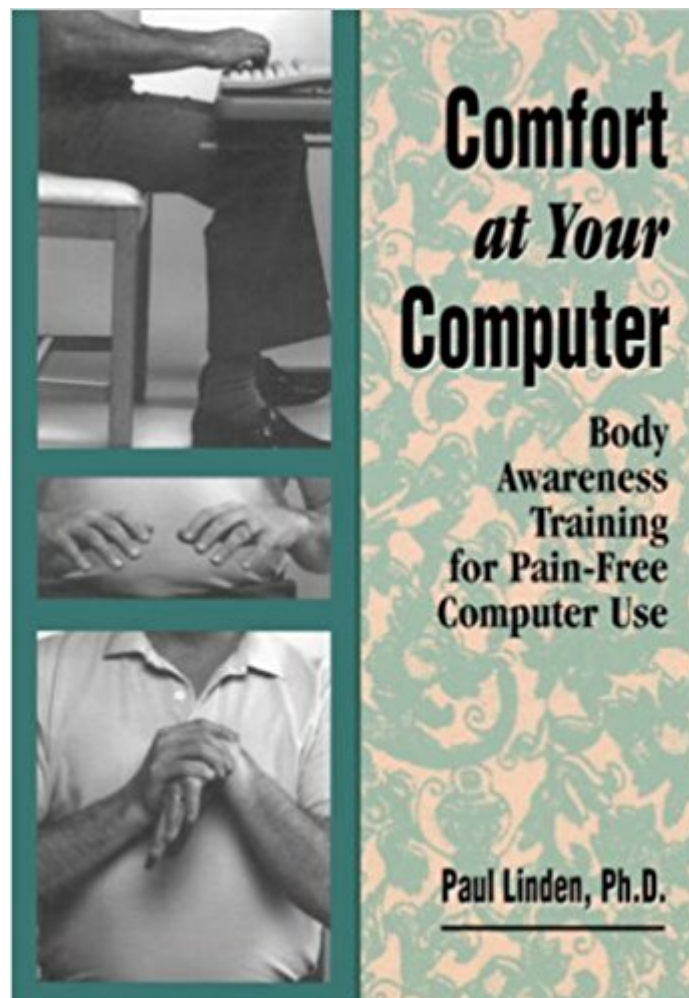




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Comfort At Your Computer: Body Awareness Training For Pain-Free Computer Use



Synopsis

"[Comfort at Your Computer] is an excellent resource for anyone who uses a computer. True to its title, the book shows the reader in clear and easy to understand steps how to use a computer in comfort. Dr. Linden adroitly synthesizes knowledge from his physical education background...This is an excellent book for people at risk for computer stress and for the clinicians who treat them. It functions both as a resources book and as a self-help text. It should also be of interest to companies whose workers use computers."-Physical Therapy, December 1996

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Customer Reviews

Paul Linden is a specialist in body and movement awareness education and the director of the Columbus Center for Movement Studies in Columbus, Ohio. Linden is an instructor of the Feldenkrais Method of somatic education, and holds a fourth degree black belt in Aikido as well as a first degree black belt in Karate. Over the past twenty-five years he has developed a systematic approach to body movement and awareness teaching which he calls Being in Movement mind/body training.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my editor, Paul Becker, for believing in this project from the first. He understood and supported what I was trying to create. I owe Dawn Costick special thanks for her imagination and skill in doing the photography. She is a massage practitioner as well as a

photographer, and her ability to see the body in both ways was invaluable in organizing the visual presentation of the book and shooting the photographs. Tom Simpson contributed a lot to the book. He coaxed me into getting my first computer, way back when, and he generously took time to serve as a model for the photographs -- in which he demonstrated with great clarity body intelligence in movement. Raphael Rosado took my jokes and turned them into cartoons which are each worth more than a thousand words. Nancy Sally prepared the anatomical drawings, and Gail Griffith served as a model in the photographs. Barbara Braham, an author and public speaker, gave me valuable advice on the book and listened to my ongoing reports on how far the writing had come. Marilyn Huheey was kind enough to review the chapters on head and eyes. Barbara Fredin, Jean Pierre Dujardin, Russell Hall, and David Berger all read the manuscript and offered detailed critiques which were immensely helpful. Aikido gave me my appreciation of the body in movement. I am grateful for the existence of Aikido, and I am grateful to all my practice partners down through the years, and to all the instructors who have helped me progress in the art, especially Robert Nadeau and Yoshimitsu Yamada. I owe all my students through the years a debt of gratitude. I learned by teaching them. I appreciate the help that Keri Walker at Apple Computer and Aida Adams at Communication Intelligence Corporation each extended in arranging for me to try out pieces of equipment. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I've developed intense pain from using the mouse (both on right and left hands). I was doing a lot of graphic work, lots of double clicking and dragging. Going weekly to the chiropractor relieved 20% of the pain. After one session with a Feldenkreis practitioner, 80% of the pain was gone. She lent me the 1st edition of this book, which is what the review is based on. I've taken Feldenkreis lessons before, but never noticed much difference. I now realize that this pain has raised my awareness levels of my body in a way I didn't know before. Now I can do simple Feldenkreis lessons at home and feel a definite difference in muscles being looser and moving better. This book is great on raising my body awareness while I am at the computer. I've professional training in safety and ergonomics. I learned more from this book that was not covered in previous professional training. Understanding about the proper pelvis position while sitting and how it affects your arms was an eye opener. The general public has a misunderstanding of what good posture is supposed to look like. The only thing I would recommend is a more in depth chapter on the different types of mice (pointing devices) and keyboards available out there, their pros and cons. Having to choose a new pointing device and keyboard for myself has been a daunting task. I've already returned 2 keyboards with centrally located touchpads that relieved some of the pain, but not all. I'm now

considering a vertical mouse and the comfort keyboard, which would keep my hands in the vertical position. Maybe this is covered in the new book edition or maybe this topic is too individual to be covered in a generic book. As the author mentioned to me in an e-mail: If you sensitize yourself to feelings of balance and ease in your body, you will be better able to detect which ergonomic devices are actually helpful. I particularly enjoyed having him respond to specific questions I posed. Highly recommended!

Amazingly easy to read, sensible and jargon-free, he knows what works but is persuasive rather than didactic (I originally titled this review "Everyone should use the mouse left-handed" but realized how much better it is to use his approach). Every page has simple experiments to try to help you discover for yourself the most comfortable, healthy positions for body, desk, computer... The following was an epiphany for me (I'm right-handed) and illustrates his delicate balance between knowing what's good for you and letting you discover it for yourself: "The number pad and cursor control keys are usually on the right side of the keyboard, and that means that when the alphabetic section is centered in front of you, the right end of the keyboard is about six inches further from your body's centerline than is the left end. Most people are right-handed and place the mouse to the right of the keyboard. Notice that if you do so, you will have to hold your arm considerably farther away from your side than if you place your mouse on the left of your keyboard. That extra extension of your arm will result in significant fatigue and strain in your shoulder and neck. It could even affect your back." "It is a good idea to put the mouse on the left side of the keyboard--even though for right-handed people it takes a little getting used to...you will get used to it soon, and you will find that it will considerably lessen the work your arm has to do in using the mouse." Absolutely worth finding even though it's out of print. No other book I've seen on ergonomics comes even close.

This is absolutely THE source on how to sit and work with a computer. You'll find simple guidelines for workstation ergonomics, eg, proper height for monitor, chair, keyboard, etc. -- and how to know when it's right for each individual. Learn to FEEL when your posture is functionally correct, meaning you are using your body efficiently and are not causing yourself a chronic problem such as carpal tunnel. Mr. Linden approaches his subject from a body awareness perspective -- you try simple movements and quickly learn what works and feel it when you've got it. I have also consulted with Mr. Linden, and have found his approach to posture, movement, and body use to be lucid, direct, and incredibly helpful. Don't be intimidated by the amount of information in the book. There are lots of pictures, and it's organized in functional chapters so you can read the parts you need.

This book changed my life at work. I have to admit, I didn't exactly follow the "program" - I skipped to the section on sitting, which is what interested me. I have a chronic, mild, back problem, and I had searched and searched for a computer chair that would allow me to sit without pain. I had 3 loaner chairs from different companies, after trying about 20 at the display area at my university ergonomics group, and with all of them, my back hurt. Then I read and worked with Paul's book - and now I sit on a not wonderful chair, with a rolled up towel (and a cushion to make up for the seat), and I am comfortable, all day. He teaches you how to sit, how to move, without expensive gadgets. Try it.

and the man is the real thing. He's a small man and I've seen him throw guys twice his size with no effort, and I've felt him throw me too. I haven't read his book but I've given this five stars because after being on the mat with him and having the chance to talk to him about the book afterwards, you couldn't meet a nicer or more unpretentious guy. He **definitely** knows what he's talking about when it comes to body movement and if you **actually follow** what he's telling you to do instead of dismissing it like the person above who gave it 1 out of 5 did, I'm sure it'll work. I'm damn sure his aikido works, so I'd like to recommend this just on those grounds alone :-)

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