

Chapter 3

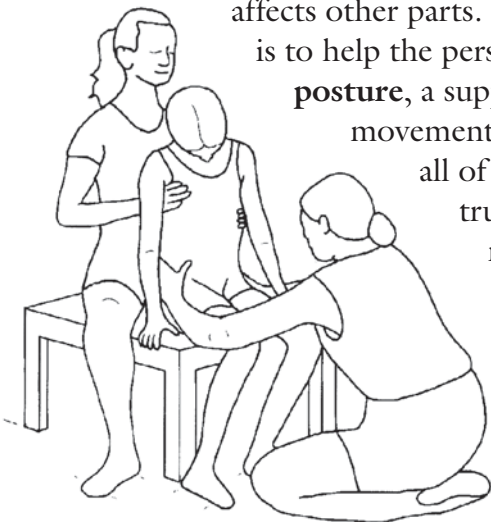
Simulation & Measurements

A Hand Simulation

Hand simulation means using your hands and often different parts of your own body to provide postural support for the person. Feel, sense, and observe how she responds to specifically placed support in different areas of her body. Hand simulation is actually done in conjunction with assessing joint flexibility and balance in sitting. In Chapter 2, many questions were posed to start you thinking about *how* your hands are supporting the person.

The individual continues to sit on a firm, level surface with her feet well supported. First, we position the person to accommodate or allow for fixed joint and muscular limitations (contractures and deformities). For example, place a block of firm foam under one side of the pelvis to accommodate a fixed pelvic obliquity. After accommodating the fixed contractures, use your hands to assess where she requires postural support. It is helpful to have at least one other person to assist.

Observe and feel how stability and movement in one part of the body affects other parts. How does she respond to your hands? Our intent is to help the person find and achieve her balanced **neutral posture**, a supported posture from which she can initiate movement to function. Simulating with your hands demands all of your senses. I often feel like an octopus, using my trunk, hands, pelvis, legs, and feet to provide just the right amount of support in just the right places.



A challenge: Without using a single seating component, can you help the person find her neutral posture, and with your hands and body determine where she needs postural support? Quick, take a photo, or have someone draw a picture. Then describe how you are supporting each part of the person's body.

