

## Action Steps Guide

### 1. **Go for a Walk**

Walking is one of the best things you can do for your back. It's the most natural human motion, and this alone can help bring your body back into balance. The entire body is working synergistically making it a full-body exercise. If walking hurts, use the contact form at [www.artofcore.com/contact](http://www.artofcore.com/contact) to reach out to me. There are some things you need to address first. We were designed to move.

### 2. **Sit Less**

Sitting promotes the muscle imbalances that are contributing to your back pain. If you have to sit for your job or some other reason, get up and move around every once in a while. How often? As often as possible. We need to reverse these muscle imbalances, and sitting will slow this process.

### 3. **Sit Cross-Legged**

If you have to sit (and are able to get into the position), try sitting cross-legged. This position brings your hip flexors (one of the culprits of your problem) into a mechanical disadvantage so they can't fire as much. Your hip flexors likely overcompensate for your weaker core muscles, so by taking them partially out of the equation, you are requiring your deep core muscles to work harder in holding you up, which we want. Next time you're sitting in your lazy boy or on the couch, get down on the ground and sit like we did before couches were invented. You may realize how tight your hips are. This can be improved upon.



### 4. **Exhale Completely**

Blow out all your air, I mean ALL of it, and feel what happens to your core. Everything engages, front, sides and back. That's powerful. Now try pursing your lips and doing the same thing. Like blowing through a straw, it requires more effort from your core to get all the air out. This can be used as an exercise. It can help you become aware of your core, and also help activate it. Not only that, it clears out stagnant air and oxygenates the alveoli in your lower lobes, which is a pretty nice gift to your lungs. You can do this randomly throughout the day.

### 5. **Crack the Walnut**

In standing, flex your butt muscles as tightly as you can. Literally, squeeze them with the intention of cracking a walnut between your cheeks. You might feel some instant relief as this takes a lot of pressure off of your lumbar spine. Maximally contracting your gluteal muscles can help wake them up (they've probably been sleeping for a while). This is a good starting point towards our ultimate goal of strengthening this major core muscle in order to **Balance Your Core**.