HOOKING IT UP:  
GETTING ARMS CONNECTED

NOTE: These warmups are designed for people with healthy bodies and arm structures. If you have any pain, discomfort or limitation in arm movement, please consult a health care professional before participating in these exercises.

I. Shoulder Shrugs

**NOTICE HOW THE ENTIRE ARM STRUCTURE (arms, shoulder blade and collar bone) MOVES WHEN YOU DO THIS.**

1. Raise shoulders up, hold, and let drop
2. Pull shoulders down, let spring back up.
3. Round shoulders forward, let spring back to middle.
4. Pull shoulders back, let spring back to the middle.
5. Roll shoulders slowly, forward and backwards.
6. Repeat, but this time wiggle shoulders up, down, back, forward and around.
7. Notice how your shoulders feel and if your arm structure is freer and more balanced over your torso.

II. Carnival Swing

1. Stand equally balanced on both feet.
2. Gently start to rotate your torso, allowing your arms to swing around your body, feeling the movement around your core.
3. Let the momentum itself allow your arms to go a little more out with each turn.
4. Start to feel the centrifugal force pulling your arms out and bringing blood into your hands.
5. Go only as far as feels comfortable – DON’T FORCE your arms to swing high.
6. Slowly and gently allow your core to rotate less and less until arms are at your sides again.
7. Stand and feel the support in the core of your body – this is what your arms need to move freely.

III. Ski Jump

1. Bend your knees as if you’re getting ready to jump high.
2. Swing both arms together forward and back, allowing your knees to react.
3. Let your knees go a little lower and your arms a little higher with each swing.
4. Feel the connection between arms and legs – for arms to go further, legs have to bend more.
5. Feel also the soles of your feet as they press into the floor – the floor is the support for your arms.

**NOTICE THAT YOUR ARMS ARE MOVING ALL THE WAY FROM YOUR TAILBONE IN BACK.**

IV. Roller Blading/Skating

1. With your hips, knees and ankles gently bending, start swinging your arms opposite each other – first right forward, then left forward as right goes back.
2. Feel the reaction in your legs as your arms move,
3. Gently let your arms swing a little higher each time.
4. Notice what your legs need to do to allow your arms to move higher.
5. Feel what happens in the soles of your feet as your arms go up and down.
6. Feel the diagonal connections in your body – between right arm and left leg, and left arm and right leg. We get support from these diagonal connections.
7. Notice how the entire arm structure (shoulder blade, collar bones and arms) move together as a unit.
8. Feel the way your torso and legs are connected in the front, sides and back.
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V. Arm Dangles
1. Stand balanced and breathing.
2. Let your right arm float up in front and notice how high it wants to go. Some will easily go all the way up, others will only be comfortable going a little way up. Notice your own range of movement.
3. Lean to your right side and let your right arm dangle. Feel the weight of your arm and release any muscles that might be working to hold it.
4. Let your arm move forward and back a little, feeling the location of the joint where it is moving from — high up in your armpit.
5. Begin to let momentum develop. Just as on a swing set you go a little higher each time, propelled by momentum, allow your arm to go a little higher on each swing.
6. Make sure you are not MAKING your arm go up, but letting it hang and be carried by the momentum.
7. Let your arm bend at the elbow as it goes up in front and back.
8. Be careful to observe your own range of movement. DO NOT go beyond what you found comfortable in Step 1, or you may hurt yourself. Make sure your arm gets lighter as it goes up, just as on a swing set you feel the rush of weight at the bottom and weightlessness at the top.
9. If you are comfortable with your arm going all the way up, freely moving and being carried by momentum, allow it to go over the top a few times, both forward and backward. Notice if one is easier than the other (forward or backward). DO NOT force this.
10. Notice if right arm is longer.
11. Repeat with the left arm.

VI. Chicken flaps
1. With elbows out, flap your arms back and forth, letting your shoulders stay relaxed. Don’t raise shoulders to do this movement, but notice how the collar bones and shoulder blades do react a tiny bit as you do this movement.
2. Notice how your upper arm bone rotates from way high up in your armpit. This is the rotation you need for crossing strings.

VII. Anti-computer stretch
1. Standing balanced, breathing comfortably, gently hold your left forearm in your right hand, behind your back.
2. DO NOT PULL.
3. Notice the slight stretch in the front of your chest.
4. Breathe comfortably and hold stretch for 20 seconds.
5. Change hands and repeat.

FOR HEALTHY ARMS AND HANDS:
- All hand movements are arm movements.
- All arm movements are connected to torso and neck muscles.
- All torso muscles are affected by head and core balance.
- Head and core balance is affected by leg movement and grounding.
- The whole body is needed in our awareness to keep pressure off nerves and support free hand movement.

B-4 you play a note:
- B BALANCED
- B SUPPORTED
- B BREATHING
- BELONG (b aware of yourself and the world)