

Health Book Review: *Superstretch*

With 7 different stretch categories and multitudes of tips and illustrations, *Superstretch* is the best stretch book on the TSCPL shelves, a credit to Jacqueline Lysycia, who was voted the world's top stretch/yoga instructor by *Yoga Magazine* in 2005. *Superstretch* effectively targets every major muscle group, as well as

focuses on the minor muscles, to create a well-rounded stretching routine. Lysycia begins *Superstretch* by laying out the benefits of stretching for your body: stress is relieved, posture is improved (making you look younger—and thinner!), muscles and joints are healthier, chances of workout-related injuries are reduced, muscle development is promoted, and circulation is improved. With these kinds of benefits, why not take a few minutes out of your day to stretch? A brief explanation is given on what goes on inside your body when you stretch, to help raise your awareness of how important stretching is—and what exactly you are targeting when you stretch. And finally, the importance of proper breathing while stretching is stressed. While it may seem simple—we all breathe, after all—proper breathing facilitates deeper, more

aeffective stretching.

The remainder of the book is dedicated to seven fantastic sets of stretches: warm-up; dynamic; spine; Hhips and legs; hips, Llegs, and spine; Uupper body; and- gentle therapeutic.

You can start with the warm--up and then work your way through the dynamic stretches, or you can choose a particular section to help you stretch out a tight muscle. If your day is packed, start with the warm--up and then pick two or -three key exercises to get you through the day. Need to wind down after a hectic

day or feeling poorly? Turn to the gentle therapeutic stretches to calm you and help you relax.

Superstretch is particularly impressive because it takes stretching to a new level. Regardless of whether you have never stretched before or have stretched for years, it will challenge you in your stretching. Keep the stretch light, or if you are particularly limberre, progress to the developmental stretch. (Being unusually -limber myself, I have had an impossible time finding stretch books thatwhich are -anywhere close to effective. *Superstretch* is the only one I have

found that can challenge me.)

Pros:

- Detailed, easy-to-follow steps
- Great pictures demonstrating different progressions of the stretches, as well as which muscles are being affected
- Focus on breathing
- Stretches for any activity and time of day
- Stretches that target every muscle

Cons:

- -None!

5/5

The Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library's health book section is easily located at the Health Neighborhood in the Adult West Wing. Check back here to read my weekly reviews on diet and exercise books and DVDs available to be checked out from TSCSPL. Check online at tscpl.org to see if the book is checked in now or to have it put on hold.