line), which feeds into the opposite shoulder, via Posterior Oblique Sling. As you could imagine, this is the same reason for the toe to full foot and palm to full hand, when traveling in reverse

- **Why am I experiencing numbness and tingling in my arms?**

  Numbness, tingling, radiating, shooting, burning sensations are usually due to nerve compression. Our nerves can easily be compressed by the surrounding fascial tissue, or if the nerves themselves are over stretched. If you take someone into external rotation at the shoulder, you're stretching the brachial plexus.

  *The brachial plexus passes through the cervicoaxillary canal in the neck, over the first rib, and into the axilla(armpit region), where it innervates the upper limbs and some neck and shoulder muscles. Therefore, stretch and compression (from taught, soft tissue) may be compromising the nerve channels. Our quick fix is to find the modified hand position first, then open the width of the hands, if needed.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the group all move together, instead of in waves.

- Have the group practice going forward and backward.
- This move can be difficult for beginners. Since we don't want to wear them out, have them practice just a short length forward and backward.
- Ask the group what they felt when performing each variation.
  - What problems did they see?
  - Was going forward or in reverse more difficult?

MODIFICATIONS

- Placing the hands at a perpendicular angle is an acceptable modification. It's important, however, to remind the class that placing the fingers backwards is ideal; fingers out is acceptable; fingers forward is ***the exact opposite*** of what we're trying to achieve!

  The perpendicular modification is for those that are excessively tight in the anterior shoulder musculature or are limited in wrist extension. With time, our goal will be to progressively place the hands in more external rotation.
- If traveling with a modified hand placement, they don't have to worry about any particular points of contact with the hand, it will just land all at once. The foot however will still strike heel first, transitioning to full foot

COMMON MISTAKES IN TRAVELING CRAB

The most common mistakes or breakdowns in a Forward Traveling Crab include:

1. **Over striding the leg:**

   When traveling forward in Crab, the arm is limited in its potential shoulder flexion, while the leg has plenty of potential extension from the knee. This makes it challenging to stride equal distances with both the arm and opposite leg. It's important to note, however, that if the leg over strides even in one stride, you'll be trying to then make up for it during every stride that follows. Plus if the heel gets too far away from the hips, it will encourage posterior pelvic tilt, rounding of the Lumbar spine and protraction of the shoulders. It's a good recommendation to have the participants "reset" every few strides just to make sure they are starting in the proper position.

2. **Not locking in the Scapulo-thoracic joint.**

   Once the striding arm makes full hand contact, it's essential to corkscrew the arm, which pulls the scap in towards the T spine. This closure and spiral tension, creates stability for the next stride. If you were to leave that joint "open", you've lost the majority of your base.

*****NOTES AND BREAK******

Finish the section by taking the class through the notes. Allow a short break.

UNDERSWITCH FORMS

When setting up the Underswitch category, inform the class that the Underswitch is the first movement in our Switches & Transitions section. Remind them again that there are four S&T categories:

- Underswitch
- Side Kickthrough
- Scorpion
- Front Kickthrough

Within each category there are 2-3 progressions or variations.

A) UNDERSWITCH

DEMONSTRATE

The Underswitch is a Switch /Transition that takes us from Crab to Beast, Beast to Crab and even Crab to Crab. Start first with Crab to Beast.

By beginning your demonstration starting from Crab, you can point out one of the most important pieces of the Underswitch, which is:

"We lift the heel to start rotation, and we drop the heel to stop rotation."

We can further use the analogy of PUSHING on the gas which makes us go, while dropping the heel is our brake, making us stop.

- Begin in Crab
- Lift the foot that was called and the opposite hand

  Push on the gas with the base foot to begin the rotation
- Pull the traveling arm and leg in towards midline, in order to streamline the rotation
- Once you see the base arm, drop the traveling hand, shoulder width and the foot hip width
- Reminder, limbs lift and land lightly, limbs lift and land at the same time
- This is not a 180 degree turn
- The leg always travels UNDERNEATH of the body

The money of the basic Underswitch is all in the slow and controlled rotation. Therefore, I always like to demo a super slow Underswitch as I'm explaining to the class, that for every degree of rotation that I go through, gravity is loading my body differently at every single joint, throughout my entire Kinetic chain (LOAD VARIABILITY). It's rare to have such a "global"

rotary stimulus in any other exercise scenario. It's important to remind them, however ,that you're getting the maximum rotary stability benefit only when you perform the Underswitch super slow. Yes, it can be performed faster, but if rotary stability is your goal, go slow. We'll pick up speed in the Underswitch Tap.

TALKING POINTS FOR UNDERSWITCH

Begin by immediately addressing the WHY of the Underswitch category:

- Yes, the Underswitch is one of our building blocks for our flows, but they are also very powerful as a stand-alone movement.
- Make it clear that the entire US category is all about rotation, whether it is controlled rotation, precision of rotation or power/speed of rotation. I usually take this opportunity to ask the class:

  Question: Who needs rotation?

  Answer: Everybody! You may have a few people offer some specific examples of who would benefit from rotation. If not, I'll usually just accept the "everybody" answer, then revisit the specific examples after Underswitch Tap.

- You may want to mention (in your own words) how most of our clients and other fitness professionals spend the majority of their lives in Sagittal Plane. It's common for injury to occur in Transverse Plane since we rarely condition dynamic stability in rotation.

GROUP PRACTICE

As soon as you're ready to take the group through their Underswitch practice, tell them that you are now starting to perform the first Flows. Explain that you'll be doing "Call Outs" which are just like playing Simons Says (although you don't kick them out for missing a command!)

- The call out will be ***Direction, Limb, Command***, which is the formula that we use when calling out. In the Underswitch this would be: Right (or Left), LEG, Underswitch.
- Have the class repeat our Call Out before they move. This is a very important component of the teaching method for this workshop. We want get the attendees repeating the AF language out loud, as many times as possible throughout the workshop. This helps them become more familiar with the language, and contributes to them remembering the names afterward.

  You can have them begin to perform the Call Out without repeating the names after they have demonstrated several rounds correctly.

Have the entire group practice the movement, introducing one piece at a time.

- First lift contralateral limbs to start the rotation.
- Have them pause at the midpoint where they can see their base hand. Have them hold this position so they get used to it.
- Then allow them to continue the rotation, dropping limbs at the same time in perfect beast position.

UNDERSWITCH FROM BEAST

- Once they've tried the Underswitch from Crab, try to get them back to crab from Static Beast.
- The focus will be on dropping the heel (and hips), stabilizing there before dropping the traveling arm and leg.
-

B) UNDERSWITCH TAP

Underswitch Taps are now adding a speed component to the equation.

DEMONSTRATE

When setting up the Underswitch Tap, you'll want to mention that while the Underswitch is all about controlled rotation, the Underswitch Tap is all about acceleration and deceleration.

- The sequence starts with accelerating rotation, followed by decelerating rotation with enough precision to just "tap" the ground, and then redirecting the acceleration in order to decelerate with enough precision to gently come back to start.
- After giving such a seemingly complex statement, I'll usually simplify by just saying, an Underswitch Tap is all about speed and control of rotation.
- Remind the attendees that in Animal Flow we can "only go as fast as we can control", and that we'll want to start off slow, and then systematically increase the speed as you continue to call out.
- It's important that both the traveling foot and hand make contact with the ground. The positioning should be so perfect that if I were to take a photo of the exact point that the foot and hand tap the ground, it should look as if they are in a perfect Static Beast position.
- When the foot and hand make contact with the ground, only about 10% of your bodyweight should be landing. It is just a light tap.
- You can keep your demonstration fairly brief, just long enough to show the movement and emphasize the importance of controlling the acceleration/ deceleration. Make sure to show how quick and light the tap is. Both the hand and foot must touch the ground briefly to complete the tap!

GROUP PRACTICE

- Start with Underswitch Tap from Crab.
- Remind them to go slow at first, then speed up with each rep
- At first, they must repeat the call out before moving. After the first one or two rounds, they can perform the movement immediately after the Call Out without repeating it.

Underswitch Tap from Static Beast

It's important to note that an Underswith Tap from Static Beast is a progression since you're opening up "blindly" or backside.

C) JUMPING UNDERSWITCH

The goal of the Jumping Underswitch is also speed and control of rotation. However the JUS is not just about speed of rotation - it's also about power and energy redistribution. We talk much more about this in Level 2, but the JUS is a great example of how we can use Ground Reaction Force to our advantage.

DEMONSTRATE

- When performing a JUS, we're jumping off of the base foot meaning that for a moment, all limbs accept for the base arm are air bound. As soon as we land in Modified Beast, we can then transfer the Ground Reaction Force into the rest of the Underswitch which disburses the energy through rotation, making it less harmful to the body.
- When teaching the JUS however, we'll teach the attendees to pause in Modified Beast, before continuing into the rest of the US. We can even mention that when we split in two, we'll have to rely on the shock absorbing capabilities of our shoulder girdle, but once we learn the movement in it's entirety, we can push the force through the rotation.

Specific cues:

The key to the Jumping Underswitch is teaching the attendees to transition through MODIFIED BEAST. Therefore, teach this movement in two steps:

- First, the “pop over” starts in Static Crab.
- If the call out was a Left Leg Jumping Underswitch, the trainer would simultaneously lift the left foot and right hand just like a contralateral limb lift. They would then pop off of the base foot (right foot) and switch legs in the air, landing in a Modified Beast with the left foot in contact with the ground and the right foot floating.
- Second, once they’ve gotten to their Modified Beast, they’ve now opened their movement window so the right leg can transfer through, finishing up the rotation.

Points to Emphasize:

- The jump can be a very small movement - this is not a levitating move! It can be as small as a little hop.
- A common mistake is to skip the modified position, attempting to make a 180 jump. This will cause you to over-rotate and land too hard.

TALKING POINTS FOR JUMPING UNDERSWITCH

GROUND REACTION FORCE

The use of the word reaction derives from Newton's third law, which essentially states that if a force, called action, acts upon a body, then an equal and opposite force, called reaction, must act upon another body. The force exerted by the ground is conventionally referred to as the reaction, although, since the distinction between action and reaction is completely arbitrary, the expression ground action would be, in principle, equally acceptable.

Or in much easier terms, as much force as we apply to the ground, the ground will push that same amount of force back into our body.

Question for the class: Who needs speed and accuracy of rotation?

Answer: Someone will answer with Everyone! You'll want to say, Yes, this is true, but who specifically, can benefit from speed and accuracy of rotation?

- Fighters
- Snowboarders
- Surfers
- Golfers

*Really anyone that needs to perform optimally in their human body. But by giving some specific examples, we can encourage them to start thinking about existing clients or potential clients that they could be working with.

GROUP PRACTICE

- Have the group practice broken into the segments described above:
- First, jump into the modified beast position. Have them hold this position to get accustomed to it.
- Then have them continue the movement all the way through.
- Once they've learned each piece of the movement, integrate it into one movement.
- Practice on both sides.

UNDERSWITCH FLOW DRILL

Finish the Underswitch Section by performing a 3 minute or so Call Out that uses all of the Underswitch variations. Remind them to repeat your call out before moving. You may want to randomly call out a Crab Reach, or another FSS to show them that the pieces are starting to come together.

****NOTES: Take notes on the Underswitch Section!****

WRAP UP DAY ONE

It's time to wrap up!

- Review the test out instructions again.
- Tell the group to take it easy tonight. They should work on their wrist mobs to help with the potential soreness. And they should not go out drinking, or Day Two will really suck!

WECLOME TO DAY TWO

Welcome to Day Two!

- Begin Day Two with a brief review of everything that they had leaned in Day One. Ask lots of questions and allow the attendees to work their way into the answers that you're looking for.

- When setting up the objectives for Day 2, you'll want to again repeat the test out procedure.

Begin warming them up with Wrist Mobs, as you continue the discussion:

- When beginning the wrist mobs, you'll want to encourage the class to again, explore additional movement as they're going through their mobs. You'll probably realize that most of the attendees will feel more freedom and comfort exploring new ranges of motion, than the previous day.

- Be sure to ask if anyone is experiencing excessive fatigue or discomfort in any areas. Make a mental note so you can offer additional modifications or regressions to ensure them having a successful experience.

- You will want to mention right from the beginning that Day 2 will challenge them both mentally and physically. If there's any point throughout the day that they need to take a break, they should do so. I always like to mention that this practice should be void of ego, both in the workshop and as they move forward.

FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

The first Component you'll teach on Day Two is the Form Specific Stretches. This is a good way to get them started right out on some new moves, while also working on any tightness or aches that may have arisen from Day One. Many of the FSS may look or feel like other moves they've learned in other disciplines (yoga etc) but with small (or large) differences, so make sure they are paying to attention to the correct form we use in AF.

USES FOR FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES

When setting up the Form Specific Stretches, emphasize that these movements can be used in a variety of ways, such as:

- ***Isometrics***: holding the position for sets of time;
- ***Active/Dynamic:*** moving in and out of the end position with the intention of getting further with each attempt
- ***Conditioning:*** it's common to use these movements as "stand-alone" exercises to build strength or stability
- ***Corrective exercise:*** some of the FSSs are like having multiple corrective exercises in one movement
- ***Super Sets:*** Used in Super Sets with apposing patterns or loaded exercises
- ***FSS Flow:*** In combination with the other FSS, to make up the FSS flow (detailed below)
- ***Call Outs/ Flows:*** Used in Call Outs, or in flow design (like the one they'll be designing for their test outs)

FSS GENERAL TALKING POINTS

1. **Full Body Mobilization:** A major message that you're trying to get across in the Form Specific Stretch section is that they serve as full body mobilizations. Each stretch is designed to explore end-ranges of opposing motion, like internal rotation followed by external rotation, or flexion followed by extension.

2. **Points of Tension:** The FSS are designed to create more flexibility/extensibility of the soft tissue but also more mobility at the joints. The caveat, however, is that none of the positions should be completely passive. Unlike a traditional stretch, where one would be

holding the position with limited amount of effort, the FSS encourages mobility/flexibility by combining it with an increase in end range strength.

This is why we use the term "Points of Tension." The Goal is not to focus on the muscles that are being elongated or stretched. Rather, the focus should be on the opposing muscles at each joint that need to be active in order to place the joint in the position we desire. By creating strength, we're allowing "flexibility".

**For more on this concept, see Dr. Andreo Spina's work.*

3. **Don't Hold Breath:** It's important to remind the class that at any point during the FSSs that they hold their breath, that's a sign that their body doesn't "own" that position and it's perceived as trauma/threat.
4. **Return to Start:** You'll also want to teach them that when performing a Form Specific Stretch, they have to hold the end position until the person calling out or the coach tells them to "Return to" the position they started in. This is a common error we see in Test Outs, so be sure to emphasize it here.

A) CRAB REACH

We begin with Crab Reach to allow some anterior hip opening since most of the attendees will be experiencing some residual deep hip soreness from Day 1. Teach the Crab Reach in two sections - the Three Point Bridge, and the Full Crab Reach.

1. THREE POINT BRIDGE:

DEMONSTRATE

Grab a volunteer and ask them to begin in Static Crab. At the initial introduction to the movement, you'll want to make it very clear that before they can perform a Crab Reach, they have to first demonstrate that they can perform a Three Point Bridge.

This is, in a way, an assessment that lets us know if they have the base stability and mobility to be successful in the actual reach.

*It's important to note that the ability to hit Three Point Bridge is the passing point to continuing the reach. In fact, we don't even show the full Crab Reach until after the entire class has attempted the Three Point Bridge.

- Demoing the Three Point Bridge
- Bring the reaching hand up, lock it in between the eyes
- Follow the hand with the eyes as you begin to bridge the hips
- Drive the heels down into the ground as you drive the hips up towards the ceiling
- Corkscrew the base arm as you're bridging the hips
- Once they reach full Three Point Bridge, they should be looking towards the reaching hand (towards the ceiling)

CRAB REACH – TPB TALKING POINTS

This is where you'll want to talk about what may be inhibiting the person from reaching Three Point Bridge and what they can do get better at it.

What would keep this person from successfully being able to reach TPB?

Answers:

- tight anterior hips
- week posterior hip muscles (glutes)
- unstable base arm
- tight anterior chain
- fear!

If these are the things that inhibit this movement, what would be one exercise that we could choose that would help fix those things?

Answers:

- Do more crab reaches!
- However, it is common in Animal Flow that the assessment is the corrective and vice versa, but you'll want to remind them that again, we don't want to discredit other corrective strategies that they already have in their tool box.
- If the client/attendee is not successful, we may need to regress the movement by breaking it down into its individual parts. For example, just focusing on a floor hip bridge, or holding a Static Crab Activation with a single hand limb lift. Or we may use an SMR strategy to focus on soft tissue limitations.

Why is it so important to hit TPB before attempting to reach the arm?

The greatest benefit that we get from performing a Crab Reach successfully is that it puts the spine in Extension, Rotation and Lateral Flexion. This is incredible for a spine that spends most of the day in mild flexion (seated, looking at phone/computer screens). The key, however, is that in order for the spine to be freed up to perform all of those amazing things, it has to have freedom from the hips.

Think about it this way: if the hips are even slightly flexed, the femurs are locking the pelvic girdle, keeping it from rotating. Therefore, the lumbar spine has to make up for the locked hips by either excessively extending or attempting to get more rotation than it's designed to. Even if the compensation doesn't happen at the lumbar, the lack of motion at the hips will most likely show up as excessive motion somewhere that we didn't want it, like the shoulder, Cervical Spine, elbow or even the knee!

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the class practice the movement. Reiterate the cues and important points of tension as the entire group tries the move together. Move throughout the class, checking each individual for correct form and making adjustments as necessary. You only need to practice a few reps, until you are sure everyone has it and is ready for the next step.

2. FULL CRAB REACH:

DEMONSTRATE

After drilling the TPB, you can then progress into the actual reach.

Demonstrate:

- Reach to TPB
- Continue to follow the hand with the eyes as it travels up and over
- At the full reach position, the eyes should be looking down towards the ground
- The upper arm is flexed at the elbow and "framing" the head
- The upper shoulder is stacked over top of the lower shoulder

Note these Points of Tension:

- Glutes
- Ipsilateral obliques of base arm
- Spiral tension in corkscrew of base arm
- Upper trap and deltoid of reaching arm (pulling finger tips down towards the ground)

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the entire class try the CR together.

- Talk them through several reps on each side.
- The first time, have them hold each side for 30 seconds. During that time, continue giving them the cues and reiterating points of tension.
- Walk amongst them to make adjustments as needed.
- Keep an eye on the placement of hands and feet!

COMMON MISTAKES FOR CRAB REACH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- **Back Bend**

  If you have someone who is hyper-flexible or possibly comes from another discipline like dance or yoga, their default position may be more of a Back Bend than Crab Reach. You'll want to explain to them that while this is a wonderful movement, it's not achieving the same results that we're looking for in the CR. We can easily show that in back bend, we're getting just extension of the spine, while in CR we're getting extension, rotation and lateral flexion. "

  Not better, not worse, just different."

- **Allowing the reaching arm to cover the face**

  This is usually indicative of tight lats, subscapularus, pec. If the arm is pulling forward, we're not getting full opening of the Lateral Sub System. We'll encourage them to use the upper trap/deltoid tension point to keep the arm in the ideal alignment.

- **Knee/Ankle/Foot Deviation**

  The alignment of the knee/ankle/foot should all be the same as in proper squat mechanics. The correction may be as easy as just making the person aware of the deviation, or we use a corrective strategy that involves a regression.

  You could also bring in an outside aid, like a theraband to pull the knees outward

B) LOADED BEAST

Since the Loaded Beast is a base or "root" position for multiple Switches and Transitions, as well as Form Specific Stretches, we want to give special attention to the set up.

DEMONSTRATE

When introducing the position, teach it from Static Beast. This is important since we're laying the foundations for how we would transfer in and out of it during a flow or call out.

"Set" Loaded Beast from Static Beast

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- Push the hips back towards the heels, allowing the knees to flare out, wider than hip width
- Slide or walk the hands forward, dropping the head down between the arms (not all the way through the arms)
- Close the gap by driving the shoulders towards the ears
- Make sure the knees are 1 inch from the ground

Points of Tension

- Gripping the ground with the finger tips
- Upper traps and deltoids, closing the gap
- Rectus Abdominis, bracing
- Glute medius pulling the legs into abduction

TALKING POINTS FOR LOADED BEAST

1. **Distance between hands and feet**

   Be sure to make it very clear that the distance between the hands and the feet in Loaded Beast is much greater than in Static Beast. To get them to fully understand and feel the difference between the two positions, go back and forth between Static and Loaded Beast multiple times. Just remember that when going from Static, we push the hips back and walk or slide the hands forward, and when going from loaded we bring the shoulders over the wrists, then walk or slide the feet forward. *This will be important information for their flows, later in the day.

2. **Knees (MODIFICATION)**

   It's important to show the attendees how to properly modify the Loaded Beast.

   If someone is limited in either their hip flexion, knee flexion or ankle dorsiflexion, you'll typically see them compensate by flexing excessively at the spine and lifting the knees up towards the ceiling. This completely changes the position, and of course changes every single move that we attempt to perform out of it.

   To help the attendees understand visually, I'll usually take this opportunity to show them the difference. Demonstrate while explaining;

   Explain the Loaded Beast as a coil that's condensed our energy before it springs forward, like in our FKT (demo). As you can see, our trajectory is forward. My knees are low, my hips are back, my head is down. When I drive out of my hips, I go forward.

Ask Question: If my knees are up towards the ceiling (show faulty position), what's going to happen if I explode out of this position?"

Answer: You'll go up!

Discussion: Exactly, so if I'm limited in my flexibility/mobility and it's inhibiting me from staying in the correct position, then I'll still keep the knees one inch of the ground, but I'll push my hips up in the air. This allows me to stay in a similar alignment, that doesn't require quite as much flexion at the hip, knee, ankle.

C) LOADED BEAST - UNLOAD

Once you feel comfortable with their grasp of the Loaded Beast, begin the Loaded Beast FSSs.

The Loaded Beast Unload is great for squat mechanics, and forward shoulder load conditioning.

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrate how to properly perform the move:

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- Pull the ground underneath of you from the Lats
- Push the ground away from the hips
- Keep the knees one inch above the ground
- Keep the elbows straight through the entire movement
- Allow the shoulders to travel as far past the wrists as possible
- Stay protracted through the shoulder girdle
- Keep the eyes down towards the ground, neck long
- Knees and hips slightly flexed at the end position

Points of Tension

- Serratus Anterior
- Lats
- Rectus Abdominus
- Psoas/Rectus Femoris

*At the end of the Unload position, the tension in the upper body should be so great, that it feels as if your feet are about to lift from the ground

TALKING POINTS FOR LOADED BEAST UNLOAD

Why do we keep flexion in the knee and the hip?

The goal of the movement is to condition the Forward Shoulder Load, with an emphasis on connecting it to Flexion Chain. By keeping the hips slightly flexed, we're allowing the hip flexors to stay extremely active, continuing the communication down through the Quadriceps and into Tibialus Anterior.

Additionally, if we were to drop the hips down into extension, that would immediately change the relationship of the Spine, Thorax and Shoulder Joint. We'd no longer be in a position that promotes strength in Protraction, but more of a depressed Scap position.

Why do we keep the eyes down on the Loaded Beast Unload, but up towards the horizon on the Beast Reach?

(While this is taught prior to the Beast Reach, we've included this question here because people may still ask about the eyes when learning this movement.)

Think of the Loaded Beast Unload as a regression of the Beast Reach. In the Beast Reach, everything is slightly more advanced, meaning more protraction, more emphasis on flexion chain, and more challenge for the hip flexor and adductors (of the reaching leg).

The head position in the Beast Reach is more advanced, but is also more specific to its application. The application would be the transfer over into the movements for which we need the Forward Shoulder Load, including the Forward Traveling Ape and eventually Scorpion Planche. When performing a Forward Traveling Ape (or Scorpion Planche) the eyes are forward, locking in the short cervical extensors. By looking forward in those movements, the short cervical extensors become a locking mechanism for the rest of the erectors, allowing us to control the hip height from the back side.

When performing the Loaded Beast Unload, we want to think about building the foundation for all of these more challenging movements. However, we aren't at the point of bringing the eyes up.

Additionally, the act of looking forward, when the hips are lower than the shoulders will typically cause the T spine to drop down between the shoulder blades. Which, of course, is the opposite of what we're trying to accomplish in the Loaded Beast Unload.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the class practice the move while you call out each step. Remind them of cues. Walk around to correct students as needed.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR LOADED BEAST UNLOAD

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Bending the elbows
- Allowing the knees to lift higher than an inch from the ground
- Dropping the hips and extending the knees

D) LOADED BEAST WAVE UNLOAD

Throughout the FSS section we state that these movements are like full body mobilizations, with a goal being to experience opposing end ranges, like flexion followed by extension, or protraction followed by retraction.

The Wave Unload demonstrates this concept to the fullest. Not only are we trying to achieve complete spinal flexion, followed by spinal extension, but we're also attempting to achieve segmental mobilization through every single vertebra.

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrate the movement while talking through the cues. This is a complex movement, so you should demonstrate several reps before having them try it.

Cues

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- Lift the hips up towards the ceiling
- As soon as the knees reach full extension, drive through the balls of the feet and tuck the chin
- The wave begins at the posterior tilt of the pelvis and continues through the Lumbar Spine
- Allow the wave to continue through the T-Spine, pushing the shoulders in front of the wrists
- Once the shoulders travel to max forward shoulder load, allow the hips to begin to drop down
- The hip drop is what begins the "Extension Wave"

- Allow the extension wave to travel up through the T-Spine, which pulls the shoulder blades back and down (arms externally rotating)
- The very last thing is “Eyes to the Sky”

Return: Call Out Return to Loaded Beast

- Tuck the chin
- Push the shoulder blades apart, thinking about driving the C6/C7 vertebrae up towards the ceiling
- Continue the flexion wave back to Loaded Beast

Points of Tension

- Flexion Wave - Entire Flexion Chain
- Extension Wave - Entire Extensor Chain

TALKING POINT

Why is having a spine that “moves" so important?

Because if any one piece of the spine is stuck or locked, it adversely effects every other piece of the spine. Although the spine is often thought of and referred to as one structure, it’s actually multiple, little joints that work in close relation to each other. And as we know about any joint in the body, if it’s not working to its full potential, the rest of the system can suffer.

Think about it this way: the spine has an almost perfect ratio of structural mobility and stability. The bigger lumbar vertebrae are fantastic for load bearing, but naturally lack the extreme angles of rotation, flexion/extension and lateral bending of the cervical spine.

The Thoracic Spine has a little bit of both. With progressively smaller vertebrae from bottom to top, the T-Spine allows more motion than the thick vertebrae of the Lumbar Spine but also has the stability to deal with forces coming in and out of the arm lines. With each section working properly, it’s a perfect balancing act of form and function.

However, if the T-spine has very little movement (due to poor posture or lifting mechanics), then the cervical spine and lumbar have to make up for the limited movement. That may show up as neck pain or low back pain.

Thus, we want each individual vertebra to move to its best ability with its neighboring vertebrae. The Wave Unload encourages this.

What's it good for?

- spine mobility
- protraction strength
- retraction/depression strength
- opening or elongating of Anterior and Posterior chain
- activating/strengthening Anterior and Posterior Chain

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the class practice the move as a group. Take them through several reps, so that you are able to circulate and provide feedback to each individual as needed.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR WAVE UNLOAD

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- **Starting Too Tight in Loaded Beast:** If the person gets stuck and can't drop their hips without repositioning their feet, it means that they were too tight in their Loaded Beast (hands and feet too close). They would need to reposition their Loaded Beast, making sure that their head was down between the arms and their hands are at max distance from their feet
- **Lifting the chin too early**: As soon as the chin begins to lift, you're encouraging spinal extension or at least flattening of the back. If they do this prematurely, then they may lose the majority of their wave. For proper mechanics of the Wave Unload, it's essential that they keep the chin tucked until the very end.
- **Leading with the hips as they return to Loaded Beast:** It's common to see attendees drop the chin, then immediately hinge at the hips. By doing this, they're again losing the entire wave, since the hinge immediately flattens the back.

E) LOADED BEAST REACH

The Loaded Beast - Unload and Loaded Beast - Wave Unload have now set the foundations for the Beast Reach. The Beast Reach isn't any more difficult than the Wave Unload, but the intensity of the protraction and Forward Shoulder Load is much higher in the BR.

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrate the move as you explain the cues:

Cues

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- Initiate the movement by lifting the hips
- Pull the reaching leg in tight towards the torso, with knee towards chest, heel towards glute and toes pointed
- Once the base leg reaches full extension, begin to forward load the shoulders
- The traveling knee travels outside of the same side base arm
- The traveling leg begins to slide down as the shoulders push into max forward load
- The knee should be just outside or below the base elbow
- To lock in the position, we bring the eyes up towards the horizon

To Return: Command is *Return to Loaded Beast*

- Tuck the chin
- Drive the shoulder blades apart
- Push the hips back up towards the ceiling
- Begin the decent by bending the base leg

Points of Tension

- Flexion Chain
- Serratus
- Pec Minor
- Hip flexor of reaching leg
- Hamstring of reaching leg
- Subocciptals (once the eyes go up towards the horizon)

TALKING POINTS FOR BEAST REACH

What's it good for?

- forward shoulder load conditioning (transfer to Forward Traveling Ape and Scorpion Planche)
- flexion chain strength
- hip flexor/glute medius strength
- anterior hip opening

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the class practice multiple reps on each side, repeating the cues and providing feedback as needed.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR BEAST REACH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- **Sliding Forward:** Avoid sliding forward into the reach, versus moving the hips in an arch. (We actually used to teach the movement the way, so it's not necessarily wrong - there's just less utilization of its potential.)
- **Dropping the Hips:** Avoid Dropping the hips all the way down, allowing the back to sway into extension. By dropping the hips, they're creating an extension in the spine which makes it more difficult to stay in the ideal Forward Shoulder Load.

F) APE REACH

The Ape Reach is unique since it's the only movement where both of the upper limbs are in open chain throughout the entire sequence. Even if we took the lower body out completely, the sequenced motion from the pelvis up, has tremendous benefit.

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrate how to perform the Ape Reach.

Cues

Reach Phase

- Begin in Deep Ape
- Actively reach the arms forward and down as you drop the head between the arms
- Internally rotate the arms, bringing the thumbs as close to the ground as possible without actually touching
- The back of the hands may touch, just be sure not to interlock the fingers
- Close the gap by shrugging the shoulders towards the ears
- Actively drive the arms forward as a counter to pushing the hips back towards the heels

Open Phase

- Shift the weight from the heels into the balls of the feet
- The heels should come up to support the hips as the knees drop forward and down (*opening into abduction is the progression)
- As the spine extends, begin to pull the arms into external rotation
- Keep the elbows straight as you retract and depress the scaps
- At the end position, the palms should be up towards the sky and at the same level as the shoulders

Points of Tension

Reach Position

- Abductors
- Rectus Abdominus
- Internal Rotators of shoulder
- Traps

Open Position

- Glute Medius (in advanced progression)
- Erectors of the Spine
- Mid Traps
- Rhomboids
- External Rotators of shoulder

During the Open Phase, it's okay to show some active abduction of the legs, since this encourages Posterior Oblique Sling and Extensor Chain activation. However, you should show it as a progression from the basic tilting of the pelvis which just drops the knees straight down.

TALKING POINTS FOR APE REACH

What are the benefits of the Ape Reach?

A "computer posture" is usually classified by forward head, excessively kyphotic Thoracic Spine, protraction of the shoulder girdle and internal rotation of the humerus. This is commonly coupled with a posteriorly tilted pelvis and rounded lumbar spine. In the Ape Reach, we're attempting to encourage a new sense of neutral by going through maximum end ranges in both directions. This flossing creates rhythm and awareness throughout lumbo-pelvic-hip, Thorax, shoulder girdle and neck/head.

This is also exactly why we want to put emphasis on the Standing Ape Reach being equally as important as the deep version.

However, by adding the lower body into the equation (deep version), we're encouraging communication from the ground up via the flexion and extension chain.

When flexed, as in the reach phase, the ankles are pulling into dorsiflexion actively from the tibialis anterior. This is consistent with Flexion Chain.

While in the open phase, the ankles are in plantar flexion, which is consistent with Extensor Chain (even though the hips and knees are still flexed).

An added bonus of coming up on the toes is the reflexive stability of the Inner Unit, which is paired with the upright, extended posture.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the class practice the movement as you call out the cues.

Call Out Notes:

There are several important aspects to calling out the Ape that should be emphasized:

- We have to get someone to Deep Ape before we can call out an Ape Reach.
- When they reach forward, they are in the "***reach phase***".
- We then have to call out for them to "***open up***" (or "open" is also acceptable).
- In order to get them back we would either say "***Return to Ape Reach***", which puts them back in the reach phase, or we could also say "***Set Deep Ape***", bringing them back to Deep Ape.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR APE REACH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- **Reaching forward instead of down**: By reaching up or forward, the attendee is missing the full spinal flexion and traction
- **Interlocking the fingers together:** This encourages the arm lines to be lax since they are now being supported by the locking system of the fingers
- **Flexing the elbows during either the open or when returning to reach:** We don't mind this as a style component for someone who's already proficient at the original version. But the intention here is to be actively reaching throughout the entirety of each phase. So even when the arms are going from internal rotation and protraction to external rotation and retraction, we want there to be force driving through the finger tips at all times, reaching in whatever direction they are pointed. This allows some traction and tension in the shoulder joint itself. If the attendee bends the elbows, they lose that valuable tension
- **Attempting to perform the Deep version, when they have limited squat mechanics:** If someone has to be on their toes to deep squat, or they have to be excessively rotated with their feet, it doesn't make sense for them to perform the deep version, as it adds no benefit other than a stability challenge

REGRESSION: THE STANDING APE REACH

If someone has limited squat mechanics and cannot get into the squat position, they should perform the Standing Ape Reach instead.

Have the entire class practice the variation, even if they can all do the regular Ape Reach. This is so that they can experience it and be able to use it with their own clients.

Open Position

- Begin standing with the arms externally rotated and palms at shoulder level
- Actively push the hips forward, tensing the Posterior Chain

Reach Phase

- Flex the knees slightly and hinge at the hips
- Internally rotate the arms as you reach forward
- At the full reach position, the hands should be at roughly hip level
- If the low back is okay in flexion, we'll allow some lumbar flexion at the peak of the reach, otherwise we'll maintain flat back

TALKING POINT ON APE REACH STANDING VARIATION

Why do we reach forward instead of down towards the ground in the Standing Ape Reach?

Think of the spine as having a muscular system as well as a ligamentous system. Whenever someone is standing and they flex their back to pick up something, the amount of stress on their ligamentous system and vertebral discs is exponential since the muscular system is at a stretched position. *Keep in mind that this is different from the Deep Ape reach since the relationship of the pelvic girdle and legs, put the SI and Lumbar spine at a mechanical advantage to being a base for the reach. This is the reason that in the Standing Ape Reach we allow some flexion in the Lumbar spine but keep the rest of the back relatively rigid into the forward reach.

G) SCORPION REACH

The Scorpion Reach is a complementary move to the Crab Reach. Both movements encourage extension, rotation and lateral flexion of the spine. However, in the Crab Reach, the bilateral base is the pelvic girdle, while in the Scorpion Reach, the shoulder girdle takes the majority of the load.

The two further complement each other by having the arm lead the movement in CR, while the leg leads in SR (both in open chain).

DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate the move as you talk through the cues:

Cueing

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- To “load the Scorpion Tale”, transfer your weight forward bringing the reaching knee to the opposite wrist (similar forward motion as the Unload)
- Make sure that the ankle of the reaching leg is Plantar flexed
- Keep eyes down, neck long and shoulders strongly protracted in Forward Shoulder Load
- Lead with the foot as the traveling leg goes out and up in a circular pattern
- As the leg begins to travels, drop the head down between the arms (not through the arms), bringing eyes to base leg
- Keeping the traveling knee at 90 degrees
- Once the traveling leg passes over the mid line, allow the pelvis to rotate
- The rotating of the pelvis will simultaneously rotate the base heel outward
- At the reach position, the shoulders should be shrugging towards the ears, closing the gap
- Reverse the movement to Return to Loaded Beast

Points of Tension

Scorpion Tale Load

- Abductors of reaching leg
- Internal oblique of reaching leg
- External oblique of base leg
- Serratus Anterior
- Pec Minor

Reach

- Upper Traps
- Ipsilateral obliques of base leg
- Glute Medius of Reaching leg
- Glute Max/med and external rotators of base leg

TALKING POINTS FOR SCOPRION REACH

It's important to show that the Scorpion Reach is not only extension of the spine and is also not Downward Dog Split (bent knee variation). If you have dancers or yogis in your workshop, they will commonly default to these positions. You may even want to bring someone who's doing this up to use as a demo. I'll usually congratulate them and say what a beautiful move it is. Then I'll say while this is great, it's not what we're trying to achieve with the Scorpion Reach. Here are some talking points on the differences:

- ***If someone is going full extension:*** You'll want to tell them to think of the SR in a similar way to the Crab Reach. Spinal extension is great, but the goal of both the CR and the SR is spinal extension, lateral flexion and rotation.
- ***If someone does a Downward Facing Dog Split:*** Visually the DFDS is very similar to the Scorpion Reach. However, you'll see that the neck is elongated, the base heel is down and there's a lot of extension and lateral flexion (mostly at the Lumbar Spine). You may want to make a point that this is not right or wrong, it's just different.

Note that while there are other similar positions, there are specific reasons why we teach the Scorpion Reach the way that we do.

Why do we close the shoulder gap, versus keeping the neck long?

By driving the shoulders towards the ears, we're creating a force closure at the shoulder girdle and neck. Not only is this the foundation for our tuck balances, but by doing so, we're establishing a strong base for the rest of the spine, up to the pelvis.

Additionally, by elevating the shoulder girdle, we may get more rotation from the Thoracic Spine. If the shoulder blades are retracted and depressed (as in down dog split), then the T-spine will have a tendency to be more locked and rigid

Why do we keep the foot off of the ground and the knee bent?

It's all about the rotation. By locking the knee and dropping the heel, the leg is "stuck" except for at the acetabulum. Even with tremendous hip flexibility, the potential motion at the lumbo-pelvic-hip is limited. If we allow a little bit of rotation from each joint, all the way up the leg, we get a lot of rotation at the hip and pelvis. This means a lot of potential rotation from the pelvis through the spine. Think about all those little degrees of rotation adding up!

Why don't we turn the head any more during Scorpion Load or the Reach?

We did used to teach the Scorpion Reach with more head movement. We would look in the direction of the reaching knee on the load, then look underneath the opposite arm on the reach. The thought process was to have flexion and rotation in one direction, followed by extension and rotation in the opposite direction. However, after truly understanding the movement and its application, we determined the little bit of head rotation wasn't beneficial enough. It would also commonly lead to bending the elbows, which altered the shoulder girdle position.

We now like to keep the neck long, with eyes down on the Scorpion Load (knee to opposite wrist). That way we can be in perfect alignment for Forward Shoulder Load, and then again keep the head neutral during the reach since it allows us to close the shoulder gap.

Additionally, with the eyes towards the base leg, the attendee can go through the mental check list of heel off of the ground, foot outwardly rotated and knee slightly flexed.

GROUP PRACTICE:

Have the class practice as a group, as you circulate and make corrections.

****Tip****

A useful strategy to make sure that they're using their hip Abductors on the upper leg is to go around and push down on their leg. Tell them to resist your downward pull. This technique has been a game changer!

COMMON MISTAKES FOR SCORPION REACH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- **Flexing the elbows at any time:** The arms should stay straight throughout the entire movement
- **Allowing the heel of the base leg to drop or plant on the ground:** We want to instruct them to actively drive through the ball of the foot, getting the scorpion tale as high as possible
- **Not rotating the pelvis:** You'll see that guys who have tight hips will commonly just try to lift the leg from the hip, which keeps their leg very low. If you see this, go and gently rotate their pelvis as you lift the leg. You'll see that you'll get a huge increase in ROM

H) FORM SPECIFIC STRETCH FLOW

Teaching this entire section first thing in the day can feel like a dense chunk of information. (Honestly, I feel it's the only lull in the entire workshop.) It is up to you as the Master Instructor to find a nice balance that's not too much information but also not too much drilling.

Reps:

Since Day 2 has so much information and movement, we want to keep them fresh. Thus, we recommend only drilling each movement a couple of times during the actual teaching. Then you can drill the entire FSS Flow a few times to make sure that we lock in all of the movements.

You can also give another lite layer of some of the big cues as you are coaching them through the Flow.

Applications for the FSS Flow:

Mention the many ways in which this sequence can be used, including being a great series for movement prep or for the client to perform as homework. This sequence can be performed first thing in the morning, or every few hours for someone who has been seated a while, or as a warm up or cool down.

The FSS Flow:

There is a specific Form Specific Flow described in detail in their manuals. You may follow this one, or make up your own. Let them know that it is in their manual for their own future reference. It is repeated on the following page for your easy reference:

If they have the Animal Flow 2.0 video, the FSS Flow is Flow #1 in the Sample Flows section.

THE FORM SPECIFC STRETCH FLOW

Start in Loaded Beast

Loaded Beast Unload
Commands: Unload, Return to Loaded Beast
(perform twice)

Loaded Beast Wave Unload
Commands: Wave Unload, Return to Loaded Beast
(perform twice)

*Walk hands back to Deep Ape

Ape Reach:
Commands: Reach, Open, Return to Ape Reach
(perform twice)

*fall back to crab

Crab Reach
Commands: Right arm Crab Reach, Return to Crab;
Left arm Crab Reach, Return to Crab

*Underswitch to Loaded Beast

Beast Reach
Commands: Left leg Beast Reach, Return to Loaded Beast;
Right leg Beast Reach, Return to Loaded Beast;

Scorpion Reach
Cue: Left leg Scorpion Load

Command: Left leg Scorpion Reach, Return to Loaded Beast

Cue: Right leg Scorpion load,

Commands: Right leg Scorpion Reach, Return to Loaded Beast

END

SIDE KICKTHROUGH

When you introduce the Side Kickthrough, emphasize that this move is all about *generating force through rotation that then gets pushed out and away from the body.* (You can compare this to the Underswitch, which is about different ways the body rotates around itself.).

Some important intro points:

- We often talk about how the SKT "loads" or "opens" the sling. However, you should also explain that the rotary force being generated into the heel drop then gets directed out to the kicking leg and opposing arm, which eccentrically loads the sling through an increasing lever length in opposing directions. This means that it's not just a stretch - we're actually *loading it or activating it* as well, although eccentrically.

- Specifically: The Posterior Oblique Sling is performing the concentric contraction or brining its points closer to each other. The Anterior and Posterior Slings then switch jobs as you retract the leg back to Static Beast.

A) SIDE KICKTHROUGH

DEMONSTRATION

The Set Up

When setting up the SKT, split the movement up into two sections:

1) The first section is all about setting up the "Movement Window" and watching the heel drop.
2) Once they've drilled that multiple times, then show them how to kick the leg.

DEMO the Heel Drop

We consider cueing from the eyes to be very effective in Animal Flow. We frequently say, "*The head follows the eyes, the body follows the head*." This is important for getting the heel drop right in the SKT.

When you are setting up the SKT, start in Static Beast. Lift the traveling limbs. As soon as you start to rotate, show them that you're bringing your eyes down to the base foot. This is imperative since you have to watch the base foot line up at a perpendicular or 90 degree angle to the base hand. Once you see that your toes are lined up properly, you can then drop your heel, which they should know from the US section is their "Break".

GROUP PRACTICE Heel Drop

Have the entire class practice just this portion together.

- Once they see the toes line up and drop the heel, ask them to do a self-check. Make sure they understand where they should be and how to correct if they didn't end up at the correct position.
- After they see the heel drop and self-check, they can then sweep their hips low to the ground and look up towards the direction that they'll be kicking. Remember, the traveling arm and leg are still pulled in towards their midline.
- Have them perform just the heel drop multiple times to each direction.
- While they're performing this drill, you should use the full call out of Left or Right Leg Side Kickthrough. Just remind them that they are not kicking the leg just yet.

DEMO The Kick

When introducing the actual kick, tell them that in Animal Flow, we externally rotate from the hip and plantar flex the ankle of the kicking leg. Why?

- Well for one, we hopefully won't be kicking anyone else, so we don't use the foot the way one would in martial arts.
- Secondly, the pointed toes are more conducive to distributing energy out and away from the body, whereas a dorsiflexed ankle is equivalent to throwing the breaks on right away.

GROUP PRACTICE The Kick

Now have the group practice the complete movement.

- Tell them to think about "opening the sling" by taking their two end points and pulling them in opposite directions. Those two end points are the big toe of the kicking foot and the tip of the opposite elbow.

COMPLETE MOVEMENT CUES

Here is the complete Cueing Sequence you'll use for the whole movement:

- Begin in Static Beast
- Lift the call out foot and opposite hand
- Bring eyes down towards the base foot as you begin to rotate
- Once you see the toes line up at 90 degree angle from the hand, drop the heel to stop the rotation
- Bring your eyes up to the horizon, in the direction of the kicking leg
- Fully extend the knee, point the toes and externally rotate the leg
- Simultaneously pull the elbow away from the mid line, bringing the back of the hand towards your cheek

The Return – call out Underswitch to Static Beast!

- Lift the heel of the base foot
- Bend the knee of the kick leg and begin to retract into the rotation
- Land with traveling foot and hand at the same time

CUEING POINT:
RETURN TO STATIC BEAST VS UNDERSWITCH

- While they are performing the heel drop drill it's okay to say "Back to Static Beast" to get them back to start position.
- However, as soon as they begin the full SKT drill, you'll want to explain to them that we use the call out of Underswitch to get them back to Static Beast. It's good to introduce this early on.

  Let the class know that in their own practice, saying "Back to Static Beast" is acceptable if they are teaching to a new person/group or if they are just drilling that one movement. It can be easier to understand that command, compared to having remember what "underswitch" is when you are brand new to Aniaml Flow. ***Otherwise the call out to get them back to Static Beast should always be Underswitch.***

TALKING POINTS FOR SIDE KICKTHROUGH

Why are we so specific about the arm position?

In most literature, the Anterior Oblique Sling or even the Functional Lines (Thomas Myers) start/end around the area of the Pec Major's insertion into the Humerus. So by abducting the Humerus away from the mid line, as well as externally rotating it, we're creating maximum distance from the opposite pointing toe. This is exactly why we like to see the elbow at or above shoulder level but not below the shoulder.

An easy way to put someone in ideal alignment is to place their hand by their cheek, with palm facing away.

Why don't we fully extend the arm?

It's a waste of energy, with little benefit. As mentioned above, just by pulling the Humerus away from the midline, we're achieving optimal length of the AOS.

Additionally, with the arm in its full length, it's more time consuming and inefficient to have to pull it back and down towards the ground for the next movement.

MODIFICATIONS

You'll want to make it very clear to the group that there are two possible shoulder positions for the base arm:

- If someone has a really happy and healthy shoulder, we'll push the base scapula into a hard protraction, which is the counter to the opposite arm pulling back. This allows a deeper rotation and brings the hips very close to the ground.
- On the other hand, if someone has some sort of anterior shoulder dysfunction or impingement, we'll keep the shoulder directly on top of the base hand. Just make it clear that if someone is using the modification, their hips and kicking leg will be much higher than in the regular version.

COMMON MISTAKES IN SIDE KICKTHROUGH

- Not fully extending the kick leg
- Over rotating the base foot
- Kicking the leg too high
- Staying guarded with the arm, clenching the fist, dropping the elbow below shoulder level
- Pushing the hips too close to the base foot

B) JUMPING SIDE KICKTHROUGH

If the SKT is about creating rotary force that's pushed away from the body, then the Jumping SKT is about the recoil and redirection of the energy/force. If we're performing alternating Jumping SKTs, we're using the recoil of the facial net to explosively switch to the opposite leg. This is similar to throwing a punch. The energy that pushes the arm away from the body also helps bring it back. Or in the case of a single Jumping SKT, the retraction of the leg creates a rotary force that is then pushed out through the opposite leg (redirection).

DEMONSTRATE

When setting up the Jumping SKT, it's important to teach it in two sections:

1) First show them how to get from SKT to Modified Beast;
2) Then how to make it one movement.

Cues:

- Begin in SKT
- Forcefully retract the extended leg as you bring the traveling hand towards the ground
- Switch feet in the air, landing on the foot that was recently in SKT
- Be sure to land in Modified Beast with a neutral foot
- Lift the traveling hand as you begin to rotate into the heel drop
- Allow the force from the rotation/drop to shoot the opposite leg out into SKT as you open the sling

TALKING POINTS

Make sure to hit on the following points:

- **Cueing:** This is the first movement that we are giving an "action command" before the direction and limb. Everything up to this point has been Left or Right, Leg or Arm, followed by the command. In the Jumping SKT and Levitating SKT, we're telling them in the first word of the call out, what they'll be doing (jumping or levitating).

- **Starting Point:** You have to first be in a SKT before you can jump or levitate to the opposite leg SKT. Make it super clear that you cannot call out a Jumping SKT from Static Beast. I would wait until the Root game to tell them that they can also perform SKT variations from Modified Crab.

- **Neutral Foot:** You'll want to make a special point to show everyone that they have to land with a neutral foot in Modified Beast, before they can rotate into the heel drop. Neutral foot meaning, ball of the foot down, toes towards the hands and heel up. Demonstrate what it looks like if they land with the foot already rotated, or with the full foot landing at once. If they do that, they've lost the ability to properly decelerate and will dramatically decrease the rotary power that they get from rotating INTO the heel drop.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have them drill the movement.

- First, have them follow your Call Out. Second, after you feel that they understand the movement, have them perform alternating Jumping SKT's at their own speed so that they can understand the stretch reflex.
- Show that the Modified Beast transition is actually the slowest part of an alternating Jumping SKT. The kick and the retraction should be as fast as they can perform it with perfect form.
- You may use this opportunity to remind them that, ***"We can only go as fast as we can control"***. If their form begins to break down, they have to slow down.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR JUMPING SIDEKICKTHROUGH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Not fully extending the kick leg
- Not opening the sling
- Landing with the foot already rotated
- Landing with the entire foot at once
- Going high hip

C) LEVITATING SIDE KICKTHROUGH

DEMONSTRATE

When setting up the Levitating SKT, you'll want to tell the attendees that there will be some similarities to the High Hip Lateral Traveling Ape (Variation 2) since they will be attempting a brief Tuck Balance.

1) Begin by showing them the full Levitating Side Kickthrough, where you hold a Tuck Balance at the transition point. Then show them the regressed version that focuses on the High Hip Modified Beat position.
2) Make it clear that the goal today is not to be able to hold the balance, but to learn the foundations which they can then spend a very long time with. You may want to share your own experience with locking in your Tuck Balance, to show them how even as Masters, it's something that we're always working on getting better at.

Cues:

Following are the Cues for the Full Levitating Side Kickthrough. Note that you will build up to having the group perform this, after starting with the HHMB regressions.

- Begin in SKT
- Retract the kick leg, bringing the traveling hand down to the ground
- Push the hips up towards the sky "getting high and tight"
- Bring both knees towards the chest, heels towards the glutes and ankles plantar flexed
- Drop the leg that was previously kicked out, down to the ground in HHMB
- Rotate into the heel drop as you kick the opposite leg, opening the sling

TALKING POINTS

- **Fear:** One of the biggest factors that inhibits someone from getting completely inverted is fear. The body will lock down and cut its attempts short if it feels threatened. This is precisely why we use the High Hip Modified Beast transition. The leg is a safety net that they can deploy whenever they need to. So even if you have someone who can only get both feet off of the ground for a fraction of a second, they still get to experience the position by stabilizing in HHMB.
- **Push:** You'll want to tell the attendees just how important it is to Push into the ground, closing the shoulder gap. If they leave the gap open, it encourages a forward head and spinal extension, which make it difficult to get the hips above the shoulders. Remind them that by bending the elbows, they'll be leaking energy.

  Also, exhaling during the push will help create stability from the inner unit (diaphragm, multifidus, pelvic floor, TVA) as well as create space to get the knees towards the chest.
- **Focal Point:** Where they focus their eyes can have a major impact on their balance point. If their eyes are in front of their finger tips, then it will be harder for them to stack their hips above their shoulders. By bringing the eyes towards the base of the palms and attempting to get the ears between the shoulders, it will be much easier for them to get inverted.
- **Cueing;** Remind the class again that the Jumping and Levitating SKTs are the only movements that we use the "action command" first. That means that once they are in a SKT we will tell them to "Levitate to" the opposite leg SKT

GROUP PRACTICE

1) Alternating HHMB

It is useful to put the attendees in HHMB, and then have them jump from one leg to the next, encouraging them to just focus on the push, the exhale and the eye alignment. Be sure to have them perform multiple self-checks to make sure that the knee is pulled tight into the chest, heel towards the glute and ankle plantar flexed. During this drill you can just tell them to "Switch" as they jump from one leg to the next.

2) Levitating SKT with Pause in HHMB

After performing the Alternating HHMB, you should then progress to the Levitating SKT with a pause in HHMB. You'll still want to use the full call out, but first instruct them to pause, and then instruct them to "bring the leg through" or "rotate into the drop." Whatever terminology you prefer to use is fine for this.

3) Levitating SKT

Finally, have them perform the full Levitating SKT. Be sure to have them repeat your call out before moving.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR LEVITATING SIDEKICKTHROUGH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Opening the legs in the air
- Dorsiflexing the ankles in the tuck
- Dropping the wrong leg
- Bending the elbows
- Holding the breath

UNDERSWITCH/ SIDEKICKTHROUGH FLOW DRILL

Now that you've covered all of the US and SKT variations, you can practice a Call Out that uses all of the variations. Call out a Flow using:

- **Underswitch**
- **Underswitch Tap**
- **Jumping Underswitch**
- **Side Kickthrough**
- **Jumping Side Kickthrough**
- **Levitating Side Kickthrough**
- **You can also throw in a Crab Reach to demonstrate how the FSS also fit in!**

Remember to have them repeat after you, calling out each move before they before they perform it. This is so important to getting them accustomed to using the language, and helps their learning process.

SCORPIONS

It's time to teach the two variations of Scorpion from the S&T Component!

THE THREE SCORPION VARIATIONS

When setting up the Scorpion S&T section, you'll want to differentiate between the three different movements that use the Scorpion name. There is one FSS, and two from S&T which they are about to learn. These tips may help people remember the differences:

- ***Scorpion Reach:***

  This is part of our FSSs. It goes from Loaded Beast, up to Scorpion Reach, and then retraces the movement back to start. You REACH with the leg but do not go all the way over.

- ***Full Scorpion (sometimes just called a Scorpion):***

  This looks like a FULL circle. It begins in Crab and ends in Modified Beast.

- ***Scorpion Switch:***

  This is like half of the circle. You are SWITCHING from Beast to Crab (modified). The word "switch" may help them remember that they are switching forms in this move.

A) FULL SCORPION

Teach the Full Scorpion first. It is easier to learn this before doing the Switch variation.

DEMONSTRATE

Cues

- Begin in Static Crab
- Simultaneously lift the traveling hand and foot
- Drive through the ball of the base foot, pulling the traveling limbs in towards the midline as you begin the rotation
- Drop the traveling hand at a shoulder width distance to the base hand
- Continue to push the traveling leg out and up in a circular pattern (knee at 90, toes pointed)

- Drop the head down between the arms, closing the gap
- At peak reach, extend the base knee and drive through the ball of the foot even further
- Allow the weight of the traveling leg to PEEL the traveling hand off of the ground
- Continue to reach towards the ground with the traveling hand to counter balance the drop
- Once the ball of the traveling foot touches the ground, drop the heel, drop the hip, drop the hand

TALKING POINTS FOR FULL SCORPION

1) **Use Pieces They Already Know:** It's a valuable tool to recall movements that they've already learned to help you build the Full Scorpion. Show them that the movement begins like an Underswitch, that then travels up to Scorpion Reach. After hitting Scorpion Reach, the upper leg pulls the body over, landing in a new position known as *Modified Crab*.

2) **Before the Drop:** Let the attendees know that before the weight of the leg pulls them over, there's a very important sequence that has to happen first. Part 1 is driving through the ball of the base foot, getting even higher. Part 2 is extending the base knee. You'll want to remind them that once the base knee extends, it DOES NOT bend again. The upper knee maintains its 90 degree bend.

3) **Peel the Hand Off the Ground:** Make it very clear that if they release the traveling hand too quickly from the ground, then they will lose their ability to decelerate the leg drop, causing them to fall heavily to the ground. By continuing to reach towards the ground, as if the hand were stuck in gum (or any analogy), now the arm becomes a counter balance to the leg. This allows them to land softly and really experience the lateral line opening.

4) **Not Side Kickthrough:** It's incredibly common for people to perform a Full Scorpion, then lift the base foot again, putting them in a SKT position. Show them that in Modified Crab, the ankle is dorsiflexed or at 90, the leg is completely straight and the arm is in guarded position.

5) **Head Down:** Make it clear that once they are at the peak of the Reach, their head should be between their arms, shrugging the shoulders towards the ears. They should be looking at their base leg so that they can go through the check list of base heel off of the ground, foot rotated outward, slight bend in the base knee. Then they should be able to watch the base knee extend before pulling over.

Why are the toes up towards the ceiling in Modified Crab?

At the peak of the Full Scorpion the ankle is strongly plantar flexed, but in order for us to continue the transition, we have to move around the perimeter of the foot (ball of foot, outer ridge to heel). In order for us to transition from ball to outer ridge, we have to dorsiflex the ankle to roughly 90 degrees. Once we do that, we then lock in the ankle position and ride it out for the remainder of the movement. If we see that the movement finishes with the toes up, it's more likely that they performed the movement correctly.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the group practice the move while you talk them through it.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR FULL SCORPION

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Bending the elbows
- Keeping the traveling ankle dorsiflexed
- Keeping the head up with the eyes towards the ground
- Not hitting the perfect reach before attempting to pull over
- Bending the base leg midway through
- Releasing the traveling arm too quickly
- Ending in SKT versus Modified Crab

B) SCORPION SWITCH

The Scorpion Switch is probably one of the most underutilized movements in the entire Animal Flow program. (It is actually my least favorite movement, or at least the one that feels the least natural.)
This movement used to be called a Half Scorpion, but we changed the name to Scorpion Switch so people could remember that they are "switching" from Beast to Crab. Plus, it just sounded better than "Half Scorpion".

DEMONSTRATE

Cues

- Begin in Static Beast
- Push the traveling leg out and up in a circular motion
- At the peak of the reach, drive through the ball of the foot, extending the base knee
- Allow the weight of the traveling leg to pull over
- Continue to reach towards the ground with the traveling hand
- Once the ball of the traveling foot hits the ground, drop the heel, drop the hip, drop the hand

GROUP PRACTICE

Since you've already practiced the Full Scorpion, you don't need to spend a great deal of time having them practice the variation. Have the group practice the move while you talk them through it.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR FULL SCORPION

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Bending the elbows
- Keeping the traveling ankle dorsiflexed
- Keeping the head up with the eyes towards the ground
- Not hitting the perfect reach before attempting to pull over
- Bending the base leg midway through
- Releasing the traveling arm too quickly
- Ending in SKT versus Modified Crab

US/ SKT/ SCORP FLOW DRILL

Time for another Flow drill using what they've learned so far!

- **Underswitch**
- **Underswitch Tap**
- **Jumping Underswitch**
- **Side Kickthrough**
- **Jumping Side Kickthrough**
- **Levitating Side Kickthrough**
- **Scorpion**
- **Scorpion Switch**
- **You can also throw in a FSS or two.**

Remember to have them repeat after you, calling out each movement, before the perform it.

FRONT KICKTHROUGHS

You'll teach the Front Kickthrough section in steps. The Front Step and Front Step Through are building blocks to the full Front Kickthrough. However, both the Front Step and Front Step Through can stand alone as their own exercises, as they have their own benefits and are excellent S&Ts.

A) FRONT STEP

DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate how to perform the Front Step while talking through all of the cues.

Cues:

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- Drive out of the hips, pulling the ground underneath you
- Simultaneously lift the hand as you land with the foot
- The foot should land outside or in front of where the hand was
- Bring the elbow outside of the stepping leg, with palm forward
- Keep the chest high with the back knee close to the ground
- Reverse the movement back to Loaded Beast

TALKING POINTS

1) **Land Hard:** Up to this point, we've been very careful with our ground contact, lifting and landing quietly with each move. The Front Step is the first movement where we're encouraging them to land hard with the foot. The reason we encourage this is so they can sequence the explosive drive out of the hips, with the quick lift of the traveling hand and land of the foot.

2) **Lift the Hand so the Foot Can Land:** Make it very clear to the class that the Front Step is a simultaneous lift and land. It's common to have some of the participants step with the foot, then lift the hand or the opposite on the way back. Remember, we're trying to sequence the lift and the land for the FKT.

3) **In Front or to the Side:** When we place the foot, we're building our "***movement window***." It's important that even in the Front Step, we build a window big enough for us to get through, since we're creating the mechanics that will next become the Front Step Through and Front Kickthrough.

Why is the elbow outside of the leg with the palm forward?

Keep in mind that the Front Step was designed to be a midway point for the FKT. If we were performing a FKT, the elbow would be traveling outside of the landing leg, so we want the specificity to be congruent.

We position the palm forward (attack hand) in the Front Step for similar reasons. We want the sequence to mimic the motion of the FKT, going from palm on the ground, to palm forward and eventually finishing with the palm towards the face in guarded position.

Additionally, the palm facing forward is more complimentary to projecting our energy forward, whereas in the FKT, our kicking leg is the result of our energy being pushed forward while the guarded arm is more like our break or counter.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the class practice performing the move together.

- **Calling Out the Return:** After the Front Step, you'll want to get them in the habit of hearing "***RETURN TO LOADED BEAST***." While the RETURN command is usually reserved for the FSSs, the Front Step and Front Step Through variations are also a good time to enforce this specific Call Out.

  *Just remember that in the actual FKT, we'll say "***POP IT BACK***" to Loaded Beast. The POP IT is to encourage explosiveness.

- **ROAR:** After they've learned the move, add a little bit of fun to the class by having everyone let out a ROAR when they land with the front foot. It can actually be any noise they want to make - it is the quick expelling of air that we want to get. Making it a Roar is just more fun.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR FRONT STEP

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Landing too close to the base hand, closing the window
- Placing the foot, then moving the hand
- Keeping the elbow inside of the leg
- Pulling the elbow far away from midline, "open sling"
- Keeping the chest on top of the thigh
- Not exhaling into the step
- Placing the hand, then moving the foot

B) FRONT STEP THROUGH

You may want to tell the attendees that the Front Step Through is a movement that was added later to the Animal Flow program. The intention was to create a bridge from Front Step to Front Kickthrough. It's also useful as a way to "groove" the movement without having to fully jump into the landing, as in a FKT.

DEMONSTRATE

Cues

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- Drive out of the hips, pulling the ground underneath you
- Simultaneously lift the hand as you land with the foot
- The foot should land outside or in front of where the hand was
- Bring the elbow outside of the stepping leg, with palm forward
- Keep the chest high with the back knee close to the ground
- Lift the back leg from the ground and begin to thread it through the window
- As the leg travels through, reposition the traveling arm into a guarded position
- Point the toes and externally rotate the kicking leg
- *Reverse the movement back to start

Demonstrate the Movement Window

The actual THROUGH part of the Front Step Through allows us find out if we've built a window that is big enough. Take this opportunity to show what it looks like if our window is too small:

a) First show that the leg can't get through,

b) Then show that if the leg does get through you may fall back onto your butt/back since your base is too tight.

(See talking points below for more on the movement window).

The Call Out

This is a good time to start clarifying the Call Out for Front Step and Front Step Through. In both these movements, we're calling out from the stepping leg. This is important since a primary goal in both movements is to "*build our movement window*".

TALKING POINTS

1) **Assessing Your Window:** The person's ability to end in a perfect FKT position is a great indicator if their window was big enough. If they can't get the leg through, can't stay up easily, can't drop their base heel or if the base foot rotates outward, their window is probably too small. Show the class that they can both step out to the side as well as to the side and forward in order to open their window.

2) **Get Guarded:** You'll want to make it very clear that in the Front Step Through, they are going from palm on the ground, to palm forward (Front Step), to palm toward the face in guarded position. Remind them that this is not "open sling", so the emphasis is not on Anterior Oblique Sling, but on Flexion Chain.

3) **Externally Rotate the Leg:** The thought process behind externally rotating the leg in FKT even though the emphasis is Flexion Chain, all comes down to *Load Variability*. It's common that most practictioners will have overactive or tight hip flexors due to sitting, sagittal plane exercising etc. That's why we like to challenge some of the surrounding muscles that also work hip flexion.

   For example, if we kept the top of the thigh up, most likely the Psoas and Rectus Femurs would take the majority of the legs load. But by externally rotating the leg, we are still encouraging those muscles to work, but adding in the Sartorius, and Adductor group. Which again, adds variation to hip flexion, while still keeping integrity with Flexion Chain.

   Lastly, from a mechanical perspective, keeping the top of the foot up sometimes will activate the Psoas so much that the leg pulls up towards the ceiling, making them fall back.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the class practice the movement as you call it out and reiterate cues.

Practicing the Call Out:

Explain to the class that the actual THROUGH part of the Front Step Through could be called out after the Front Step. This gives them some flexibility during a random call out, but can also be used as a teaching tool.

For example, if you had someone who was becoming confused with Front Step and Front Step Through, you could put emphasis on the word THROUGH versus the entire Front Step Through call out.

An example would be alternating between the two, using a brief pause before saying THROUGH:

Left Leg Front Step

Return to Loaded Beast

Left Leg Front Step……THROUGH

Return to Loaded Beast

Right Leg Front Step

Return to Loaded Beast

Right Leg Front Step……THROUGH

Return to Loaded Beast

COMMON MISTAKES FOR FRONT STEP THROUGH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Landing too close to the base hand, closing the window
- Placing the foot, then moving the hand
- Keeping the elbow inside of the leg
- Pulling the elbow far away from midline, "open sling"
- Keeping the chest on top of the thigh
- Not exhaling into the step
- Placing the hand, then moving the foot
- Stepping too close to the base hand
- Not fully extending the knee or externally rotating the leg on the kick
- Hopping back instead of stepping back through

C) FRONT KICKTHROUGH

The FKT is definitely one of the most dynamic movements in the entire Animal Flow practice. It is also one that people tend to have the hardest time learning.

DEMONSTRATION

Learning the movement can be particularly confusing because of the fact that they are initiating the movement from the opposite side of the call out. You can be totally honest with them that should expect this to be a bit confusing at first. Here's a good way to start it out:

Calling Out the Kicking Leg:

From the very start, you'll want to reiterate that in the Front Step and the Front Step Through, we are calling out from the stepping leg, since the focus of those movements is building the window. However in FKT, we already know how to build the window so now we give the actual action which is the FKT. *This means we call out the kicking leg instead of the stepping leg.*

Here are 2 different verbal techniques that work quite well:

a) In the first scenario get everyone into Loaded Beast and ask them to:

"Identify your left hand by wiggling your fingers"

"Now identify your left leg by moving your knee from side to side"

"Congratulations, that's the left side of your body"

"Your left foot is about to replace your left hand, then your opposite legs just going to slide right through"

"Ready?' "Left foot replaces left hand, GO!"

b) The second approach uses the exact same set up, but this time use "Jump" and "Kick"

"Okay guys, your left foot is the jump foot and your right leg is the kick leg"

"You have to jump before you can kick"

"Here we go, jump with the left and kick with the right, GO!"

Popping Back to Loaded Beast:

Keep in mind that jumping back from the FKT or "Popping back to Loaded Beast" is much easier than most people think. We've tried multiple variations of instructions to teach them how to break down the sequence from forcefully retracting the leg, to emphasizing the rotary movement and the arm drop. And after everything, the thing that works best, is just telling them to jump back. It's that simple. If you over cue it, they over think it.

Cues:

- Begin in Loaded Beast
- Explosively drive out of the hips as you pull the ground underneath you
- Lift the traveling hand so the foot can land
- The foot should land outside and or slightly in front of where the hand was
- Allow the kicking leg to transfer through the movement window
- Point the toe and externally rotate the kicking leg
- Pull the arm into guarded position with the palm towards the face
- Jump back to Loaded Beast

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the group practice while you call out the cues and provide feedback.

COMMON MISTAKES FOR FRONT KICKTHROUGH

Be aware of these common mistakes:

- Stepping instead of jumping
- Landing too close or behind the base hand
- Lifting the wrong hand - if you see that the person has the same side hand and foot down, they jumped with the correct foot but lifted the wrong hand
- Externally rotating the base foot
- Dorsiflexing the ankle of the kick leg
- Opening the sling
- Stepping back instead of jumping back

FRONT KICKTHROUGH DRILL

After teaching all three movements of the FKT category, it's a good idea to drill them in sequence. Have the attendees perform all three with the same building leg. For example;

"Load your Beast"
"Left Leg Front Step"
"Return to Loaded Beast"
"Left Leg Front Step Through"
"Return to Loaded Beast"
"Remember guys, you're about to perform a Right Leg FKT, but you're still initiating the movement with your Left leg"
"Here we go Right Leg FKT, GO!"

After repeating the sequence a few times on one leg, do the same on the next

KINGDOM FLOW

Now that you've taught all the S&T, it's time to teach the full Kingdom Flow.

When setting up the Kingdom Flow, make it very clear that this is a road map or blue print that gives them example of how some of the AF movements fit together. They should practice this often since it will give them a sense of what a FLOW feels like, but also to help them prepare for their test out.

This is also a great time to remind them about the requirements for their Test Out: Let them know that depending upon how fast it's performed, the Kingdom Flow is roughly 30-45 seconds. For their Test Out, however, they need to design a flow that's 90 seconds. You'll also want to remind them that there are no FSSs in the Kingdom Flow, but they can and should use FSSs in their test out flow. (But no Activations or Traveling Forms in their Test Out Flows!)

TEACHING

Here are some other points for teaching the KF:

1) **Repeating the Call Out:**

   Up to this point, you should have had the class call out each movement in the S&Ts before they performed it (repeating after you.) On the Kingdom Flow, you'll want to skip this at first - have them just focus on the movements for the first few rounds, without calling anything out.

   Right before you move on to the next section, have them call out one round.

2) **Split the Class into Groups:**

   Even if you have a small class, it's a good idea to divide the group into two sections (after they've attempted a few rounds). This gives them ample rest time while the other group is moving. It is also good for them to observe the other attendees for those that are visual learners.

3) **Step by Step Breakdown:**

   You'll want to break the Kingdom Flow down into a few movements at a time:

   - It works well to teach the first three moves together since they all use Modified Beast transitions and are all redirects. This is also useful since the very first movement is a combo.

     Take time to show them how the Jumping Underswitch INTO Side Kickthrough is a combo and *why it's so important to use the word INTO when you're combining movements.*

*"Left Leg Jumping Underswitch **into** Right Leg Side Kickthrough"*

Have them practice just the first movement a few times before adding in the next two:

"Jump to Left Leg Side Kickthrough"
"Left Leg Jumping Underswitch"

- Drill the first three multiple times before teaching them the alternating Full Scorpions

  Show them how the Jumping Underswitch "rolls" right into the first Full Scorpion

  "Left Leg Full Scorpion"
  "Right Leg Full Scorpion"

  *In Level 2 we talk a lot about energy flow and what the difference is between a *Redirect* and a *Roll*. This can get pretty confusing for a Level 1 attendee, so if you mention how the Jumping Underswitch rolls into the Full Scoprion or how the second Full Scorpion is a redirect, you may want to keep it brief. We used to actually call out "Redirect" in between the Full Scorpions, but later had people using the word redirect as an actual call out. Bottom line, keep it simple if you mention it at all.

- After drilling the first five movements, take a break and show them how to properly Underswitch INTO a Loaded Beast. Be very clear that the hands slide forward as they push the hips back into Loaded Beast.

  "Left Leg Underswitch INTO Loaded Beast"

- As the instructor, you can decide if you want to practice just the Underswitch into Loaded Beast or the entire thing up to this transition

  "Left foot replaces left hand, Right Leg Front Kickthrough", "Pop it back to Loaded Beast"

  You can use whatever technique that you find effective to let them know that the jumping foot is the opposite of the call out leg, but it's good to give them a reminder.

  "Right foot replaces right hand, Left Leg Front Kickthrough", "Pop it back to Loaded Beast"

- Since the last transition-variation is brand new, you'll want to give them a very concise demonstration of how they Underswitch from Loaded Beast to Crab. Show them that it's almost like they are performing a Reverse Traveling Crab from the Underswitch. Then once they plant the first foot, they just slide the second.

  "Right Leg Underswitch"

- Once you make it all the way through the Kingdom Flow, break them into groups and alternate between the two. You may want to progressively speed up the Call Out, but be sure that on the last one, they call out the movements with you.

ROOT GAME

The Root Game is a great way to get attendees thinking about what moves go to together to create a flow. It is also an excellent way to practice the intricacies of the Call Out language.

- When setting up the root game, put the entire group in a circle and ask for the first volunteer.
- Tell the class that you're going to put the volunteer in a "root' position, and that it is the job of the class to think of all of the possible S&Ts and FSSs that can come out of the root.
- They need to focus on first identifying all of the movements that are "singles" before getting into combos. For example, if starting from Loaded Beast, going into a SKT would a "combo since they have to first get from Loaded Beast to Static Beast - that is a combo.
- The class will almost always start mentioning combos, though. When they do, make sure they understand that a Combo is combining two movements. This allows us to use the words INTO or TO (those 2 words are interchangeable). The only times they EVER should use those words are if it's a true combo. If you're just calling out one movement after another, you should not use INTO or TO. This is a very common mistake that people get into a habit of doing - they'll start saying things like "Underswitch to Beast" when just "Underswitch" would suffice. (Of course, Underswitch INTO Loaded Beast would acceptable since you are skipping through the Static Beast.)
- To start each section, put the volunteer in the position, and then ask the group, "Where can we go from Static Crab?" (or Static Beast, etc)
- Once you hear a correct answer, point at the person who said it and ask them to do the full Call Out. (Meaning the limb, direction and command)
- If you hear an answer that is incorrect, ask them "Can we?" and then "why not?"
- Use one volunteer per root. Select a new volunteer for each new root.

A good move to start out with is the Static Crab.

Here is a chart listing the roots and possible moves:

STATIC CRAB

Single Moves

- Underswitch
- Underswitch Tap
- Jumping Underswitch
- Full Scorpion
- Crab Reach

Changing Between Animal Flows

- "Set" Ape

Combos

- Underswitch Into Loaded Beast
- Jumping Underswitch into Side Kickthrough
- Underswitch Tap into Side Kickthrough

STATIC BEAST

Single Moves

- Underswitch
- Underswitch Tap
- Side Kickthrough
- Scorpion Switch

Changing Between Animal Flows

- Set Ape
- Set Loaded Beast

Combos

- Underswitch Tap into Full Scorpion

*If anyone mentions a combo that involves going from Static Beast to Loaded Beast and then into another move, just tell them to wait until Loaded Beast since that's not a true combo.

APE

Single Moves

- Ape Reach

Changing Between Animal Flows

- Set Static Beast
- Set Static Crab
- Set Loaded Beast

LOADED BEAST

Single Moves

- Unload
- Wave Unload
- Beast Reach
- Scorpion Reach
- Front Step
- Front Step Through
- Front Kickthrough

Changing Between Animal Flows

- Set Static Beast
- Set Deep Ape

*We would recommend Underswitching into Static Crab versus SETTING it from a Loaded Beast

Combos

- Underswitch into Crab

*We treat this as a combo since there's some re adjusting that has to be done

SIDE KICKTHROUGH

Single Moves

- Underswitch
- Jumping Underswitch
- Jumping Side Kickthrough
- Levitating Side Kickthrough
- Full Scorpion

*There are two single moves from SKT that are a little trickier, and most will not have been thought of:

- **Underswitch Tap:** by calling out an Underswitch Tap from SKT, the flowist will retract the leg, perform the tap, then end in Crab. We don't consider this a combo because you are not combining it with anything else. You're simply going by the rules of an Underswitch Tap which is going to brings you to Static Crab or Static Beast.
- **Pop it Back to Loaded Beast:** It's hard for most to understand this one, but if you're in SKT and someone uses this Call Out, you would know that the person who's calling out wants you to pretend that you're now in FKT, meaning you'll retract the leg forcefully and jump straight backwards into Loaded Beast.

Changing Between Animal Flows

- Set Static Crab

Combos

- Underswitch into Loaded Beast
- Underswitch Tap into Side Kickthrough (same leg)

MODIFIED CRAB

Single Moves

- Underswitch
- Underswitch Tap
- Jumping Underswitch
- Jumping Side Kickthrough
- Levitating Side Kickthrough
- Full Scorpion
- Pop it Back to Loaded Beast

Changing Between Animal Flows

- Set Static Crab

Combos

- Underswitch into Loaded Beast
- Underswitch Tap into Side Kickthrough (same leg)

GROUP FLOW PRACTICE

This is one of our absolute favorite parts of the workshop, since we get a clear view of how much of the information the class has actually retained. Additionally, the process of having them work through the flow design helps them recall information and problem solve at the same time, which are huge parts of learning.

Break the attendees up into equal groups. You may want to choose the groups yourself, so that you can put weaker individuals with ones that have a more solid grasp of the information. Group of 3-5 people each are ideal.

Give them the instructions:

- Create a 8-10 movement flow that is made up of only S&Ts and FSSs. If you're short on time, you could have them do less movements, but I wouldn't recommend picking more than 10.
- They should not repeat any of the movements (or if they do repeat a movement, it does not count toward their requirement 10.)
- The list of available movements includes: (review it out loud for them)

Loaded Beast Unload
Wave Unload
Beast Reach
Crab Reach
Ape Reach
Scorpion Reach

Underswitch
Under switch Tap
Jumping Underswitch

Side Kickthrough
Jumping Side Kickthrough
Levitating Side Kickthrough

Full Scorpion
Scorpion Switch

Front Step
Front Step Through
Front Kickthrough

- They have about 20 minutes to work on their flow together.
- They should work together to develop the Flow. Have each group pick a Team Leader. When it comes time for each group to demonstrate their flow to the rest of the class, the Leader will Call Out the Flow, while everyone else in the group performs it.
- Have each team perform their flow for the class. Allow them to go through it once without making interruptions or too many corrections. Then have them repeat the flow slowly, while you give feedback as needed on each movement. You may give feedback on technical issues or form, and/or the actual language of their Call Out.

WRAP UP

Congratulations on making it to the end of the workshop! Some final points to hit upon:

- Give them another overview of the Test Out procedures. Tell them the info is in their manual on page and will be sent in a follow up email. Strongly encourage them to get their videos submitted within the 30-90 day time frame. Stress the importance of following the instructions.
- Tell them to ask to join the Facebook group for Certified Instructors
- Tell them about merchandise
- End on a high note - Each Master Instructor should have their own unique way of closing the class. It needs to be something that gets everyone charged up and feeling great about the overall experience. What I've always done is explain to them how much the AF practice means to me and how incredible it is to have so many practitioners around the world, inspiring others to move. I then ask everyone to hold up their right hand, as if they are about to take an oath. I then walk around and high five everyone, look them in the eyes and tell them good job. It breaks the tension and makes every person feel like they have been acknowledged.
- Group Pics

Good bye!