

Put your spine in neutral

IF Pilates hasn't done enough for your posture, go one better with Aston-Patterning. Since 1963, Judith Aston, an American expert on human movement, has been teaching people how to move in a way that suits their natural, asymmetric, alignment. "No two people are exactly alike and I have never seen a body that was exactly symmetrical, so why should people hold themselves symmetrical when they're not?" she says. Her technique, Aston-Patterning, aims to ease the tension that leads to discomfort and injury. First, she helps me find my "neutral" position, in which my joints will have proper spacing and my muscles will have room to operate freely. Michael King, director of The Pilates Institute in London, says that Judith's work is going to be the next Pilates. As for me, I've learned to walk so that I'm visibly better aligned. I've also learned how to tie my shoelaces correctly — on the floor, one knee up, one down, weight on the front of the forward foot.

Angie Newson

For Aston's video and more information, visit www.astonenterprises.com or contact The Pilates Institute (020 7253 3177, www.pilates-institute.co.uk).

