

## Stretching for Pole Flexibility Week 4

The Oak Tree and the Reeds – A French Fable (short version)

Alongside a river, an oak tree and a patch of reeds grew side-by-side. The oak tree was strong and proud; its enormous trunk and branches reaching far above the tops of the slender reeds below.

One day, a great storm came from across the river, and the strong winds blew with all their might.

The oak tree, as strong as it was, was toppled over by the winds, but much to the dismay of the oak tree, the reeds were still standing.

The reeds replied calmly, “We were not blown over because we were flexible and moved with the wind. Although you are strong, you fought against the wind and lost.”

\*For a longer version of this story please visit: [Tellmeastory.com](http://Tellmeastory.com)

### Week 4 Stretches



#### Shoulder Stretch:

Eagle Arms- Cross your arm out in front of you above the elbows, right arm on top of the left. Bend both elbows to about 90 degrees and try to touch your palms together. (Please use a strap if necessary.) On each inhale lift your elbows a little bit higher, and on each exhale lower your shoulder blades down your back. Draw your low ribs in and lift the crown of your head tall.



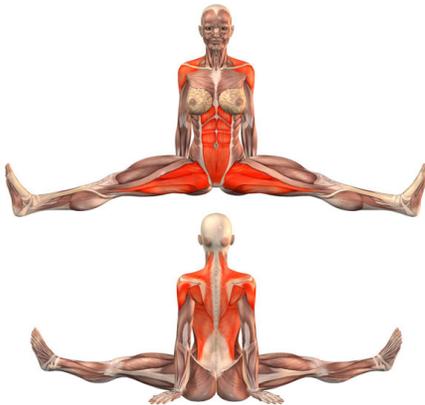
#### Back Stretch:

Backbend at the Wall- Begin standing with you back against the wall in mountain pose. Step forward one foot's distance away from the wall. On an inhale reach tall, on an exhale begin to arch your upper back until your fingers touch the wall. Lengthen your tailbone towards the floor to help protect your low back. Hold for several breaths. Step forward a couple of inches and repeat. Continue until you find your edge.



**Side Splits Stretch:**

Half Split Stretch- Start in a lunge with the front knee over the ankle. Drop onto the back knee and begin to walk your front leg out in front of you. Rock your torso front and back between pointing and flexing the front foot. Try to keep both hips square and your back flat. You can also rock side to side to help release deeper into the stretch. As you need to, walk your front heel further out in front of you.



**Middle Splits Stretch:**

Straddle Stretch at wall- Sit facing the wall in a straddle, ankles engaged. Use your arms to help prop yourself up and to encourage your body closer to the wall. (You can also use blocks between the wall and your lower inner thighs if this is causing knee pain.)

**Week 4 Chart**

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Shoulders (Left Side) (Right Side)							
Back							
Side Splits (Left Side) (Right Side)							
Middle Splits							